



The triunity of life: on the unity of the Vollenhovian project

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To the anonymous and the solopists:

Loneliness only occurs in connections too manifold to bear

“how can I arrive at a merciful God?”



My deep gratitude to Karen. Disconnection can often connect.
My gratitude to Bob Sweetman, the most gracious mentor, a man of God.
My gratitude to John Kok for translating a great deal of Vollenhoven's works into english.

⊕ a supplication

So then, as we direct our gaze at the creator by understanding the things that are made (Rom. 1:20) we should understand him as a triad, whose traces appear in creation in a way that is fitting
- St. Augustine: The Trinity, Book VI:2:12

The thoughtful person places the doctrine of the Trinity in the very center of the full orb of life of nature and mankind...the mind of the Christian is not satisfied until every form of existence has been referred to the triune God

- Bavinck: The Doctrine of God, 329

The view you have of the Trinity dominates your conception of the world, as does your understanding of redemption on your outlook of life

- Vollenhovenⁱ

Here, in all of its provisionality, is an essay on Vollenhoven, written by one who is not a Vollenhovian. At least not yet.

I am not, I confess, a 'Vollenhovian'. From the very start, I have read very little of the secondary statements produced by the community that, in one way or another, critically apprehend Vollenhoven once primarily stated. I am a stranger to Vollenhoven, and the Vollenhovians. And, as Vollenhoven has become less strange to me, the results of Vollenhovians have only become stranger. It is as if I have strayed from a community that I have never belonged to; estranged. Is this because I have largely read Vollenhoven free of Vollenhovians?

Yet, I am here, at the threshold of a welcome.

It is, in my experience, always best to welcome a stranger as a stranger – not as one's neighbour. A stranger comes forth to be welcomed yet brings something strange. This essay shall no doubt be strange, I am a neighbour to only a few Vollenhovians, and they might be of rebel spirit – as the orthodox often are. Lacking many of the protocols cultivated by the community of 'Vollenhovians', this essay can claim to be Vollenhovian yet will appear strange to many Vollenhovians. It lacks much that has been critically apprehended by Vollenhovians, critically transferred from one Vollenhovian to the next, and critically affirmed by the Vollenhovians throughout the last century. No, I am not a Vollenhovian, not yet anyways.

There is a great advantage and disadvantage to being a stranger. The stranger evinces a different structure: a body burdened by different acculturations and

ⁱ From an early (1914) paper of Vollenhoven's on Abelard, see Kok (Using and Abusing Scripture, Draft – p.114).

adaptations. And, the stranger comes forth with a strange normativity: a normativity that surveys the cosmos through what is surely a strange culture. The stranger comes forth as one sick with strange diseases and yet flourishing with a strange health. The stranger comes as one whose body and soul is held up in a different spirit, a different genesis, a strange cultivation. The stranger reads with different eyes.

Yet, what we share as strangers is the Vollenhovian text, strange in itself. This, unfortunately, does not make us neighbours – far from it, I fear. For, it is what is affirmed or disaffirmed in our secondary statements about this primary text that shall bind us together or further estrange us. And so we arrive at that strangest command of all: that even despite our possible differences we must nonetheless love the stranger who may never be our neighbour.

What we certainly share is a primary text that is, apart from the community of commentary, almost impenetrable. Vollenhoven is reputedly obtuse despite his commitment to rhetorical exactitude and often difficult to follow as one moves from one clause to the next. One must instantly ask how one approaches and comments on such a text. Indeed, a culture of commentary forms as an answer to this question. Perhaps this shall be the source of all that might be strange between us.

As the oral tradition tells it, Vollenhoven self-consciously refused to express more than one idea per *sentence*. Vollenhoven's refusal implies that each concentrated sentence of the Vollenhovian corpus is a source worthy of thorough and painstaking contemplation. The logical entailments of each sentence are infinitely manifold, and, while some entailments are certainly present as the argument moves from antecedent to consequent, the pluriformity of these entailments are silent yet bursting forth within the text – absolutely expectant with possibility.

How to approach the Vollenhovian text? This is my method: each chapter that follows is a sort of commentary on a number of Vollenhoven's sentences, each of which extends a cosmos of manifold discernments. Thus, this is a commentary that explores only some of the multiple logical entailments that each Vollenhovian sentence holds (and only according to the intent of this essay). And, this is an exploration performed in *my* words¹, an unapologetic eisegetical reading that nonetheless stays faithful to the text only by its careful exegesis. That is to say, the entailments present within each Vollenhovian sentence are explored through the exploration of these entailments elaborated elsewhere in Vollenhoven's own work – that is, in the rest of his sentences.² Where this could not occur I sought out Vollenhoven's commentators, and when this did

not work I sought out his interlocutors – the culture that he shared with others. This is, in other words, an exegetical exercise as old as Augustine.

But above all, there is a logic to my method. This, of course, should be of no surprise, except that I mean this in a far stricter sense. If it is the logical entailments of each sentence that is sought, then it is always best to ask how analytic thinking *functions* for Vollenhoven, hence his logic. After all, if we know Vollenhoven's *logical* commitments then the content of his works can be read as (at least where he could help it) consistent with *this* logical method and not *that* opposing logical method. This is above all the method by which I open the Vollenhovian text and avoid the sloppy mistakes that are easily made in today's largely unseen logical morass.

There are, as the early Vollenhoven already knew (and many of us still do not know), many logics. Now, logic is different from the analytic structure of a subject, for the analytic structure of a subject is that which logic continually explores and cultivates, either rightly or wrongly.³ Vollenhoven, who spent a great deal of his life developing a Christian logic⁴, should be read as a man who was *exceptionally* self-conscious about his logical method – in no way should this be underestimated. After all, if there *is* a Christian logic, then it follows that one ought to be vigilant against the subtle trappings of all non-Christian logics. Anguish is too easily caused by the often unappraised logic through which one circumscribes and sifts out the world. After all, if the cosmos is arranged according to a certain logical method, then it is important that this arrangement logically arranges the cosmos in a way that brings about the duration of flourishing and not anguish.

Now, I remain convinced that Vollenhoven was committed to a logic of relations and not a logic of substance. This shall be explained in greater detail further on. Put quickly, the logic of relations holds that each relatum relates to another relatum in its own *irreducible* relation, and vice versa. Thus, there is never a case of two relata, each with the exact same relation. But, given this absolute irreducibility, how can it even be said that these relata relate? The answer, I will argue, is that there must be some other relatum that relates each relatum together if there is to be a relationship between relata at all. Thus, between each relatum relating, there must be a third, a relatum that relates the relations of each relatum into a relationship. This is, in short, Vollenhoven's logic of relations.

