

A Critique of Jeremy Ive's Interpretation of Herman Dooyeweerd

By J. Glenn Friesen

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This is a critique of Jeremy Ive's doctoral thesis, "A Critically Comparative Kuyperian Analysis and a Trinitarian, 'Perichoretic' Reconstruction of the Reformational Philosophies of Dirk H. Th. Vollenhoven and Herman Dooyeweerd," (2013) King's College London. He has now renamed it "The Roots of Reformational Philosophy: The Thought of Dirk H. Th. Vollenhoven and Herman Dooyeweerd in the Light of the Trinitarian Vision of Abraham Kuyper"

I am grateful for Jeremy Ive's numerous acknowledgements of my research on Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven. But in trying to minimize the difference between the philosophies of Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven—serious divergences that they themselves acknowledged—Ive has chosen to eliminate what Dooyeweerd says are the most important parts of his philosophy in favour of Vollenhoven's ideas. And in many cases, Ive appears to have not read what Dooyeweerd actually says, preferring to accept the misinterpretations that others have made of his work. And although Ive refers to some of Dooyeweerd's sources for his philosophy, he does not examine these sources in depth to see how they influenced Dooyeweerd and how they can help interpret his work. Nor does Ive examine the sources that influenced Abraham Kuyper. In general, Ive is too quick to try to systematize his philosophy and his theology, without first understanding the history of Dooyeweerd's philosophy and its actual content.

Here are some of the ways that Ive has failed to interpret Dooyeweerd correctly:

1. Ive rejects Dooyeweerd's key idea of the supratemporal selfhood. But Dooyeweerd himself insisted that this was central to his philosophy. He was not at all, as Ive claims (p. 146, fn 39), "equivocal" about this idea. Dooyeweerd emphasized the idea of the supratemporal selfhood right up to the very last article he published in 1975. Ive (following D.F.M. Strauss) takes the view that Dooyeweerd revised his previous idea of the supratemporal selfhood as ontical, and changed to the view that

The heart is not supra-temporal knowledge, nor an entity, but rather *the orientation of the whole person* towards or away from God (Ive p.156).

In support, he claims that Dooyeweerd says that God alone is above time. But the page he cites, *NC III*, 88 contains no such statement! Nor does any similar string of words appear in the entire *New Critique*! In fact *NC III*, 88 says the exact opposite. It refers to

...the human I-ness, which transcends the cosmic temporal order. The reason is that human existence is not restricted to the temporal world...man is created after the image of God, as the lord of the “earthly” temporal world...the human body is the free plastic instrument of the I-ness, as the spiritual centre of human existence.

Now it is true that only God is eternal. But the supratemporal is distinct from the eternal. It is, to use Kuyper’s expression, a “created eternity.” Thus, the human heart can be supratemporal, even if only God can be eternal.

2. Ive claims that in the late 1950’s, Dooyeweerd changed his views about the supratemporal heart. At p. 74, fn 239, Ive cites:

[D]e religieuze concentratie juist een centrale relatie tussen het menselijk ik en de eeuwige God impliceert die nooit in de tijd kan opgaan

Ive claims that this quotation is from Dooyeweerd’s article “Van Peursen’s critische vragen bij A New Critique of Theoretical Thought” *Philosophia Reformata* 25 (1960), 103). But in fact, it is from a totally different article, “Schepping en Evolutie,” *Philosophia Reformata* 24 (1959), 116-17, fn 3.

Ive badly and incorrectly translates this as

...just because [the heart as] the religious concentration is the central relation between the human I and the eternal God does not mean that it rises above time

This is a totally incorrect translation! It misses the meaning of ‘juist’ and ‘opgaan.’ The correct translation in its full context is as follows (I have placed in bold font the portion that Ive mistranslates so badly):

But how can the “heart” function in the above-mentioned sense as the *religious concentration point of history* if the heart is completely closed up within time? The introduction of the idea of “religious time” is of no help here, because **it is precisely the religious concentration that implies a central relation between the human ego and the eternal God that can never be subsumed in time.**

This is the very opposite of Ive’s translation! Far from Dooyeweerd changing his mind, he is in this article responding to those people like J.M. Spier who questioned the idea of the supratemporal self. Dooyeweerd challenges those who dispute his reading of the biblical text that God “has laid eternity in our hearts” as well as the text “From out of the heart are the issues of life.” The heart, as the religious concentration point, is not subsumed by or closed up in time.

If we look at Dooyeweerd's 1960 article on Van Peursen, and to the page that Ive incorrectly cites for this passage (p. 103), that page also contains an emphasis on the supratemporal selfhood. Dooyeweerd says

Slechts in de ontsluiting van ons hart voor Gods Woordopenbaring worden wij aan ons zelf ontdekt en onthult zich de ware wortel-eenheid van onze existentie, die, als de centrale zetel van het beeld Gods, de tijd *in zijn kosmische zin-verscheidenheid* transcendeert, omdat, naar de scheppingsorde al het tijdelijke in *haar* op de eeuwigheid in haar bijbelse (niet-Griekse) zin diende te worden geconcentreerd....En slechts in en uit Hem leren wij in de gemeenschap van de HJ. Geest verstaan, in welke zin wij in het centrum onzer existentie de tijd *te boven gaan*, ofschoon wij tegelijk *binnen de tijd besloten zijn*.

