

Problemen van de tijd in onze kring
[Problems about time in our circle]¹

by D.H.Th. Vollenhoven

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[p. 200]

I. Created reality in outline

Here I sharply distinguish between: (A) the relation of created reality to God, and (b) the relations within created reality.

A. The relation of created reality towards God.

I would like to summarize [this relation] in this short word: 'being-subject.' It has been said to me more than once, "You will never finish making the distinction between 'being-subject' and 'subject,' [where 'subject'] stands over against 'object.' But I don't see any way of avoiding this distinction. I would be happy if someone knows a better word for it. But we must take account of what I have indicated here, for otherwise the basis of our whole work will go to ruin. Even as I now state 'being-subject,' I would like to use the words 'authority' and 'respect.'² They are correlates. The respect [for the law] must stand on our side. For example: the fifth commandment,³ which has authority, presupposes respect, and everything connected with it. I will not discuss this point further at this time. It is enough just to remember it, although we will of course soon come back to it.

B. The relations within created reality.

Here we must make various distinctions: (1) the horizontal relations; and (2) the vertical relations (which concern more the structure of things)

1. First of all the horizontal relations within created reality. There I distinguish two relations: (a) the relation of subject to subject and (b) the relation of subject to object.

¹ Speech given by Vollenhoven on March 29, 1968 for the Amsterdam Circle of the Association for Calvinistic Philosophy (Vereniging voor Calvinistische Wijsbegeerte). A copy of the speech appears, together with some valuable notes, in A. Tol and K.A. Bril: *Vollenhoven als Wijsgeer* (Amsterdam: Buijten & Schipperheijn, 1992), 199-211. Tol and Bril were the ones who edited the speech. Most of the information set out between square brackets is that of Tol and Bril. I have included the original page numbers in square brackets in **bold** typeface.

² JGF: There is a play on words here between 'authority' [*gezag*] and 'respect' [*ontzag*].

³ JGF: See Exodus 20:12, "Honour thy father and thy mother..."

a. The relation of subject to subject is found first of all within the same realm. Physical things, for example, determine each other, thus mutually, not only in relation to speed, but also in relation to direction. Plants support or undermine each other; animals play with each other, fight with each other; humans talk, discuss with each other, and so on. But the subject-subject-relation is not just between things of the same realm: it is also found in the diversity of realms. If on a spring day we go outside, then we will be [p. 201] refreshed not only with, but also by means of all the rest of created reality. And, in the terrain of the psychical: a dog plays in my living room; that is nice and I play with him, and then I observe the dog not as an object, but at that moment as a comrade in my play. And he really is that for me.

b. But now the relation of subject to object. It also exists, and is also horizontal. But there is nevertheless also something of the vertical in this relation. For example: a plant processes the air into oxygen—the plant is here subject, and the air is object. Animals feed themselves with plants; humans shape physical things with tools, nurture plants, tame animals. Those are therefore three subject-object-relations in human life. Therefore you can see, there is something vertical in it, whereas the subject-subject relation is completely horizontal. The latter relation [subject-subject] therefore does not concern the structure [of things], although it certainly also has something to do with the structure.

2. The vertical relations

These are first of all the relations between the modalities or functions; beginning first in the non-human creatures. The modalities are of great importance. But we must also not overestimate them. They are not things; they exist exclusively as modal functions of things.⁴ And with respect to the structure [of things]: the structure is not itself modal. But

⁴ JGF: Vollenhoven disagrees here with Dooyeweerd. Dooyeweerd distinguishes between aspects (modes) and functions. See Dooyeweerd's last article, "De Kentheoretische Gegenstandsrelatie en de Logische Subject-Objectrelatie," *Philosophia Reformata* (1975) 83-101. In that article, Dooyeweerd also disagrees with Vollenhoven's view that the modal structures have only a methodological priority. Dooyeweerd emphasizes that the modal structures are prior to the individuality structures, which need to be individualized. The modal structures *lie at the foundation* of the individuality-structures, *and not the other way around*. For without the foundation of modal structures with no individuality, we would not be able to speak of a typical ordering and gradual individuation of the functions in these modal aspects of concrete entities in their individuality structures. Therefore it seems to me that Strauss's remark is incorrect, when he says in the note on page 118 of his thesis, that it is *only in a methodological sense* that an analysis of the

as long as we remain outside of human life, we must however say that the structures have much to do with the modalities, for in the final analysis the structure is ruled by the order of [the] functions, and especially the unity [of the structure] concentrates itself as it were in the leading or destination function.