Thus, where difficulty occurs in the Vollenhovian text, I asked, how does *this* relate to *that* in the text, and what is their *relationship*, the thirdness that relates them


together? The more I operated under this logic the more I became convinced of this uncanny and rather omnipresent thirdness: wherever irreducible relations were found among relata there was always a third relatum that related the relations of these relatum into a relationship. Now, if this isn't strange enough, I shall also argue that this commitment to logic is not itself a logical commitment *per se*. Instead, it is an essential part of a far larger commitment, a commitment that precedes logic and that can only be described as the confessional testimony (or circumspection) that underlies all of Vollenhoven's sifting out of the cosmos. We will get there soon enough.

Finally, like all exegetical sleuths, I must admit some eisegetical license, some flourish. Logical entailments are always, by nature, open – even unto the strange. Each overcrowded sentence of Vollenhoven's is packed with logical entailments that even Vollenhoven could not have discerned. But, to discern these things is simply to follow the logical entailments that are nonetheless honest to the circumspective trajectory of Vollenhoven's own thought. Thus, it is perfectly Vollenhovian to follow Vollenhoven's own logical entailments to discernments that, though they lay open within the purview of his own concepts, may have been strange to Vollenhoven (and especially to Vollenhovians!). We are all strangers to Vollenhoven yet welcome as neighbours in his text.

So, while it may be Vollenhovian (but not Vollenhoven) to follow through with these discernments, this may be best accomplished by welcoming some help along the way from some rather non-Vollenhovian guests. In this essay we are all strangers at the table – such is the case when a stranger has prepared the feast. In this text we find a few strange guests – hardly Vollenhovian guests at that. After all, what lies potentially discernable for Vollenhoven others may have already discerned in great detail. And, while the overall circumspection that conceived each discernable thing may be contestable from one Vollenhoven to another, it can certainly be argued that as far as the detail discerned is concerned, what is given does not feel all that strange. That is, barring conceptual circumscriptive differences, it may be the exact same matter of detail that Vollenhoven may have discerned himself. So, I am sorry if Vollenhoven sounds sometimes like a feminist, I assure you he is not (I am not either⁵), but his investigations into sexual difference is incredibly important if we want to understand the life-line of sin and the flourishing of humans (=male and female).

In any case, the Vollenhovian text is open, merely provisional, leading the reader beyond the text to the text of which it is a commentary (Scripture) and to new depths of

flourishing or correction. And, if we are to take this leading seriously, who knows where this shall lead? Perhaps we shall all be strangers to Vollenhoven in the end – yet welcome as neighbours, Vollenhovians the lot of us and Christians even more.

 provisionalities: introduction

In the Vollenhovian spirit, it must be stated that all that follows is merely provisional. This, after all, is the truest one can remain to Vollenhoven for whom all results are fundamentally open, never closed, "a philosopher can never say: 'I am ready, look here, a closed system'" (Isagooge §15).ⁱⁱ Thus, what lies before the reader remains entirely open to question – which is to say, this essay in question remains itself answerable in each of its answers – it remains accountable. As shall be shown, this is the very nature of everything apprehendable: that each result only lead to further results; that results – properly led and in the right spirit – will flow without end, the Spirit willing. Each answer, held up in question, leads to an endless depth of questions, and hence, an endless depth of answers. This is the very nature of the answer – what we (following Vollenhoven) call the positivized⁶ – that its arrangement is always open to endless expectation and inspiration – again, the Spirit willing.

Thus, what is here offered is in fact offered, and offered only for the sake of being held up in question – a neighbourly thing to do. The question, as I shall argue, is the very method of the conceptual approach and thus the very process of reading, and, as if to force its proof, this claim can itself be held in question. What is here offered, then, is a conceptual re-collection of Vollenhoven's own writings. Given that no answer can claim any final closure, this reconception allows for the further conceptual re-apprehension and re-arrangement of these texts as they move from generation to generation – always opening, always welcoming. This essay is the answer to a question that arose out of questioning an answer already given (the Vollenhovian text), an answer that first began as Vollenhoven's own question, and surely this answer – like Vollenhoven's own – too shall be questioned. We are each answerable before each other. We each begin with an answerable question.

So, reading thetically and not just critically – *hypo-thetically?* (for is the hypothesis not the question that precedes all statements?) – we approach Vollenhoven's

writing with a hypothetical question loaded with conceptual curiosity: 'what if?'. That is: what if we were to read Vollenhoven that way, or thus? What if this is true and what if the other is not so? We approach all answers with a concept that is always a question – always a loaded question, always answerable.

Consequently, you have already held me up in question. And, as though a question were already anticipated, it is best to preface this essay with confession, a commentary to this Vollenhovian commentary. Answerability always begins with confession. If I am to be questioned, it is best to lay bare the question that prefaced this entire essay, that gave rise to this entire answer held in question, especially since this result concerns what I consider Vollenhoven's deepest confession. It is best to lay bare the spirit of each inspiration. We turn again to the logic of relations, or perhaps better, the confessional depth behind Vollenhoven's logic.

Was it that I was questioning Augustine's The Trinity at the same time I was questioning Vollenhoven that led to my own hypothetical question? That is a question left for the reader, your invitation. Is this Vollenhoven presented perhaps too Augustinian? I am not sure. After all, not all questions can be answered, despite their answerability.

Yet, it was a revelatory and entirely hypothetical moment of discernment: while reading Vollenhoven's The Unity of Life, something suddenly jumped out, and I found myself hypothesizing a very loaded and conceptually curious question. For it is in this article that Vollenhoven lays out, explicitly, an understanding of reality as triune, an understanding that, I shall argue, lies confessionally implicit throughout his whole thought. This would happily place Vollenhoven as one more philosopher in the long lifeline of inherited Christian philosophy (and theology). In fact, it makes Vollenhoven very Augustinian, which I doubt very much he would object to. Perhaps it is wise to read Augustine alongside Vollenhoven. But again, this is a question left for the reader.

Now, Augustine spends books I through IV of The Trinity explaining how Scripture understands the relations of Father, Son and Spirit to the cosmos. Given that we, the cosmos, can indeed relate to this Triune God in the knowledge of Scripture, Augustine is also faced with the reality that God is not only a Triunity in the relation to His cosmos, but a Triunity in and of Himself. That is, God does not only *inter-relate* with

ii "Vandaar dat zulk een wijsgeer nooit kan zeggen: 'ik ben gereed, zie hier een gesloten systeem'"(Isagooge §15: 15).

the cosmos but *intra-relates*ⁱⁱⁱ with/in his Being. God is not only the Father of creation – we confess – but also the Father of His Son, with whom He is one in intrarelativity Being.