Only in the opening of our heart to God's Word revelation are we discovered to our self, and is unveiled the true root-unity of our existence, which, as the central seat of the image of God, transcends time *in its cosmic meaning-diversity*, because, according to the order of creation, in it [our root-unity or heart] all that is temporal was destined to be concentrated in eternity in its biblical (non-Greek) sense. ...And only in and from out of Him, and in the community of the Holy Ghost, do we learn to understand, in what sense we *transcend* time in the center of our existence, although at the same time we are *confined within time*.

We live both above time and within time. On the same page Dooyeweerd says that human existence finds no real concentration point within the cosmic horizon of time, but remains dispersed in the diversity of modal aspects and typical individuality structures (our concentration point must be outside of the horizon of time). Elsewhere in the article (p. 99, referring to *WdW* II, 54) again Dooyeweerd refers to the heart as supratemporal.

3. In support of the alleged change in Dooyeweerd's views about the supratemporal heart, Ive also refers to a 1964 lecture by Dooyeweerd and the discussion that followed.

See <https://jgfriesen.files.wordpress.com/2016/12/1964lecture.pdf>

Ive says that part of the discussion in question has been "variously interpreted" by me and by D.F.M. Strauss (p. 74, fn 240). Strauss claims that the discussion after the lecture shows that Dooyeweerd changed his mind about the supratemporal heart. Ive acknowledges that I have "contested" that there was such a change. He refers (and p. 74, fn 240; p. 141 fn 475; p. 144, fn 486) to my article, "Why did Dooyeweerd want to tear out his hair?" <https://jgfriesen.files.wordpress.com/2016/12/hair.pdf>

But Ive does not examine the arguments I raised against this view! If he is to agree with Strauss's claims about Dooyeweerd on such a central point, he needs to read Dooyeweerd's remarks more closely. My arguments are worth repeating here in summary form. Any one of these arguments is sufficient to show that Dooyeweerd did not change his view from an ontical supratemporal heart to a merely temporal directional heart. The direction of the heart is from the supratemporal to the eternal.

a) Strauss points to Dooyeweerd's answer to Peter Steen in the 1964 Discussion Strauss incorrectly claims that Dooyeweerd says here that sometimes he can "tear the hair from his head" that he ever used the expression "supra-temporal." But Strauss does not quote Dooyeweerd's response correctly! The full paragraph of Dooyeweerd's Response should be as follows (I have placed in bold font those parts either neglected or misstated by Strauss).

Wat uw eerste vraag betreft, ja, ik begrijp die nu beter, daar draait dat penibele punt, waar ik soms de haren uit mijn hoofd trek, (you understand?), **dat ik deze woorden ooit gebruikt heb, ik geloof ook nooit dat ik ze gebruikt heb, het boventijdelijk hart**, ik geloof niet dat ik deze uitdrukking ooit zo gebruikt heb. Ik heb wel dit gezegd, dat de mens in het centrum van zijn bestaan de tijdelijke, de kosmische tijdelijke orde te boven gaat. Dat is wel iets anders. **Translated in English: I only ascertain that man in the centre of his existence is transcending, does transcend the temporal order in its cosmic sense. To say in the sense of his world, with this world of this man, you see?**

Please note that the last two sentences in English, beginning with the words "Translated in English..." are Dooyeweerd's own words and not my translation of something he said in Dutch.

Dooyeweerd was responding to Steen, who asked his question in English. The question itself is not recorded, but from the notes taken by the scholar K.A. Bril, who also attended the lecture and discussion, it was a theological question concerning the two natures of Christ. Bril's notes record that Steen's question included

The Word became flesh. As it was in the beginning by God. Transcends time and took place in time.

The page in the Discussion following this response to Steen confirms that Steen's question related to the two natures of Christ. Perhaps Steen had read J.M. Spier's 1953 book in which Spier argued against supratemporality by relating the issue to Christ's two natures.

Here is a translation of the full excerpt from the Discussion, again marking in bold font those parts not included or misstated by Strauss:

Concerning your first question, yes, I now understand you better. It revolves around that painful point, where I sometimes pull the hair from my head (you understand?) **that I have ever used these words—I also don't believe that I have ever used these words. The 'supratemporal heart'—I don't think that I have ever used this expression in that way.** I have certainly said that in the center of his existence, man transcends the temporal, the cosmic temporal order. That is now something else. [the following words spoken in English by Dooyeweerd]: **Translated in English I only ascertain that man in the center of his existence is transcending, does transcend the temporal order in its cosmic sense. To say in the sense of his world, with this world of this man, you see?** (1964 discussion, p. 4)

Dooyeweerd does not say that he never used the words “supratemporal heart,” or that he regrets using these words. He *denies* that he used the words “in this way,” i.e. in the context of Christ’s two natures. *Even in this response*, Dooyeweerd affirms that “in the center of his existence, man transcends the temporal, the cosmic temporal order.” But “that is something else” from the question that Steen has asked. Surely the distinction is between Christ’s eternity and man’s mere supratemporality. Both eternity and supratemporality transcend time, but eternity also transcends the supratemporal *aevum*, the “created eternity.” As fully human, Jesus existed in both the temporal and the supratemporal.

for that is an event, a real event, the incarnation of the Word, an event that simultaneously reaches into the central sphere of our life as well as in the temporal sphere of our bodily existence (Discussion p. 32).