For humans these distinctions do not suffice. For humans we must speak of the modal and the non-modal, or if one wishes, of the functional and the non-functional. And then we call the non-functional “the heart” or “the soul.” But then we come directly to a difficult point concerning which there is disagreement in our group. If we ask, “Where is the heart located?” Then we hear the answers, “Within the mantle of functions [functiemantel],” or “Above the functions.” And in this second answer I see a danger of spiritualism. Therefore I have myself chosen for “that which is within,” in the sense of “pre-functional.”⁵

One could also ask here whether the theme in the Scriptures about the image of God is not decisive [for this issue].⁶ I believe that it is, but then we must first interpret it correctly. Nowhere do we find that the soul or the heart is the image of God in humans.

modal structures precedes an explicit analysis of typical structures of totality of naïve experience.

There is a difference between modal structures and individuality structures. But this does not mean that Dooyeweerd has made modes into independent things. He says in this same article that modal structures have no individuality, but they are prior to the individuality structures.

⁵ JGF: Dooyeweerd specifically denies that we have experience of a temporal pre-functionality. See the long footnote at NC I, 30-32, apparently written in response to Vollenhoven’s criticisms in the “Divergentierapport.”

⁶ JGF: In contrast to Vollenhoven, Dooyeweerd speaks of man as the image of God. Our central selfhood, restored in Christ, is that image. This is a key idea for Dooyeweerd. Just as God expresses His image in our selfhood, so our selfhood expresses itself in the coherence of temporal functions (NC I, 4).

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

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

For Vollenhoven, humans are not the image, but they are to mirror or obey God’s law. That seems to me to be a much more forced construction.

For that matter, Scripture as a whole gives no theory about “the image of God.” On the contrary, it knows [p. 201] the expression, “*to be* the image of God.”⁷

In order to concisely indicate the main matter of discussion (I must naturally limit myself a lot), I would like to put it this way: we are either the [image of God], or we are not. But we must then directly add the following: if we are God’s image, then we are it in a greater or lesser degree. In the Scriptures, to be the image of God is a characteristic of human life that we can lack if we do not live in accordance with God’s commandments. It [the image] is not something divine in humans, or half-divine, and also not [merely] a part of man. Rather it concerns being or not being the image of God, or we could also say, to *display* the image of God. To be similar to God, not in the sense that we yet again want to be something next to God, but (I have sometimes formulated it this way): God maintains His law, as Giver of the law, and whoever displays the image of God, holds himself to the law, as creature, insofar as he displays the image of God.⁸

II. The difficulties in our group

Up to now I have discussed the main matters. I now come to the difficulties in our circle with relation to time.

A. [My own difficulties]

It seemed best to me to take a historical order of events, beginning with my own difficulties. That is proper, since I share the blame for the difficulties that are here. My dissertation appeared in 1918. It concerned the philosophy of mathematics from a theistic standpoint, and therefore was about number and space. I myself was then still too dependent on Henri Poincaré, at the time an influential French philosopher, who was an ennoëtist. He held to Kant’s conception, but in contrast to Kant, he did not belong to idealism—certainly not to the old idealism, but also not to the new. He had an irrationalistic inclination with a moderated pragmatism. I can let Poincaré be, at least with respect to the question of where he precisely stood, for what concerns me here is above all the question of number and of space.

Ennoëtism looks like this: [p. 203]

contemplative *nous*

--self-moving *psyche* (time, number, astronomy)

--*soma*, which is moved (space)

⁷ JGF: Gen. 1:26 and Gen. 9:6, 1 Cor. 11:7 and Col. 1:15 seem to give a very different interpretation than that given by Vollenhoven.

⁸ JGF: There is some repetition in this sentence. But Vollenhoven’s idea of the image of God as mirroring the law seems to be rejected in his article “De Problemen Rondom de Tijd.” He says there that the idea of image of God as mirroring the law is “the old reformational understanding: how God thinks about you. This is wrong.”

Time concerns movement; number is then considered to be its correlate. Matter is that which is moved, it is considered to be primarily a correlate with space. In this way, number comes above space, and it is correlated with the psychical, with the world-soul. That is why, according to Poincaré, the succession of numbers is connected with—or founded—in the succession of time.

We can therefore thank (or blame) Poincaré for this view, insofar as it is current in our own group. It derives from [my view of] time in my dissertation.