There is a subtlety here, and Augustine knows it. Scripture, after all, has infinite depths of complication for Augustine, complications that prevent a mere complicit reading. Why, for instance, does Scripture employ the the language of Father, Son and Spirit? What is Scripture telling us, and, perhaps more interesting, what logic and grammar does God’s revelation employ as its mode of discourse?

There *is* a certain mode of discourse here, a certain logic, and Augustine sees it. There is not only a subtlety in *what* is said, but a subtlety in Scripture’s very delivery: it’s grammar, logic and rhetoric. Thus, the Father is neither an attribute of God, like ‘goodness’ might be, nor is the Father named ‘substance-wise’ – to employ Augustine’s language – that is, named in and of Himself. ‘Father’ is always predicated of God – again, to employ Augustines’ language – ‘*relationship-wise*’ (The Trinity, Book V:1:6). To bring a (perhaps) strange voice to this conversation, consider the early Russell. As Russell notes, fatherhood is always an *asymmetrical relation* to something else, namely a daughter or a son. That is, it holds between A and B but *never* between B and A (Russell: KEW, 57). A father is named ‘father’ only because there is someone the father fathers. Indeed, if there is no son or daughter there is no father. The name ‘father’ always implies an irreducible *relation* of fatherhood. A son, *qua* “son”, can never claim the relation of fatherhood in relation to the father. There can only be a father if there is a son and there can only be a son if there is a father. Thus, there is no ‘father’ in and of itself, and the same is true for a ‘son’. Sonship and fatherhood are distinct relations that bring us to distinct *relata*, *relata* that can only be distinguished *in that they relate*.

And this is the case. A father relates irreducibly to his son as a son relates irreducibly to his father. This is, as Russell notes, an asymmetrical relation; thus, the relation of Father to Son is absolutely unlike the relation of Son to Father.⁷ Each relation is irreducible, hence we name each of the *relatum* relating according to their irreducible relation – hence the names ‘Father’ and ‘Son’.

But consider this: how is it that two *relata* with *absolutely* irreducible relations are even said to relate? How can two completely and absolutely different relations (of *relata*) even be said to meet in a *relationship*? This is an old Vollenhovian question, much older than Vollenhoven. As to the matter of predicating God, this, as Augustine sees it, is the

ⁱⁱⁱ Only God can *intra-relate*. All creatures, even in their own *intra*-individual relations are still relating *inter*-relatively. The concept of *intra*-relation is, I think, a most helpful term.

great subtlety of Scripture in naming God the 'Spirit' *relationship-wise* as the third relatum. If two irreducible relata cannot meet given their irreducible relations then there must be a third relatum that relates these relations into a relationship.

Thus, according to Augustine, "the Holy Spirit is a kind of inexpressible *communion* or *fellowship* of Father and Son" (The Trinity, Book V:3:12). The Spirit, as a Holy Person, is the communion, the very *relationship* by which the irreducible relations of Father and Son relate. The Spirit is not named in and of itself, but only in being the Spirit of Father and Son, that is, the communion of Father and Son, distinct from Father and Son as their Spirit. And this relationship is not an accident of Father and Son, but a Divine Person co-equal with Father and Son. And this is what is so inexpressible, for there is no cosmic experience of a cosmic relationship, something non-accidental that relates the relations of irreducible relata. That is, there is no cosmic 'thirdness' that by its own efficacy relates our own irreducible relations.⁸ And so we confess a Trinity, that is: a *Tri-unity*; the Spirit, as third, completes the Trinity by unifying, in its Thirdness, the relations of the Father and Son.

Now, let us turn to Vollenhoven. Anyone who has seriously read Vollenhoven's work already knows the persistent and almost insistent presence of the Divine Persons in his early thought all the way to his later thought. But let us turn to something more curious, namely a difficult fragment of text from his 1918 dissertation:

Parallels without a one-one correspondence require a new relation that regulates the relationship of the parallel sequences, in this case, a *primary relation* between the sequence of things and the sequence of relations. Hence, the number of relations is at least larger by one than the number of things (WWTS: 407 in Kok: VHED, 313).

Where two irreducible relata are gathered in their (total of two) irreducible relations, there must be one more relation, a *primary relation* that relates these relata together. This relation is not identical in function to the irreducible relation of each irreducible thing, but is a relation that in its function 'regulates' these irreducible relations, it is, in fact, another relatum. Here, already, is a tri-unity. It is not, to be very clear, the Trinity, but it is nonetheless a tri-unity, a way in which things besides God relate - a way in which things are held in *relationship*.

For fear of speculation it must be said again: this is not the Holy Trinity, but it certainly bears a trace (*vestigium*) of the Trinity, it is 'small-t' tri-une. This too, I insist, is Vollenhovian, and perhaps what shall be most held in question by the reader for fear of

speculation. But the reader must ask whether this account of Vollenhoven's implies any speculation, and thus also, what the *consistent nature of speculation* is.

An example of something that is not the Trinity but is yet vestigially triune – that bears a *trace* of the Trinity – is the various commands of law as discussed in Vollenhoven's The Unity of Life. Here, as the title suggests, Vollenhoven is discussing life's unity. But what *kind* of unity?

All of cosmic life is under the commands of God's law, says Vollenhoven, and these commands are, as Vollenhoven shows, a threeness.⁹ Each command of law is irreducibly different from each other command of law, although that which is under *this* command of law is always in relation to that which is under *that* command of law. So, what is under *this* command of law relates in an irreducible manner to what is under *that* command of law, and vice versa. These relations are absolutely irreducible. And, so again we must ask: being so irreducible, how are each command of law said to relate at all to each other command of law? And here Vollenhoven's idea of unity comes forth. This is a *tri-unity*, that is, each command of law is unified in a thirdness that relates the relations of each into a relationship. But this law is not the Spirit. The Trinity of God and the triunity of Law are absolutely distinct. As I shall demonstrate later, the command that unifies other commands of law Vollenhoven calls the '*law of the Spirit*'.

This commitment to thinking of relationships as tri-une underlies, I would argue, all of Vollenhoven's thought, and hence, his entire logic of approach.¹⁰ Now, we are warned not to conflate these tri-unities with the Trinity itself. To do so is speculation, and speculation, as I shall argue in the next chapter, is *precisely what Vollenhoven is writing against*, at least in his Isagooge.