But the incarnation from the eternal to the temporal and supratemporal is “something else.” The incarnation of the Word that “was in the beginning with God and through which all things were made” –that is “an incomprehensible mystery.”

The conclusion of this same excerpt from the Discussion again affirms the idea of man’s supratemporal heart: “I only ascertain that man in the center of his existence is transcending, does transcend the temporal order in its cosmic sense.” This in itself shows that Dooyeweerd did *not* change his mind about this idea.

b) If in 1964, Dooyeweerd had really retracted his idea of the supratemporal heart, Steen would never have devoted so much space to the issue of the supratemporal heart in his later (1970) doctoral thesis. See Peter J. Steen: *The Structure of Herman Dooyeweerd’s Thought* (Toronto: Wedge, 1983), where there are many references to the issue. In that thesis, Steen cites both Spier and Jager in his arguments against supratemporality. From Steen’s other writings,

including a 1964 article published after the 1964 Discussion, it is apparent that Steen regarded the supratemporal/temporal distinction as confusing the distinction between Creator and creature, although Steen does acknowledge at p. 149 that G.C. Berkouwer had defended Dooyeweerd against Spier's view that supratemporality involved some sort of super-creatureliness.

c) Furthermore, in 1968, four years after this lecture, Vollenhoven gave a lecture where he again referred explicitly to his continuing differences with Dooyeweerd, including his disagreement regarding the supratemporal heart. (D.H. Th. Vollenhoven: "Problemen van de tijd in onze kring" ("Problems about time in our circle"), a lecture given by Vollenhoven in 1968. If Dooyeweerd had retracted his views, this would have been unnecessary. Vollenhoven says

Just like me, he [Dooyeweerd] distinguished between functions and the soul or the heart, but at the same time he saw this distinction as an opposition, namely that between the temporal and the supratemporal.

d) In the same 1964 Lecture, Dooyeweerd also says that the distinction between supratemporal heart (the center) and the temporal body (the periphery) is necessary in order to understand the central working of the Word of God in our lives, for "Holy Scripture also has a center, a religious center and a periphery, which belong to each other in an unbreakable way" (1964 Lecture, p. 14). True knowledge of God and true knowledge of self are also obtained by the central working of God's Word in our heart:

But when it concerns true knowledge of God and true knowledge of self, then we must say, "There is no theology in the world and no philosophy in the world that can achieve that for man. It is the immediate fruit of the working, the central working of God's Word itself in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, in the heart, the radix, the root unity of human existence (1964 lecture, p. 14)

e) In the same 1964 Discussion, Dooyeweerd says that those who hold a different view of our religious center [i.e. those who hold it to be fully temporal] cannot be regarded as adherents of his philosophy.

It is undoubtedly a different direction, and one that does not come from out of the same center (1964 discussion, pp. 1-2)

f) Strauss refers to Dooyeweerd's 1960 discussion with Van Peursen, where Dooyeweerd said that the term "supratemporal" could be replaced by another term. But that does not mean that Dooyeweerd wanted to do away with the distinction between what is temporal, on the one hand, and the center of our existence that transcends time, on the other hand. On the contrary, and as we have seen, in that very article, Dooyeweerd continued to emphasize the idea.

Even if he did not use the term “supratemporal,” Dooyeweerd was using the same idea, when he spoke about man transcending time.

g) But in fact, Dooyeweerd did continue to use the word “supratemporal” after his 1960 discussion with Van Peursen. For example, he used it in *In the Twilight of Western Thought*, which appeared in 1968, and which Dooyeweerd edited following the 1964 lecture we are discussing. On p. 7, of *Twilight* Dooyeweerd refers to the central unity of the human selfhood, which is the supra-temporal, central unity and fullness of meaning:

This whole diversity of modal aspects of our experience makes sense only within the order of time. It refers to a supra-temporal, central unity and fullness of meaning in our experiential world, which is refracted in the order of time [...] the central unity of the human selfhood, which, as such, surpasses all modal diversity of our temporal experience.

h) And in 1975, in the last article he ever wrote, Dooyeweerd again affirmed the importance of our transcendence of time. (Herman Dooyeweerd: “De Kentheoretische Gegenstandsrelatie en de Logische Subject-Objectrelatie,” *Philosophia Reformata* 40 (1975) 83-101.) I will refer to this article as “Gegenstandsrelatie.”

<https://jgfriesen.files.wordpress.com/2016/12/kentheoretische.pdf>

In this article, Dooyeweerd says that human existence,

...although it is enclosed by cosmic time in its modal aspects and individuality structures, nevertheless transcends this time in its religious center (pp. 83-84).

Without this idea of the religious root, we cannot understand the mutual irreducibility and unbreakable reciprocal meaning-coherence of the modal aspects, because these ideas are

“not to be separated from the transcendental idea of the root-unity of the modal aspects in the religious center of human existence” (p. 100).