In 1926, Dooyeweerd worked out his teaching about the functions, and he there set out—I believe correctly—a different mutual relation of number and space> In fact, what he says is the reverse [of Poincaré]: number is the lower and space is the higher. I already said, “correctly.” That appears from the relation of anticipations and retrocipations: the arithmetical anticipates the spatial in the case of irrational numbers. And space (in the meaning of the geometrical) retrocipates to the arithmetical with its multiplicity of dimensions. But—and there came the greatest difficulty—in spite of the correct reversal of the succession order, we originally held to the idea that the succession of numbers presupposed the succession of time. In the course of time, I came to reject that idea. A colleague, [C.C.] Jonker, then professor in physics at the Free University, showed that one can speak of a succession of numbers, but that this succession is an order of magnitude and not of time.⁹ And with that this difficulty was resolved for me.

B. Dooyeweerd’s difficulties

Dooyeweerd felt—I hope that I correctly set forth his standpoint—no impasse in the question of the succession of numbers, in connection with the succession of time. And I can certainly understand that, for it was connected with his ontology. Just like me, he distinguished between functions and the soul or the heart, but at the same time he saw this distinction as an opposition,¹⁰ namely that between the temporal and the supratemporal. From that standpoint, he felt no impasse from which he needed to be saved and for which a solution must be found. [p. 204] He thought that the functions must always be understood as temporal, and that held also for the arithmetical function, which is always the first.

The matter became somewhat more complicated in that he furthermore saw the object-function founded in retrocipation.¹¹ In my opinion, there is always a danger in this view that the law-spheres could become too independent.

⁹ JGF: But when we speak of magnitude [*grootte*], are we not anticipating the spatial? Does Vollenhoven’s view not suppose that numbers are things instead of a modality?

¹⁰ JGF: That does not seem correct to me. Dooyeweerd saw it as reciprocity. The central heart requires embodiment in the temporal peripheral aspects. This reciprocal relationship is what Dooyeweerd refers to as the ‘enstasis’ that is disrupted by the theoretical ‘disstasis.’

¹¹ JGF: Vollenhoven deals with this in more detail in “Problemen Rondom de tijd.”

I have no objection against the “sovereignty in its own sphere,” although it is a term borrowed from Kuyper, which may perhaps be replaced with a better term. But we can let this point rest; it is purely terminological.¹²

What concerns me is that the spheres become very independent whenever the mutual relation of lower and higher spheres is fashioned by using the terms ‘subject’ and ‘object.’ Or rather, it doesn’t stand so strongly in Dooyeweerd, and yet, [he says that] retrocipation founds the objects. And that this creates difficulties which are not included in my previous objection appeared by Dooyeweerd’s appreciation of Niels Bohr’s theory of complementarity. This point does not concern the question of the arithmetical and the spatial, but of the mechanical and the energetic [aspects]. The distinction is in itself very correct: it is the relation of movement and force. In mechanics the movements lie on the same level; the one movement increasing in speed or slowing down with respect to the other. For force [in the energetic aspect], something else arises: it is not just a question of speeding up or slowing down, but there is now a change of direction. I also have no objection against the succession order of the mechanical as the lower and the energetic as the higher.

Really, we must distinguish properly between the special sciences and *techné* [technique]. The special sciences concern a particular function, whereas *techné* concerns the connections of things. (I am now at least referring to chemistry.) Now it can sometimes also be necessary in the special sciences that one observes things as objects, and even handles them. On the other hand, we must continue to maintain the boundaries between the special sciences and *techné*: *techné* concerns objects.

Bohr was a biochemist, and therefore always technically occupied. Therefore it would have been quite understandable if he had come to think about the relation of subject and object; but that was not the case. A physicist can determine both the impulse of force of a particle as well as the place of this particle; for both determinations, a specific method of measurement must be worked out. But whenever one combines those methods, then there remains a remainder of imprecision. That is the true state of affairs. Bohr did not adequately distinguish biochemistry as *techné* [p. 205] from physics. I ascribe Dooyeweerd’s agreement with him to the fact that he himself inclined a little in this direction, in that he founded object-functions in retrocipations.