Now, let us approach my hypothesis, and as every approach is a question, so let this hypothesis also be the empathetic question of the charitable reader, an open question that seeks a real possible answer.

What if Vollenhoven thinks of all relationships as triune? This was the question on my mind as I approached one great Vollenhovian mystery, the unity between his systematics and his historiography – the very *unity of Vollenhovian thought*.

This is my first thesis, held up for hypothesis: Vollenhoven is known for the usefulness of his historiography and the perplexing enigma of his systematics. By contrast, he is scarcely known for his epistemology and logic, despite of an early dedication to this discipline. But, his epistemology, I will argue, is that unity that relates into a relationship the disciplines (relations) of systematics and historiography. After all, if

one takes very seriously Vollenhoven's axiom that all results must first be thetical before they are critical¹¹, the role of epistemology will become very clear as one reads the Vollenhovian corpus.

The philosophical discipline of systematics investigates the structure of the cosmos and organizes this structure into results that always remain provisional. That is to say, systematic results never completely encapsulate structure. After all, they remain always irreducible to structure; structure and results are two irreducible relations. A result of this nature is always conceptual. Now, criticism is always the study of these given and shared results; it is always the study of what has been already said about structure and not some new result about structure itself. Hence, both systematics and critical historiography inextricably have to do with concepts. And the study of concepts *qua* concepts is the discipline of epistemology.

When one reads Vollenhoven's epistemology, one understands that Vollenhoven is engaged in a self-reflective act, a moment of analysis studying the nature of analysis. But the analysis of analysis always follows the thetical position one has staked for oneself (or been culturally given). In other words, what one has said about structure structures what one will say about the structure of analysis. This is the very structure of the Isagooge; epistemology is the appendix that comes after a study that is entirely systematic and thetical. What has already been said concerning a thing (a what), or positivized, will determine what one reflexively says about the structure of one's original act of positivization. So what can be said? At least this much: what is *known* as positivized or cultivated is always different from what is *knowable* as structure – each thing exceeds the name it is given. The original act of accounting for structure is later reflexively understood only when one comes to realize that this 'enstructuring' structures the very reflexivity of this understanding. Epistemological self reflection relies primarily on one's account of structure and therefore one's interaction with structure. So what are we interacting with, then, in self-reflection? Epistemological self reflection is interacting not with structure, but with *what has already been said about structure*. What has already been said about structure structures the very manner by which one through self-reflection reflects on the original act of analyzing structure.

But there is something else: beyond what has been said about structure and structure itself lies the very act of investigating each. One is neither the sum of what has been said, nor the sum of one's structural relations – one is also a *normative subject*.

That is, a creature that can perform this analysis recognizes three states of affairs in cosmic subjectivity: a structural, a normative, and a positivized state of affairs. Now, philosophy, as a result, is always ‘the positivized’, it is the conceptual result of systematics, the conceptual result of critical historiography and the self-reflexive conceptual results concerning the nature of all concept formation, including that of historiography and systematics. As positivized results, each discipline points to a different state of affairs: systematics towards structure, historiography towards what is right or wrong in what has already been positivized, and epistemology to the study of the positivized state of affairs.

Now, each discipline as *result* is different from the discipline as *activity*. Hence, even in historiography one is *normatively* arranging in principle what is normatively right or wrong about each philosopher’s already positivized conceptions – that is, what each philosopher has to say about the *structure* of things. Normativity, then, always concerns structure. Likewise, structure always relates to normativity, one philosophizes better when not exhausted, not hungry, and safe.¹² But what unifies these irreducible relations together?

The answer, in my reading of Vollenhoven, is the positivized results shared by at least two people together – what we shall call the first and second party. These results, I shall argue as a second thesis, are not ‘Positive Laws’, but are *positivized laws* – Positive Law is the command of law that these results are under, and this command of law is the irreducible relationship that relates the *subjectivity* of positivized laws and the *sovereignty* of God’s Spirit (perhaps to resolve this confusion, Vollenhoven later calls Positive Law the Law of the Spirit). What is already positivized structures the manner by which structure is perceived and structures the manner by which structure reveals itself as either maligned¹³ or flourishing. What is positivized are *results*, and they hold as results for the irreducible relations of structure and normativity.

Positivized results are not the Law. After all, positivized results are consistently, in Vollenhoven’s humble position, *provisional*. And this is only to say: each conceptual result opens a world of further conceptual results concerning structure – beyond expectation. Structure is always larger than its positivization. And: each conceptual result is either welcomed in by structure or bears the trauma of structure – normativity is ever creative or destructive in its cultivation. A result only *leads* to further results, and this leading, as we shall see, is the very subjective nature of the positivized results under the

Law of the Spirit, the Spirit whose irreducible relation to the cosmos is one of lawfully leading.

Now, each discipline is under law, and the very nature of being under law is to be *subject* to law. Hence, systematics, historiography and epistemology are all species of a wider conceptual approach, the question “ what does it mean to be a subject?” Thus, all philosophy, in all of its disciplines, is at heart an anthropology. To be a subject for Vollenhoven is to possess an irreducible relation to God that God does not possess in His irreducible relation to the cosmos. Thus, all of life, in each state of affairs under law, is a matter of being subject to God, prompting the question – what irreducible relationship relates the irreducible relations between God and Cosmos? Vollenhoven’s answer is: the Law.

As already mentioned, this is an essay concerning the relationship of systematics and historiography for Vollenhoven. That means – on another level – that the essay is principally an essay concerning the question of what it means to be a subject under Law. After all, the very subjective activity and results of philosophy are always, as cosmic, lawfully subject to God.

The essay opens, then, with a defence of tri-unities, beginning with what can best be described as an exegesis of section §13 of Vollenhoven’s Isagoooge. For it is here, in the introduction to his introduction to philosophy that Vollenhoven reveals, using the same logic as Augustine, the triune relationship of God and Cosmos in the Law. But this relationship, as section §13 only insinuates, is far more complex. As God is Triune, so is the Law and so is the Cosmos. Thus, the tri-unity of God, Law and Cosmos is a tri-unity incorporating multiple tri-unities: each relatum relating in this relationship is a relationship within itself.