Strauss must be familiar with this text, since this article was directed against his ideas! It is nonsense for Strauss to now assert that Dooyeweerd changed his mind about the supratemporal heart. Strauss is trying to invent “alternative facts,” but he cannot change what Dooyeweerd actually said and wrote. The truth is that Dooyeweerd never changed his mind about the supratemporal heart and that he emphatically rejected Strauss’s own very different philosophy.

i) At the end of both the original Dutch edition *De Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee*, as well as the English translation, *A New Critique of Theoretical Thought*, Dooyeweerd indicates that this idea of the supratemporal heart is in fact the

basis of his whole philosophy; he links what he said at the beginning of the work to what he says at the end. On the last page of *A New*, Dooyeweerd repeats what he said at NC I, 31, fn 1: the heart is not merely the center of our temporal functions (as Vollenhoven had proposed in his idea of the merely pre-functional heart). Dooyeweerd says that whoever holds to such a view has “an all-too simple and erroneous idea of what we understand by “anthropology.” Dooyeweerd never changed his mind about this.

4. In his discussion of the orientation or direction of our heart, Ive does not seem to recognize that the supratemporal is distinct from eternity. Above the temporal dimension of reality there exist further levels of supratemporality—our own, and that of God’s eternity. When Dooyeweerd does speak of the direction of our heart (e.g. 1964 Discussion, p. 5), he is referring to the fact that our supratemporal heart participates in and seeks rest in God, who is eternal. Although man in his bodily [temporal] existence is completely contained within time, he can also “transcend the temporal order” and “direct himself to the things that transcend time.” This does not mean that the heart is temporal like the body, and is merely directed from the temporal to what is above time. It means that in our supratemporal heart, we transcend the temporal order, and this supratemporal heart is either directed towards or away from God. The supratemporal heart is where we are converted. Our heart is then also where we are turned towards God. None of this takes away from our ontical supratemporal status. There is that which is central or supratemporal in man, and on the other hand, there is that which is bodily or temporal. He says that the distinction is necessary to understand Christ’s incarnation, but it is not the same as the incarnation. That is the point of the whole Discussion. And it is also something that Dooyeweerd had earlier raised in his lecture (See 1964 lecture, p. 8).

5. Ive says that Dooyeweerd’s philosophical anthropology tends to show agreement with Danie Strauss’s views—that the supratemporal selfhood is not ontical but merely a matter of direction of a temporal heart towards the Origin. In support of this, Ive refers to Dooyeweerd’s “De Leer van de mens” [“The Theory of Man in the Philosophy of the Law-Idea: 32 Propositions on Anthropology.”] See <https://jgfriesen.files.wordpress.com/2016/12/32propositions.pdf> How can Ive say this? It is a serious misreading of the text, and Ive omits many relevant passages!

Proposition IV [which Ive does not cite] says:

Nowhere does Scripture teach a polar tension between an *anima rationalis* (as the rational, essential form of human nature) and a material body. It cannot teach this, because it discloses to us the supratemporal religious root, the integral center of temporal human existence. The temporal acts of thinking and willing are merely temporal branches, temporal expressions of this supratemporal religious root.

Dooyeweerd continues this idea in a draft of Proposition IX [not cited by Ive]:

...total human existence is concentrated in a spiritual unity in the human soul, whereas in the body, this same total human existence is prismatically refracted by time into a diversity of functions and individuality structures. The soul is the “inner man” in Paul’s sense, just as we can see in the “body” the external revelation of man (“the outward man”). The “outward man” is nothing without the “inner man,” but the “inner 10 man” cannot be subjected to temporal, i.e. bodily death, because the inner man transcends cosmic time.

In Proposition XXIX [also not cited by Ive], Dooyeweerd says

A sharp distinction must be made between the creation of man and his temporal becoming. For the creative act of God is not subject to time; in contrast, the creature’s bodily becoming is subject to time.

Proposition XXXII [not cited by Ive] says

The creation of man (both body and soul), which, according to the Scriptures, has been totally completed, works itself out in a creaturely way by means of generation. This generation has both a bodily as well as a spiritual (religious) side. With respect to its bodily side, which takes place in cosmic time, humanity is generated of one blood [Acts 17:26 K.J.V.]. With respect to our religious side (which does not take place in time) we are the “spiritual seed” of Adam and as a result of this, we share in his fall into sin

6. As stated in Proposition IV, and elsewhere in his work, Dooyeweerd says that our actions come from out of our supratemporal centre.

The temporal acts of thinking and willing are merely temporal branches, temporal expressions of this supratemporal religious root.

This is something that Ive does not consider when he says (p. 112 fn 173; p. 128) that Dooyeweerd’s idea of cosmic time is deterministic since all acts are pre-determined. Nor is it correct to say that Dooyeweerd’s view “presents us with a conception of a de-historicised human person, bearing none of the characteristics that makes each individual uniquely him or herself” (p. 156, citing Gerrit Glas).

We act in history and become individualized in time. But we act from out of our supratemporal heart.

7. Individuality structures and *enkapsis*. Ive does not properly understand these crucial ideas of Dooyeweerd. The structures are not laws for things; they are the

things themselves. A thing is made up of two or more individuality structures, in a nested or enkaptic relationship. One or more individuality structures include or encapsulate other individuality structures, rather like a Russian doll. The leading function of the included individuality structure is the founding function of the including structure. Ive does not deal with founding and leading functions, except for Vollenhoven's simplistic reduction of the idea of leading function to that of realms of animal, vegetable and mineral (pp. 90, fn 295). Ive seems to interpret Dooyeweerd's idea of "leading function" the same way (pp. 110, 190); he gives no explanation of "founding" except at p. 110, fn 170, where he does not understand the enkaptic interlacement. Vollenhoven rejected the idea of enkapsis and so could not understand the idea of founding and leading functions.