A second complication came later. Dooyeweerd likewise regarded the order of the functions as [itself] an order of time. It is impossible for me to share this view. I do believe that we can speak of an order of time in relation to the order of the realms: the flora [realm of plants] presupposes the realm of physical things, and the animal world presupposes the flora. I have no objection whatsoever when one speaks of an order of time in that regard. I also do not object to referring to humanity as a realm; it presupposes all three lower realms. But whenever one also speaks of a temporal order in relation to the order of the functions, I believe that this is not good for the clarity of the distinction

¹² JGF: Vollenhoven’s objection to the term ‘sovereignty in its own sphere,’ or ‘sphere-sovereignty,’ is surprising.

between the relation of higher and lower in the case of functions, and the distinction [of higher and lower] in the case of realms.

C. My own background

Why did I not get stuck in the difficulties just referred to? (Even for me the terminology was initially not so clear.) I have often asked myself this question, and then I have thought back on my course of development.

I came from a Kuyperian family. Fortunately not without a critical attitude: my father was completely free of the fanaticism with Bismarck and Germany, which Kuyper certainly promoted. As a boy I read *De Heraut* from an early age. But I was never fascinated very much by Kuyper's mediations. In 1909, there appeared in *de Heraut* certain articles under the title "Pro Rege." And later, when we came into conflict with a certain group of Kuyperians, we sometimes pointed to the fact that we must sharply distinguish the early Kuyper (where he strongly believed in semi-mysticism), and the later Kuyper, where he really preached a much more active Christendom. During that time I also learned what social engagement was, and that ecclesiastical evangelization was also necessary.

From about 1914-18 I worked on my dissertation. In the discussion of my subject, I repeatedly came into contact with thinkers where nothing of the late Aristotle could be found; nothing of semi-mysticism, but also nothing of monarchianism, not even of consequent or non-consequent empiricism. In writers such as Bertrand Russell, and so on, one really does not have to seek any late Aristotle; that is certainly generally known.

I could then not use the terms of "early" and "late Aristotle"; the distinction was also not found in the literature. It dates from a later time.¹³ [p. 206] And yet I felt something like it in Kuyper's course of development, and in the subject of my dissertation, I frequently came again in that direction. That is not to say that I then was already speaking of a 'pre-functional heart' and so on, but I was lucky.

Here is an example. From 1914 to 1918 I worked not only on my dissertation, but I was also a candidate for ordination in the Gereformeerde Churches. When I think back on those times, 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

¹³ JGF: A recent book by Prof. A.P. Bos, *De Ziel en haar voertuig: Aristoteles' psychologie geherinterpreteerd en de eenheid van zijn oeuvre gedemonstreerd* (Damon, 1999), calls into question this whole distinction of early/late Aristotle. Vollenhoven's view of the origins of what he calls "semi-mysticism" may therefore need to be re-examined.

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.”¹⁴

The NBG translation says,

For we must certainly die, and become like water, spilled out on the earth, which cannot be gathered up again. God does not however take life away, but seeks ways that a banished one does not remain disowned by him.

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 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.

I was also fascinated by such things during the time of my first congregation (1918-1921). For example, I once read a review with a quotation from Augustine: “The cry of the heart, understood by Your ear”–. [p. 207] And in this way it seemed to me that the Bible came closer to the congregation.

In Oost-Kapelle I met Mr. Janse (as he was always referred to by us). He came from Oost-Kapelle, and was the head teacher in Biggekerke—a distance of not more than about 12 kilometers from Oost-Kapelle, but with the poor [transport] connections at that time, we did not see each other every day. Mr. Janse wrote me a letter after I had been in Oost-Kapelle about three months, with all kinds of questions about my dissertation. It appeared that this man, employed in a very little village school, had worked through my dissertation. I invited him one day to come visit me. In Oost-Kapelle he really helped me with his stimulating questions.

He also definitely helped me after I moved to The Hague, for he himself had come somewhat further in his anthropology. I even obtained the courage in The Hague to remark from the chancel that the term ‘immortal soul’ definitely did not work. In Oost-Kapelle I had not yet reached that point. I am very certain that Mr. Janse contributed to my views on this.

¹⁴ JGF: KJV has as second part of this verse, “...neither doth God respect any person; yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him.” (KJV). I have tried to translate into English the Dutch translations of the Bible quoted by Vollenhoven.

In 1926, Dooyeweerd and I went [to teach] at the Free University. Between 1926 and 1929, Dooyeweerd had worked out his views about the historical function, for in '29 we debated together about it in Leeuwarden. He spoke at that time before at an annual meeting of the alumni organization of the Free University, of which I was chairman. Dooyeweerd was a speaker. And I felt already then, "This is not my standpoint; history cannot be a function."¹⁵

That's why I have not become stuck in these difficulties; I have my own course of development to thank for that.