Now, we *think* about relations, thus it must be asked whether relations conform to logic or whether logic is just one more relation subject to God. This question sets the stage for our study of concepts in later chapters. Is the tri-unity of God, Law and Cosmos a logical tri-unity, or is all of reality, including the reality of logical functioning, determined by some non-logical unity that graphs all relationships as relationally triune? Is logic the graph of all reality or is logic graphed by the interrelative tri-unity that is neither itself logical nor cosmic? The first question is by nature speculative for Vollenhoven; it presumes that logic is extracosmic, rising above all relations and relationships as their graph, whereas for Vollenhoven logic is nothing more than one irreducible relation

involved in being cosmic. It is a mistaken question, an incorrect logical relation – a question already answerable.

Now, this is an essay that approaches Vollenhoven's systematics and historiography from the point of view of his epistemology. Thus, we ask the question in chapter two, 'what is the nature of truth in concept formation for Vollenhoven?'. Truth, as shall be shown, is enframed by a larger anthropological concern for Vollenhoven; if the cosmos does not malign its irreducible relation of being-subject-unto-God it is a cosmos at rest in its constant play. Thus, truth is always a matter of flourishing, or, what Vollenhoven calls 'rest'. Truth, then, is a matter of irreducible relations: so long as one is at rest with one's subjectivity – one's subjection to God – one does not 'play God' and subject others unto oneself. Truth is, therefore, a matter of being at rest with God in the very (lawful) relationship of one's relations with others.

Now, if all is subject to law, what then is the nature of the law? In chapter three we explore what Vollenhoven means by 'primary' and 'secondary' states of affairs in his Isagoge. By using Vollenhoven's own example of Calvin, we show that Vollenhoven clearly distinguished between primary states of affairs, which the normative subject approaches and seeks to understand, and secondary states of affairs, which are the cultivated positivizations of subjectivity that uphold the irreducible relations of both structural and normative subjectivity. Therefore, what is positivized as subject is the cultivated relationship of what is structural and what is normatively subject to God. Hence, it is here that structural subjectivity shows its signs of closure or opening, its trauma or its welcome; it is here that normative subjectivity signifies structure in a relation of violence or flourishing.

By chapter four it becomes clear that the subjective relations of structure and normativity require further analysis. Structural subjectivity relates to normative subjectivity in either trauma or welcome. Normative subjectivity relates to structural subjectivity in either its cultivation or violence. In either case, each irreducible relation is held in relationship by the subjectivity of what has already been cultivated or positivized. Thus, structure shows its trauma in *signs* that disrupt its cultivated positivization.¹⁴ Being upheld, this signification too, is a kind of positivization, for cultivated subjectivity is already unrested, cancerous in its positivized constitution. And it shows: the signs are clear, [our] structure is injured in groans too deep for words. Likewise, normative subjectivity approaches structural subjectivity in the signification of structure, that is, the cultivation of structure. But this is only performed through the background of signs

already cultivated – in other words, through the background of a structure already upheld in its positivization. Thus, one normatively produces signs based on what has been already signified, and either corrects or deepens these past positivizations in the ever continuing repositivization of one's own structure. Normatively speaking, this is a matter of religious circumspection. A circumspection that is at rest with being-subject to God should seek not the malignation of structure in the cultivation of creation, but rather the kingdom open, forever without end.

Since this is fundamentally an essay concerning the nature of concepts, our essay turns to discuss more specifically the structure and normativity of concept formation in chapter five. And so, we discuss different kinds of concepts. A concept, I argue, is always a loaded question by which one approaches a subject – a question that is therefore answerable in its circumspective orientation. Two concepts are introduced. A primary concept is the result of exploration concerning structural subjectivity whereas a secondary concept is a result concerning structure as it has already been positivized.

From concepts we move to the nature of a statement, or a result. All results under the law of the Spirit (especially those that are self conscious of the Spirit), are provisional. That is, inasmuch as every concept is a spiritually loaded question, the results given as answers will always be approached by others through their own loaded question – their own spirit.¹⁵ One question always leads to another question, one approach is approached and approached again. All results are lawfully led by the Spirit under 'Positive Law', or, perhaps better: the "law of the Spirit". The trauma or welcome of creation, revealed through it's happy or unhappy cultivation leads one to even further cultivations. Each result, being provisionally positivized, leads to endless depths of cultivation, and the Spirit, bound in faithfulness to a subjectivity already cultivated, opens up already cultivated results to their endless reiterations and non-identical repetitions. Hence, anything positivized, whether it be a law, building or a painting, is always provisional, always open – there is no final answer, no grand closure in a world of rest.

Having discussed the different commands of law and their unity we turn in chapter six to discuss the co-relation of law and the cosmos for Vollenhoven. For Vollenhoven, the cosmos is always the states of affairs in which at least two subjects in a lawful relationship are found, that is, a case of two irreducible subjects co-related by the thirdness of law. That is, there is always at least a first party and a second party under law. This is, I show, the very meaning of Vollenhoven's term 'state of affairs'. This argument is brought forward by providing an epistemological example, namely, that of

'classes'. The more recent logic of classes and set theory has recognized that no classifiable object is ever met in the singular but is already connected to other objects. Hence, concepts classify a multitude of things that are already present to hand. But, since at least two things are present under a concept as its class, this becomes too quickly ontologized into a realism of classes where the concept that relates objects together becomes also the extra-cosmic relationship through which all subjects are lawfully related together. Contra realism, a class is not the law for structural subjects, for a class is always a cosmic entity – it is always a named result – a positivization. And, while a positivization is certainly a relationship of structure and normativity, it is not in any way identifiable as the relationship that is the extra-cosmic reality of law. To understand a class as the law is to understand the need for thirdness but to hypostatise some part of human subjectivity as this thirdness. This too is speculation.

Having explained the law as the relationship between God and cosmos and the co-relation of subjects under each command of law, in chapter seven we turn to the different determinants of subjective law response. Here the argument gets complicated. Subjects respond to law in determinantly different ways. Each determination of subjectivity is thus a determination of subjectivity that includes some structural, normative, and positivized state of affairs. Each determinant, then, is a different subjective determination of the tri-unity of structural, normative, and positivized subjectivity. Hence, one cannot consider a state of affairs unless one examines the determination in which they are operative. Likewise, one cannot consider a determination unless one examines the states of affairs in which they are operative. God, through law sets a states of affairs, where determinations are the intersubjective cosmic responses to God through law – law and cosmos are therefore absolutely correlate.