8. Ive says (p. 115):

Regarding individuality, while recognising concrete individuals, Dooyeweerd tends to treat them primarily in terms of their cosmonomic side, i.e. in terms of 'individuality structures' (as 'structures for'): but in doing so, he leaves little room for the recognition of individuals as factual entities, even if he begins his discussion with that recognition.

Ive says (p. 116)

Vollenhoven's account of individuality is much stronger than Dooyeweerd's, seeing individuals as unique, concrete entities and identifying how they are governed by laws and norms.

But, unlike Vollenhoven, Dooyeweerd does *not* begin with individuals. He begins with the idea of Totality, which is individualized in time. Dooyeweerd says that we only know the individual by abstraction (abstraction from continuity in time, not abstraction from the thing).

9. It is true that Vollenhoven begins with things. This is because for Vollenhoven, things come before aspects, and aspects are properties or functions of these things. Vollenhoven abstracts the modes or aspects from those things. Dooyeweerd expressly disagrees with this approach of abstraction of properties.

For Vollenhoven, modes are found by beginning with what he regards as the concrete thing and then abstracting the properties from it. Ive tries to avoid this Aristotelian view of abstraction by claiming that it is only in a few places that Vollenhoven speaks of "properties" (p. 89, fn 289) and that he is really talking about functions. That is not so. Vollenhoven is very explicit about his idea of abstraction of properties.

Vollenhoven refers to aspects as the “not further analyzable determinations” [niet te analyseren bepaaldheden] of things. We begin by analyzing realms into kinds and kinds into things, and things into their aspects

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

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

This method of deriving the aspects from concrete things is precisely the method that Dooyeweerd so strongly criticizes in his last article *Gegenstandsrelatie*. In this article, Dooyeweerd says that, contrary to the assertions by D.F.M. Straus, we do not have implied knowledge of aspects in pre-theoretical experience. Nor are aspects deduced or abstracted from things.

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

10. Dooyeweerd says the same thing in “Van Peursen’s Critische Vragen bij “A New Critique of Theoretical Thought,” *Philosophia Reformata* 25 (1960, 97-150, at 137:

For the fundamental *manners* or *modes* of our experience are not the theoretical product of an ever further carried out abstraction from out of concrete existential experiences of the bodily person, but they are rather the *transcendental conditions*—founded in the temporal order of our experience and existence—for every concrete subjectively human experience.

Already in his 1923 article “Rooms-katholieke en Anti-revolutionaire Staatskunde,” February, 1923 (excerpts in Verburg 53). Modalities are described as modes of intuition [*schouwingswijzen*], although he had also used this term in the earlier 1922 paper on Kelsen. In 1923, Dooyeweerd specifically denies that modalities are qualities or properties of things. He says that the modality in which the concrete meaning is perceived is not the same as a property [*eigenschap*] of this concrete meaning.

11. It is not surprising that Vollenhoven refers to aspects as properties of things, since his two fundamental distinctions are the “this-that” and the “thus-so” distinctions. The “this-that” refers to concrete things; the “thus-so” refers to the different ways that these things function. Vollenhoven refers to the modes or

aspects as “thus-so” [zus-zo] determinations; he says that these are “important properties for the structure of what has been created” (*Isagoogè* par. 43).

As another example, he says that the spatial is not a mode of intuition (as in Kant), but a property [*eigenschap*] of all things (*Isagoogè* par. 31 note 2, para.54). Dooyeweerd rejects the idea that aspects are properties of things.

12. So, contrary to what Ive says, Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven did not agree on the nature of modes or aspects. For Dooyeweerd, modes are modes of experience. They are not, as Vollenhoven would have it, modes of being and knowing. There is no “common framework” here as Ive claims (p. 10).

In the 1964 lecture, Dooyeweerd says that his Idea of the modal aspects has been one of the least understood of his ideas (1964 discussion, pp. 2,3, 8).

13. Ive says (p. 119) that there is a confusion in Dooyeweerd when talking about individuality structures

But even in his later account, there is a lack of clarity in Dooyeweerd as to whether ‘individuality structures’ belong to the cosmonomic (‘structures for’) or to the factual side (‘structures of’) of the created order. On the whole, however, Dooyeweerd tends to see individuality structures as ‘structures for’, i.e., as complexes of law and norms governing the functioning of individuals.

Unlike Vollenhoven, Dooyeweerd does not view the modal aspects as universals that require a particular thing to be governed. He says that objectivity is not the same as universally valid law-conformity (*NC* II, 370). This misunderstanding of law (and modal aspects) as universals is something that Dooyeweerd says causes him to regret having used the term “Philosophy of the Law-Idea.”

Dooyeweerd does not view the modes as “structures for” things. Dooyeweerd objected to referring to the aspects as “kinds of properties and laws” instead of “modes of experience.” See Letter from Roy Clouser to Dooyeweerd dated June 21, 1972, in the Dooyeweerd Archives (*Lade* I, 2). This letter was written after Clouser had completed all but minor revisions to his doctoral thesis at the University of Pennsylvania, and after extensive discussions between Clouser and Dooyeweerd the year before. Despite this admonition, Clouser continued to use the expression “properties” in relation to the aspects and to incorrectly attribute it to Dooyeweerd.