III. My positive view tested against the objection of "historicism"

In order—as much as possible—to exclude all misunderstanding, I certainly do not say that the functions belong outside of time—time is also in the functions.¹⁶ But we must hold fast to the view that the functions, although we systematically examine them first [before examining things], are yet not primary, and certainly not independent (they are functions of things).¹⁷

A. [Positive view of history]

As far as history is concerned, I would direct our attention to three characteristics:

1. Everywhere there is genesis, becoming. This already begins in the realm of physical things. Think only of the splitting of the elements. I hardly need to show this in the realms of plants, animals and humans: for them there is reproduction. And that is also the case for humans, but connected [p. 208] in love, and if the love bears fruit in the birth of children, also in the education of humans. Marriage is certainly not without sex, but love in marriage is not only sex. Furthermore, sex can be "enjoyed" outside of marriage; it is therefore not only connected with marriage. But it should be connected to it. Only in marriage, in a responsive love, that also feels responsible for the consequences of sexual

¹⁵ JGF: Vollenhoven's criticism here seems to confuse acts with modes. For Dooyeweerd, the historical *aspect* is the aspect of formative power. It must be sharply distinguished from *acts*, which come from out of our supratemporal center, the central sphere of occurrence:

We can even call it the central sphere of *occurrence*, for *that which occurs* cannot be distinguished too sharply from the *historical aspect* of cosmic time, which is only one of its temporal *modalities of meaning* [NC I, 32].

¹⁶ JGF: Vollenhoven seems to take a contrary viewpoint in the "Divergentierapport," at least with respect to the arithmetical and spatial functions. He there says (inconsistently) that the idea of "succession" it "can be understood as a non-temporal order of small and large."

¹⁷ JGF: Dooyeweerd there says that the aspects are primary, and he specifically rejects the view that this primacy is to be viewed in only a methodological way. See footnote 4.

intercourse, and also heartily works together in the education of children—only there has sex found its correct place.

2. The second characteristic in history is the mutual relation of the realms. I speak of genesis everywhere, but of history only in relation to humans. We have seen that the plants presuppose the physical, and the animal realm presupposes the realm of plants. Humans presuppose all the lower realms. And we also can speak here of shaping [*bewerking*]. It is not only a question of the succeeding generations and of education, but also, if one will, of the history of civilization.

3. And you still have not yet seen what history is, if you do not see the third characteristic, which is the history of the relation of humans towards God.

There is always a whole history of religion. And here I do not intend to refer to 'religions' in general, which you can study, but a history of religion limited to the Bible. There was a status of man before the fall into sin, where he lived in God's favour. There was and is a status of man after the fall into sin, in which he must deal with God's wrath and God's grace. These two [wrath and grace] do not in themselves stand in 'favour.' Grace implies favour, but 'wrath' and 'grace' have a very other sound than 'favour.'¹⁸ The second phase [wrath and grace] presupposes the first. Moreover, we must also distinguish the situations before and after the revelation of the love of God in Christ—in other words, the time of the Old and that of the New Testament. And then in the New Testament, we must also distinguish the revelation of God's love in Christ before and after the pouring out of the Holy Spirit. The Bible finally ends with a splendid awaiting of the future: neither life, nor death, nor any other thing, can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord—always combined with the hope of the renewal of heaven and earth. A grounded hope, which rests on the promises of God.

The Scriptures know, and that is also a characteristic that plays out in history, of the battle between God and Satan, as well as of the echo that this battle finds within human lives—whether this battle is [p. 209] acknowledged or not—and through which it finally also makes humans stand over against each other.

Summary. In this way you can well understand, that I can summarize everything by saying this: history is definitely not a function, but much more. (i) In history we encounter characteristics that implicitly belong to it [such as] the development of the human race, the generations one after each other, and also the subject-object characteristic of techné and its analogies in the higher functions. (ii) And although the sciences do not disappear into the subject-object relation, yet they are always held in relation to it, since no science is possible without perception. And in perception, the

¹⁸ JGF: This is contrary to Dooyeweerd, who says that grace is also prior to the fall, and that we are not to separate it out from creation. Dooyeweerd emphasizes that the creation order is also a matter of salvation, and it is not to be separated from Christ. Common grace is common because rooted in the Saviour. It is not given for the particular fallen man, but for humanity in Christ. The cosmic law is itself related to our sinfulness [here is another ground of difference with Vollenhoven]. Dooyeweerd says that without the law there is no sin; but the same law makes the existence of creation possible (*Vernieuwing en Bezinning* 36-38).

subject-object relation plays a role. (iii) And third, history is connected with the revelation of God.