Now, each determination is involves some mode of subjective law response, and each subjective law response marks an event, which is the very *temporality* of being subject to God. Thus, each determination is a different determination of temporality. Now, as the law is a triunity, it should not be surprising to discover a further triunity in the cosmos subject to it. That is, each determination of subjects-in-relation is always already in relation to other determinants of the same subjects-in-relation. Thus there must be one case of subjects-in-relation that unifies these other determinants of the same subjects-in-relation – the very unification of the subject. Referring to Vollenhoven's own explanation, we call this case the 'genetic'.

The genetic determination is the focus of chapter eight. As mentioned, the genetic is the determination that unifies the other determinants of subjectivity. Since these subjective determinants must be themselves unified under law, we find the unity of determinants where we also find the unity of law, that is, the law of the Spirit – the crux of the correlation, if you will. Thus, it is in the genetic determination of the secondary state of affairs that we find full subjective unity through the correlation of law and cosmos. But this has a specific character. As the cultivated subjectivity of structure and normativity, the genetic is also the place where we find subjects relating irreducibly under law as sexed subjects – humans are, after all, either male or female. Moreover, the genetic is also the ‘life line’ of all cultivations, for the very history of structure and normativity is here cultivated.¹⁶ Thus, if we are to discover the origin of one’s circumspect concept, it will certainly be in the genetically cultivated, particularly in that society where the sexes meet: i.e., the family.

Having discussed already the relation of normativity to structure in concept formation, in chapter nine the argument is deepened by discussing the concept formation that is exclusive to each determination of normativity. Thus, in each determination we discover not only different determinants of normative concept formation, but also different determinants of structure in its relation to normativity. Thus, it is not at all surprising to discover that the positivized result that holds structure and normativity together is itself threefold. Now, since concepts either approach structure beyond through its positivization or only approaches a positivized structure, there will be concepts about structure and concepts about what is already positivized – as mentioned, Vollenhoven calls these primary and secondary concepts. Thus, there will be different determinants of primary and secondary concepts according to the determinants of subjectivity. For example, in the case of the genetic, a conceptual approach to structure will be that of expectation, while a conceptual approach to the already positivized will always be that of recollection. The other determinants are explored and their relationship in the genetic determination will be further demonstrated in this chapter.

In chapter ten we pause for a moment, for here the essay takes its turn into the study of historiography. Having analyzed the relation of structure to normativity and the relation of normativity to structure, we now have a chance to analyze that which has already been positivized. Historiography, is, I argue, the critical (not negative) appreciation or depreciation of what has already been positivized.

Before the essay goes on, room is needed for sober thought. Too often Reformational thinkers have assumed that they are antithetically opposed in truth to the pagans. I argue that there is not a positivized state of affairs for each, the Christian and the pagan. We share the same space, the same creation. Here we argue against the belief that disbelief is something held onto by way of a choice, a choice that often splits the world into two worlds without overlap: the Christian positivization and the pagan positivization. Showing that one's religious choice is neither merely due, *aposteriori*, to one's cultural inheritance nor, *apriori*, to some ahistorical space of choosing, we introduce the notion that the trauma of creation is revealed in shame. Whether correct or not in one's religious rest, one carries the past as one's own spiritual lifeline. One is already positivized and positivizes in shame – this is the space in which one chooses, led inclusively by the Spirit. Even in straining for Christ where Christ can be found, one finds oneself constantly in shame, for one knows the error that lives in the past and lurks in the future as a fate before destiny (death itself is the fate that comes before our final destination). Thus, historiography is as much a negative discipline as a positive discipline. Critically, it finds sorrow in the destruction of error that has either willfully or unwillfully resulted. And critically, it seeks to appreciate and demonstrate the conceptual paths each thinker took to bring greater flourishing to the cosmos.

Now, historiography as a critical exercise can only proceed from a thetical account of the cosmos. That is, criticism never proceeds from a neutralized space nor is it a neutralizing space. Criticism always proceeds from one's thetical position, thus, one criticizes the other based only on what one has affirmed for oneself. As Vollenhoven's own thetical position changed, so did his historiography – thus Vollenhoven is himself a lived example of a historiography of humility. Given what we have said regarding states of affairs and determinants as Vollenhoven sees it, his critical historiography is an exploration of how these states of affairs and determinants were willfully or unwillingly maligned by the non-Christian philosopher. Thus, Vollenhoven's historiography stands or falls on the basis of whether or not his own thetical position is accepted as a flourishing account of the cosmos and its relation to God.

We start, in any case, by showing that in not submitting oneself as subject to God, the thinker must malign God's own creation – both subjectively and intersubjectively. This is the stuff of chapter eleven. Thus, a certain malignation of each command of law occurs as the non-Christian thinker articulates his or her own subjectivity. Hence, we show that each malignation – subjectivism, objectivism, and

realism – recognizes yet maligns something lawful about the creation, even though the thinker may not see it, since he or she does not confess everything as lawfully subject to God. Hence, I argue that subjectivism is a malignation of the love command, objectivism a malignation of the creation command, and realism a malignation of the law of the Spirit.

Following this, in chapter twelve, the essay then turns to the subjective determinants, arguing that the genetic determination is maligned in the question of genesis versus pure structure, the *this-that* determination maligned in the question of individuality versus universality, and the *thus-so* determination maligned in the question of monism versus dualism. I conclude by showing that each maligned determination shows different states of malignation given the malignation of law in question, and that the depth of malignation is equal to the depth that the law allows for flourishing

Our essay ends with reflections on anthropology, reminding the reader that this essay on Vollenhoven is in its entirety built up on the confession that all of life is subject to the God who is Triune. Showing the amazing consistency of Vollenhoven's triunities, our essay in chapter thirteen concludes by rearticulating Vollenhoven's own articulation of life's unity: the triunity of God, Law, and cosmos and the triunity present in each of these relata. From confession to the relationship of historiography and systematics, the unity of life, for Vollenhoven, is always triune.

⊕ 1. on triunities: Isagooge §13

- In every case where two things are different, we can ask about the relationship between the two (Isagooge § 10).^{iv}

If there is a trace, a golden thread – a *relationship* – running between the early and late Vollenhoven, it may well be his concern regarding the relationship between God and cosmos, indeed Kok has called it “...probably the most fundamental question with which he struggled” (Kok: VHED, 23). But as fundamental as this relationship may be, says Kok, Vollenhoven “deals only in passing with the relationship of God and the world” (Kok: VHED, 23). This is, unfortunately, correct, though the theme occupies the most

^{iv} Steeds wanneer twee verschillend zijn, kunnen we vragen naar de verhouding tussen beide (Isagooge §10).

central of all places in Vollenhoven's thought. Yet, if one does not hastily pass over this question, one finds that it is impossible to pass beyond this question, so central is it to Vollenhoven.