14. In his last article “*Gegenstandsrelatie*” (1975), Dooyeweerd says that it is a “serious misunderstanding” to believe that the modal structures can be deduced from the individuality structures. He says that not even the aspects can be understood apart from the supratemporal selfhood. The idea of the irreducibility of the modal spheres

cannot be separated from the transcendental idea of their root-unity in the religious center of human existence (*Gegenstandsrelatie* 100).

For Dooyeweerd, aspects are both modes of our consciousness and modes in which individuality structures function. And there is an identity of those two modes, which is why the theoretical *Gegenstand*-relation, the entering into the temporal functions of our own body, can work. It is God's law that gives the identity. I have dealt with these matters in greater detail in my article "Imagination, Image of God and Wisdom of God: Theosophical themes in Dooyeweerd's philosophy."

<https://jgfriesen.files.wordpress.com/2016/12/imagination.pdf>

15. One of the criticisms leveled against Dooyeweerd was that his theory reduced individual reality to law. In the 1964 lecture, Dooyeweerd says that this is a mistake, since he has always emphasized that reality has both a law-side and a subject-side, and that corresponding to the central law-Idea there is also a central subject-Idea (Discussion, p. 14).

16. Vollenhoven views what Dooyeweerd calls the "*Gegenstand*" in terms of properties of things. He gives as an example the representation "blue." He distinguishes among: (i) the act of representation, which is itself not blue (ii) the *Gegenstand* "blue" which is the "what" of my representation (iii) the content of the *Gegenstand*; that which specifically distinguishes it from "red" or from "chair" and (iv) the "given" which in this case consists of vibrations by which we are made aware of colour.

Dooyeweerd does not speak of colours in terms of a *Gegenstand*. Nor would Dooyeweerd agree with this view of the given — as objects giving off vibrations that we then perceive as colour. That would involve us in the distinction between primary and secondary properties — a distinction that Dooyeweerd rejects.

17. I've does not deal with how Dooyeweerd in fact views the *Gegenstand* in theoretical thought. In "*Gegenstandsrelatie*" (1975), Dooyeweerd gives a sharp critique of the thesis by Danie Strauss, *Begrip en Idee*. He says that Strauss's rejection of the *Gegenstand*-relation involves "real antinomies." Strauss blurs the crucial distinction between pre-theoretical and theoretical experience, and negates the distinction between theoretical and pre-theoretical intuition.

18. I've intentionally misspells "anticipations as "antecipations" (pp, 85, fn 273, 89, 139, 175, 189, 192, 195). He does this because he thinks the meaning is conceptual and not temporal. He says that "'Ante' (Latin for 'before') signifies that a conceptual element clustered around the 'meaning nucleus' of a modality 'goes before' the modality to which it points." According to Vollenhoven, the aspects are ordered by increasing complexity and not by time (*Isagoogè* par. 55).

But Ive is just following Vollenhoven here, and not reading what Dooyeweerd actually says. Dooyeweerd obtained his idea of modal anticipation from Franz von Baader, who uses the word "antizipierent" (*Werke* 8, 11). We anticipate the future both within time and beyond time.

Daniël Chantepie de la Saussaye, who along with J.H. Gunning, Jr., introduced Franz von Baader's ideas to Dutch Reformed thought, does spell the term in this way, "antecipatie," but he uses it in Baader's sense of experiencing even now our eternal life. This is not at all Vollenhoven's or Ive's usage of the term to mean logical ordering of modalities.

19. Dooyeweerd emphasizes that the order of the aspects is a *temporal order of succession*. There is a "successive refraction of meaning" (*NCI*, 106). Each aspect represents a "moment" in our experience, and each such moment stands in an order of temporal succession, of *before and after*. It is Vollenhoven who denies that the order of the aspects is an order of cosmic time.

Our experience is given by cosmic time, in an order of before and after, retrocipation and anticipation. Ive seems to understand the order of cosmic time in a logical, not a temporal way. He says (p. 75) that

this 'cosmic order of time' is not so much time (i.e., actual time) as the ordering of the modalities combined with the duration of individuals.

This is not true, and something that was denied by Dooyeweerd. Ive's misinterpretation leads him to abandon the idea of cosmic time altogether (p. 124), thus removing another central idea from Dooyeweerd's philosophy.

20. Ive fails to understand the idea of analogies among the modalities. He says that they are relations among the modalities (p. 195). But the modalities all have a relation to each other because they all come from the same supratemporal root. In the religious, supratemporal center, all modalities coincide in a radical unity. Ive does not discuss this.

21. Ive cites Gerrit Glas (p. 156) who is afraid that Dooyeweerd might be interpreted in terms of center and periphery. But that is exactly how Dooyeweerd himself refers to his ideas! See his lecture "Centrum en Omtrek" or "Center and Periphery."

<https://jgfriesen.files.wordpress.com/2016/12/1964lecture.pdf>

22. The eschaton. Ive says (p. 141) "Dooyeweerd views the Christian hope, the eschaton, not as something anticipated in the future, but as the eternal destiny revealed in the present." This is certainly not true. Any reading of Dooyeweerd will show that he anticipated a future fulfillment, and he says that nothing will be lost from God's creation. And Dooyeweerd shares Baader's idea that our supratemporal religious center is also the creaturely center of the whole earthly,

temporal cosmos, and that through us, this temporal cosmos is also saved (NC III 783). That is of course a most anthropocentric view of the world, but it does give a reason for us to behave ethically towards the earth and its creatures. We participate in the redemption of the world.