B. Historicism?

The rest of the question: is this not historicism?

I can understand this objection verbally. *If* one says that the historical is a function, then of course whoever does not see history as a function is occupied in a powerful overestimation of a function, and you could then call that historicism. But [Prof. Dr. J.P.A.] Mekkes has made a distinction between ‘historicism’ in this sense and the sense in which everyone usually understands it. The latter historicism is correct insofar as it finds time in all relations. That sounds historicistic, but it is not so in the least. For historicism is wrong when it becomes an ‘ism,’ and tries to deduce what is presupposed, taken up and entered into in history.¹⁹

–‘What is presupposed’ means, humanity in its relation towards God, whether or not in obedience to God, also in the reproduction and the development of the sexes.

–‘Taken up’ means, taking account of the lower realms, the shaping by techné, and science.

–‘Entered into’ means, the revelation of God in the history for and of Israel, and that of Christ in the flesh.

If I can now mention just one offshoot of historicism, that would be evolutionism. How did it come into the world? It is not yet so old. In antiquity there were theories that eagerly spoke about life—for example, the phytological interaction theory which spoke about “growth” in everything—but that is nothing other than a summarizing concept, naturally connected with the ontology. And although a unity was perceived there, there was certainly no evolutionary line [p. 210] within it. Evolutionism also doesn’t begin in the Enlightenment. That is also too early. I well remember seeing a picture dating from that time; it showed a man with an ape that he had taught to walk with an umbrella. It therefore concerned training. What lay behind this kind of dressing-up, that we still come across in a circus today? Actually it is a subject-subject relation of father to child, carried over to the subject-object-relation of owner to animal. This is really not yet the same as evolutionism. Evolutionism only comes from the time of positivism. There you see, at least in some kinds of positivism—not in Comte, but in parallelism and some types of interactionism—the relation of positivism and evolutionism. Here it concerns not only the pedagogical truth that a man can teach an ape to walk like a man, but the belief that “Nature” could produce men from apes. This brings with it normlessness, not only in the relation of man and woman, but also in other relations. I see evolutionism as a terrible danger.

We must also leave room for the entry of God into history. The intention here is certainly not to argue for a “Christian historicism” in the sense of “history has now turned out this way, and now nothing more can be changed, and so on.” Certainly not. But even less is it

¹⁹ JGF: Is not an ‘-ism’ an absolutization of an aspect? I suspect that that would be Dooyeweerd’s response.

the intention to argue for the idea that a norm could be over there and history over here, and that norms are purely human work. That would simply amount to the denial of God's entrance into history. As Christians we must not talk this way.

Therefore I must warn against the danger of dualism, for which I do not feel any attraction, and in which I see a great danger—Gereformeerde life has suffered under it. For some pietists it had a monarchian trait; for others a strong dualistic semi-mystical trait. I am very happy that all of this has received a great setback. But above all we must watch out that we do not swing over to monism: that would again amount to being ruled by reaction, and that will not benefit anyone. For we certainly do not need to maintain a theology, or rather a belief, with the help of dualism; on the other hand we must see clearly that it certainly is not to be maintained by monism alone. We must continue to observe a duality between God and humans. And that is something very different than dualism; only by means of that can human life be saved.

Summary

1. Succession in the arithmetical is a succession in accordance with (arithmetical) size and not in accordance with time.
2. We can clearly distinguish retrocipations and object functions. A retrocipation [**p. 211**] implies the presence of at least one lower function. An object function implies the presence of at least one lower realm. Therefore the three highest [subject] functions of physical things certainly possess retrocipations, but [there are on these modal levels] no [correlative] object functions [,] and object functions can have retrocipations.
3. For reasons of clarity, we should name the function between the logical and the linguistic not the historical, but rather the form-giving function. The economic and the aesthetic aspects, and others, retrocipate to this form-giving.
4. The order of the functions, in contrast to the order of the realms, is not an order of time.
5. In anthropology, the relation of the functions to the soul must not be classified dualistically, as a relation of the temporal to the supratemporal. The heart, the pre-functional, determines the religious direction of man in his functional existence.
6. History, which includes the genesis in the realm of physical things as well as the procreation and forming of kinds in flora, fauna and humanity, also concerns the revelation from the side of God in history and in man's religion [, the latter] being the answer of his heart and life to this revelation.