Vollenhoven, unfortunately, says most things 'in passing'. His style is uncharitable and esoteric, and, if we are to be charitable to the reader of his texts, it must be admitted that it is indeed easy to pass over difficult sections that are heavily ramified in detail yet lacking a detailed explanation of these ramifications. Yet, the feeling of having missed something nags the reader to read closer these difficult sections, opening up further passages within the text, allowing passage within the text. It is a painful process, for Vollenhoven's texts are not a journal of his struggle – of his activity – but only the results of this struggle. And, though each result leads consistently to the next, his writings offer a strange pedagogy, an exorcism of speculation that occurs only through great personal difficulty. One must oneself struggle with each result, each passage – one must struggle with the same perduring problems that are answered and given as a result. Sometimes one must struggle to find the very problem being answered.

Section §13 of the Isagooge is that one passage where the relationship between God and cosmos is mentioned 'in passing'. Section §13 is pivotal to the rest of the Isagooge and cannot be passed over, for it prefaces the entire Isagooge. In passing over Section §13, one passes over the logic that organizes the entire Isagooge – a logic that may well be the culmination of Vollenhoven's lifelong search for a 'Christian logic'. Section §13 presents at one and the same time a confessional account of the relationship of God and cosmos which directly impacts the way one thinks about this relationship, namely, one's logic.

But who is section §13 written for? Who is the reader struggling with this preface, this result? Who is given this confession and this logic?

Or, what is the *problem* given result in section §13?

The problem is presented in section §13, for the result given in section §13 is a result given against *speculation*. The reader of the Isagooge is already a person asking about the relationship between God and cosmos, this is not a critical text of positions written for the non-Christian. No, this is a *thetical* work, not a critical work. Besides, Vollenhoven's critical analyses remain marginal in the text, mere supplementary comments, as he himself admits. So, the Isagooge is written for those who share Vollenhoven's same thetical interests. In other words, it is written for one who shares the

same confession as Vollenhoven and who faces numerous dangers in the systematic organizing of this confession.¹⁷ It is written as an introduction – fragmented classroom notes¹⁸ – for a new generation of Christian philosophers. It is both a thought and a way of thinking.

Now, the confession so in danger of speculative organization concerns none other than this question:

What is the relationship of God and cosmos?

The question is twofold. The first question is a logical one, that is, it asks how one *thinks* – which is itself a relation – about relationships, which themselves need not necessarily be logical. Secondly, in asking this question about the relationship of God and cosmos one's logic will either conform to this non-logical subject-of-thought (namely, the relationship of God and cosmos) in its interactive relation or this non-logical subject-of-thought will conform to the logical as logical. The difference is crucial. Logic will either be *graphed*¹⁹ by some non-logical and subfunctional structure of reality (including the reality of the relationship between God and cosmos), or it will be the *graph* of all subfunctional reality (including the relationship of God and cosmos). The first requires an authority beyond the authority of logic for the logical authoring of reality and the second, inasmuch as it claims that it needs no such authority and claims itself as the only author of reality, is understood by Vollenhoven as speculation. Logic may organize reality, but it is not the subfunctional organization of reality.

Now, the question of the relationship of God and cosmos is *not* a question about the difference or similarity of God and cosmos, despite the immediate tendency to answer the question in this fashion. Such a response can certainly be one way of *answering* the question, that is, *one way of thinking*. But if the question is not implicitly a question of similarity or difference, what *kind* of question are we asking? What logic will formulate the answer? Perhaps it is best to ask the question even more generally as Vollenhoven did, asking; “What is the limit that marks off that which is created from the Creator?” (Isagooge § 13).^v A limit, says Vollenhoven, is like a line, that is, “everything that stands on that side of this line is God and everything that stands on this side is created” (Isagooge § 13).^{vi} The question of the *relationship* of God and cosmos is thus a

^v Zo geeft zij ook antwoord op de volgende drie vragen: “Wie is de Schepper?” “Wat is het geschapene in betrekking tot Hem?” en “Waar ligt de grens tussen beide?” (Isagooge §13, 12).

^{vi} “Daarbij versta men onder ‘grens’ iets zodanigs, dat men kan zeggen: al wat aan gene zijde van deze grens staat is God, en al wat aan deze zijde is geschapen” (Isagooge §13, 13).

question concerning the nature of this line, and its answer depends on the logical structure of one's answerability.

One can answer the question of this line in two ways. Each answer will require a certain *way of thinking*, that is, a certain logic. Vollenhoven's most powerful example of these two ways of thinking can be found near the end of his Isagooge where he discusses humanity as the anthropological *imago dei*. We approach, as we shall see, the very heart of the question concerning the relationship between God and cosmos. This paper both begins and ends with this anthropology.

One can, Vollenhoven states, either think *ontologically* or *relationally* about this issue. That is, one can either think about humanity 'being the image of God' or 'being made in the image of God' (see Isagooge § 115). The issue is not only semantic, for each employs a *way of thinking*, or, a logic. The former, for Vollenhoven, is an "abstraction", that is, *speculative*, whereas the latter Vollenhoven understands as *scriptural*, that is, it accepts only the *relation* of God revealed in Scripture for the irreducible and reciprocated relation of scriptural understanding. When people put too much emphasis on the 'image', says Vollenhoven, "they also lost sight of its being related to God" (Isagooge § 115). The minute this happens, says Vollenhoven, "they end up identifying it with a specific group of [cosmic] functions, or even with a supposedly innate understanding" (Isagooge § 115).^{vii} Being made in the image of God is not ontologically graphed by some cosmic function (i.e., logic), but rather by this subfunctional *relationship* or *being related* of God and cosmos. Whatever this subfunctionality is, it is the graph of all reality in that it graphs all reality.

The same issue is at stake in section §13, for those who identify the line between God and cosmos as demarcating a similarity or difference are those whose way of thinking is itself speculative. That is, speculative thinking employs a logic of *substance* (or essences) and not a logic of *relations*, whatever this supposed logic is.²⁰ Accordingly, the difference between these two logics must be explicated.