23. Ive is too theological in his approach. Dooyeweerd criticized Vollenhoven for being too theological. Ive, in placing emphasis on the idea of *perichoresis* in the Trinity, is even more theological. Dooyeweerd refuses to speculate like this. Indeed, if Ive wants to speculate on intra-Trinitarian relations, he should look at Franz von Baader, who influenced Dooyeweerd in so many ways, and who defends this kind of speculative theology. Ive acknowledges that the relation between philosophy and theology is a “fraught issue” (p. 130) but he does not explore Dooyeweerd’s opposition to the primacy of theology, and Dooyeweerd’s view that theology always relies on philosophical presuppositions. Philosophy is not controlled by theology.

24. Even within his own theological framework, Ive does not distinguish between traditional Calvinism and neo-Calvinism. They are not the same. The term “neo-Calvinism” was first used against Kuyper in a derogatory way. I believe that this is correct; Kuyper was strongly influenced by non-Calvinistic sources. Even within Kuyper’s neo-Calvinism, Dooyeweerd himself distinguished between those parts of Kuyper that he accepted and those that he did not. The parts that were acceptable—for example, the heart-center of our being—derive from Kuyper’s reading of Franz von Baader. And although neo-Calvinists all refer to creation, fall and redemption, Dooyeweerd insisted that these are events that take place beyond time. Ive acknowledges (p. 148, fn 454) that for Dooyeweerd, redemption takes place in the supratemporal, but Ive only begins to sketch out some differences from traditional Calvinistic theology. For example, what is the importance of Scripture if as Dooyeweerd says, it is not to be interpreted as propositional truths? If redemption occurs beyond time, what is the importance of the crucifixion in temporal history? Nor does Ive discuss how Dooyeweerd’s idea of Christ as the New Root of creation derives from Baader. With respect to the fall, Ive says (p. 145, fn 490) that

...the Structure of creation is itself unaffected by the fall (i.e., no aspect of it is lost – the fall is not metaphysical but religious, i.e., not a change in the elements of the created order, only in their orientation).

But this assumes that the fall took place after the temporal order was created. It ignores the view that the temporal order is itself a response to the fall (that was Baader’s view). It also seems to be contrary to Dooyeweerd, who says that “we fell into time.”

25. In my view, the idea of Christ as the New Root (an idea that Dooyeweerd took from Baader) is evidence that, despite Dooyeweerd’s claims of the priority of philosophy over theology, he still retained some theological ideas at the

foundations of his philosophy. There are other retained theological ideas, too, like his Ground-motive of “creation, fall and redemption.” But the term “Christ” means “anointed” and is equivalent to “Messiah”—a very temporal idea of kingship. So is “Son of God,” which was applied to historical kings like David. It was for claiming to be king that Jesus was crucified by the Romans. Dooyeweerd does not emphasize the historical nature of Jesus, but only what some theologians today (e.g. Richard Rohr) refer to as the “cosmic Christ” [“cosmic” is actually not correct, since for Dooyeweerd, “cosmos” and “cosmic” always refers to temporal creation]. Dooyeweerd says

het Christelijk geloof bleek in zijn tijdelijke functie naar zijn individueelen inhoud zelve historisch gefundeerd in de historische verschijning van Christus, ofschoon het slechts uit Christus' eeuwige, boventijdelijke Volheid zijn uitgang kan nemen. [*WdW* III, 373]

[Christian belief in its temporal function according to its individual content appeared to be founded in the historical appearance of Christ, although it can only take its departure from his eternal, supratemporal fullness.]

I have distanced myself from these theological views in my own book *Christian Nondualism in Jewish Historical Context*. The quest for the meaning of the historical Jesus remains important. Jesus’s expectation [from *The Book of Enoch*?] that he would return as the Son of Man within history and within the lifetime of his disciples did not occur. Some theologians assert that God nevertheless exalted Jesus, and that we can participate in him. But this is a different theological framework than beginning with the idea of a “cosmic Christ” or of “Christ as the New Root.” But in my emphasis on the historical Jesus, I have expressly acknowledged that I am departing from Dooyeweerd’s (and Baader’s) philosophy.

26. Ive’s theology of *perichoresis* also does not emphasize the historical Jesus. Citing Vollenhoven, Ive says that Jesus “Jesus of Nazareth is a genuine human individual” (p 126). But Ive does not deal with any specific historical details of Jesus’s life. Ive is more interested in whether Jesus’s human nature was “enhypostatic” or “anhypostatic.” So Ive shares with Dooyeweerd this deficiency of emphasis on the historical Jesus. But there is no indication that Dooyeweerd shared the rest of Ive’s theology or that he was even interested in such speculation. This is not to say that theology is unimportant. But Ive, like most reformational philosophers, is far too quick to systematize. He is of course free to formulate his own theological and philosophical views, but he first needs to understand Dooyeweerd on his own terms. He then needs to expressly acknowledge where he disagrees with Dooyeweerd instead of trying to force Dooyeweerd into preconceived ideas.

28. Miscellaneous errors:

Ive (p. 74) refers to Wilhelm Max Wundt. But it was his son, Max Wundt, who gave the lecture “Ganzheit und Form in der Geschichte der Philosophie” (in Krüger 1932, 15).

Ive (p. 87) the reference should be “earlier and later.”

Ive says (p. 116) that the idea of knowledge by acquaintance derives from Bertrand Russell. The distinction between knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge about something was made at least as early as 1865 by the philosopher John Grote, who pointed to the distinction made in several languages between different types of knowing. In 1890, the psychologist William James adopted the distinction.

Conclusion

Ive tries too hard to minimize the differences between Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven. This leads him to skate over their differences, and to misstate what Dooyeweerd actually says. For example, Ive rejects Dooyeweerd’s central idea of a truly ontical supratemporal heart. In support, Ive refers to a non-existent quotation. Ive mistranslates another text, and ascribes it to the wrong source; the actual text and the actual source affirm the reality of the supratemporal heart, the very opposite of what Ive says. Ive selectively leaves out crucial parts of Dooyeweerd’s work on anthropology; the parts he leaves out affirm the supratemporal heart. Ive adopts the conclusions of D.F.M. Strauss regarding the 1964 Lecture and Discussion and does not acknowledge how Strauss has not stated the text correctly or interpreted it in context.

Ive has no other arguments to deny supratemporality in Dooyeweerd, except to point to many other reformational philosophers who deny the idea of the supratemporal heart. But of course the fact that they reject the idea does not affect what Dooyeweerd actually says. Those reformational philosophers, like Strauss, who state that the heart is fully temporal and that it only has a *direction* to what is above time fail to understand Dooyeweerd’s threefold division: cosmic time, the supratemporal and eternity. The heart’s direction to the eternal is from the supratemporal to the eternal. The supratemporal heart is the locus of all human acts. And it is where religious conversion occurs. For Dooyeweerd, the “religious” always refers to the supratemporal.

I do not believe it is possible to reconcile the philosophies of Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven. Dooyeweerd clearly states how crucial the idea of the supratemporal heart is to his whole philosophy. His other ideas like modalities and individuality structures cannot be understood apart from this idea. At the end of both the original Dutch *De Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee*, as well as the

English translation *A New Critique of Theoretical Thought*, Dooyeweerd indicates that this idea of the supratemporal heart is in fact the basis of his whole philosophy, and he links what he said at the beginning of the work to what he says at the end. At the end of Volume III of *De Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee* (p. 627-30), Dooyeweerd refers to man's place in the cosmos as really the basic theme [*grondthema*] of his philosophy, and he says that his whole theory of the law-spheres and of individuality structures is continually set against the background of this central theme. He says that the supratemporal religious center is the only possible point of departure for a Christian philosophy.

And at the end of *New Critique* (III, 784), Dooyeweerd says that anyone who does not start from the supratemporal religious centre, the heart, "remains rooted in immanence philosophy." The supratemporal heart is "the only possible starting-point of a Christian philosophy." Thus, although he does not mention him by name, Vollenhoven is an immanence philosopher because he denies the idea of the supratemporal heart.

And in the 1964 Discussion, Dooyeweerd says that some philosophers, like Prof. Stoker, cannot be viewed as adherents of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea because of the way that they speak about the religious center of our being (Discussion, p. 1, 27). The same would apply to Vollenhoven, and indeed from the Discussion it appears that Vollenhoven thought that Dooyeweerd was directing these comments to him. Vollenhoven tried to minimize his differences by speaking of them as mere "nuances," but that is not what Dooyeweerd said about Stoker. He said that the difference was one that came from out of a different center.

Dooyeweerd's last article "*Gegenstandsrelatie*" is very strong in opposing Strauss. It is so strong that in the published English translation, the editors toned down the original Dutch version, omitting statements such as the following, that Strauss's ideas

...belong to the most current presuppositions in modern epistemology, which as we have earlier seen, have darkened their insight into the correct relation of the naïve or pre-theoretical to the theoretical, scientific attitude of thought and experience.

See my website for the full translation. Despite Dooyeweerd's vehement opposition, Strauss has continued his misinterpretations. In this last article, Dooyeweerd again emphasized the importance of our transcending of time in the religious center of our being. Our religious center transcends time:

...although it is enclosed by cosmic time in its modal aspects and individuality structures, nevertheless transcends this time in its religious center (pp. 83-84).

Ive dismisses Dooyeweerd's central idea of the supratemporal selfhood on grounds that do not stand up to any serious textual analysis. And because he rejects the supratemporal selfhood, Ive also rejects the idea of cosmic time, misunderstanding it as a logical ordering of the aspects instead of a genuine temporal earlier and later.

Like most reformational philosophers, Ive believes that we start with a concrete thing and then analyze or abstract from it its properties. He does not appear to have read those parts of Dooyeweerd where Dooyeweerd explicitly rejects such an approach. For Dooyeweerd, the modes are modes of experience, not of being.

Ive does not understand individuality structures and *enkapsis*—he does not discuss how things are a nested whole of one or more individuality structures, each having a founding and leading function.

One cannot help but conclude that Ive has forced his reading of Dooyeweerd into his preconceived theological scheme, and into his preconceived interpretation of Dooyeweerd's philosophy. Ive's theological framework of *perichoresis* in the Trinity is foreign to Dooyeweerd, who avoids such speculation, and who insists that theology is based on philosophy, since theology is itself a theoretical science. Ive has tried to give the primacy to his theology and not to philosophy. And instead of accepting what Dooyeweerd actually says, Ive has too often followed erroneous interpretations by other reformational philosophers.