Now, subject-predicate logic, which is the traditional Aristotelean logic of genus and species has always been held suspect by Vollenhoven despite his qualified praise for it, for it remains traditionally a logic of substance (See Kok: VHED, 194). Subject-predicate logic is (traditionally, for the later Vollenhoven radically transforms it into the

^{vii} "Vooral wanneer men dan nog, het accent op het 'beeld' leggend, het op God vragen, wat dit beeld wel mocht zijn het en het tenslotte somtijds zocht in de bepaalde groep functies of zelfs in een vermeend aangeboren begripen" (Isagooge § 115: 75).

non-essentialist logic of inherence) a logic of genus and species, a logic that through abstraction moves from the most universal to the most specific or vice versa by noting *specific differences*. These specific differences are the *line* between what is more universal and what is more particular. Thus, both “ice” and “steam” are species of the genus term “water”, and though both are a species of “water” they remain distinct according to the specific difference of one being hot and vaporous and the other cold and solid. “Water” itself will be the species of further genera, such that when we reach the most general term of all species this term will extend all species without having any specific difference in itself. In philosophy, this term is usually “being”.

Now, if the line between God and cosmos is to be made according to this logic, then the line of distinction between God and cosmos will be that of *specific difference*. This then will define the *relationship* between God and cosmos. Unfortunately, this assumes an immediate ontologization of what is in subject-predicate logic a general term and what is a particular term. Since God is traditionally confessed as self-identical to His attributable predicates (lest he be subject to his own attributes), God is self-identical to ‘being’ and is thus true Being, the Being of all things. But it must also be confessed that despite God’s being the only Being, created beings are not *identical* with the Being of God. Thus, this line of specific difference between God and cosmos – denoting their relationship – can denote either identity as similarity *without sameness* or, opposed to this, absolute difference. Each presents a problem.

An example of similarity comes from the Radical Orthodoxy project. Referring to Derrida, Graham Ward claims that “the logic of Christ is the logic of *difference* – deferral of identity, non-identical repetition which institutes and perpetuates alterity; this is not that, or more accurately, this is not only that” (Ward: Bodies, 174). To repeat is to repeat what has already happened, but *non-identically*, like the famous case of Kierkegaard taking the train to Berlin, anticipating the *same* thing from this trip as his earlier trips, and surprised at the *difference* present in this, the same trip. This is not absolute difference nor is it sameness. The trip is *similar* in identity, that is, it is the same yet altogether different.

Now, we participate in Christ, according to Ward, but non-identically, Christ is that One who is in excess of all identity, including his own temporally discrete temporality, his flesh. But this excess occurs in an absence. The more Christ non-identically recedes from his temporal corporeality (recedes from the text of Scripture to become the very Logos of the text) the more temporal corporeal bodies can identify with

the body of Christ: “The withdrawal of the body of Jesus must be understood in terms of the Logos creating a space within himself, a womb, within which the Church will expand and creation will be recreated” (Ward: Bodies, 174). It is within this space, within the *Being of God*, that creatures participate, identical with Christ’s body yet still non-identical, the same yet different – *similar*.

We might ask: what is the ontologized nature of this space, this line of specific difference?

“Repetition”, says Caputo. “is a law of inwardness which moves ahead precisely in virtue of outward loss. The outer loss is an inward gain; the detachment from the finite is progress towards the infinite” (Caputo: RH, 32). Now, this is Caputo speaking, but Ward is saying very much the same thing. The detachment of Christ’s finitude is the very overflow of corporeal inward infinitude, the very possibility of the Cosmic Christ overflowing Himself in his own corporeal absence, an absence, a space in which all supposedly participate. This is a *process*: “it is only in the union of all the particular members that the beauty of Christ’s body is complete” (Ward: Bodies, 177).

Thus, although a “non-identical” difference is tenuously maintained between God and cosmos, the irreducible relations of God to cosmos and cosmos to God are eradicated, for it becomes the being and the goal of the creature to be *like* God without being God, that is, to non-identically possess the same *relation* of God’s own infinity without being God. This then is the meaning of participation. The line of specific difference is that very *space* and that very *process* of infinity, where God and creature remain somehow distinct yet nonetheless possessing the *exact same relation*.

Vollenhoven names an example of this similarity “coincidentia oppositorum,” saying, “in this way God as well as cosmos are subordinated...to something that stands above both and hence are coordinated with one another” (Isagooge § 13).^{viii} But if God and cosmos are non-identical, should their relations not be non-identical as well?

This question can be answered via the concept of absolute difference. But here again another problem emerges. To state that God and cosmos are irreducibly different is to recognize an implicit problem with the logic of specific difference yet without positing any replacement logic. If absolute difference is the line between God and cosmos – the denotation of their relationship – then we might ask how that which is *absolutely* different

^{viii} “Dit geschiedt daar, waar men met God en kosmos also uitlopers of als fasen van een ‘zijn’ of ‘gebeuren’ ziet: op deze wijze zijn beide – God en kosmos – aan iets dat boven beide staat, b.v. coincidentia oppositorum (Cusanus en Hegel), gesubordineerd en dus met elkander gecoördineerd” (Isagooge §13: 13).

can relate at all? That they are said to still relate requires an internal contradiction (see Isagooge § 13). This then is the problem of absolute difference, it can never be reconciled, can never be *related*.

Now, absolute difference implies a certain disagreement with the ontologization of subject-predicate logic for it at least recognizes God and cosmos as two irreducible *extensions*, yet is unable to extend these two extensions according to any concept other than absolute difference. This is largely because the line between God and cosmos is still understood as a line of specific difference rather than something that might *itself* relate both extensions together without contradiction. Here is the germ of a different logic.

The problem can be put this way. As we shall demonstrate later, following Frege, a logical predicate or concept ('intension') and a logical subject ('extension') can never, ever be the same – they remain distinct.²¹ If this is the case, then the most intensionally reduced term – that is, 'Being' – that term that can maximally extend all beings, can never be itself an extension. 'Being' is only ever the *predicate* that can be predicated of all things that it extends (it is the most *extensive* predicate), "Being" is never a logical subject. Thus, equating God with the predicate "Being" is to make that which is predicated of all things the very subject of all things.²² Thus, those who claim the line between God and cosmos is absolute difference acknowledge the irreducible extension of God and cosmos (they are both the logical *subjects* of a concept) yet are unable to account for the relations of God and cosmos largely because the line that relates the two together is the very line that splits them up absolutely. The move is contradictory: subject-predicate logic is denied in the very act of employing subject-predicate logic.

In recognizing two irreducible subjects, the proponents of absolute difference at least recognize that God is not a being that subsumes all being, God and cosmos are two *different* beings. This is a step forward and requires that one's understanding of reality approaches this reality through a logic other than that of subject-predicate logic. But two absolutely different beings can still be said to relate, for it is by the irreducible *relation* of each that we know each as absolutely different. God's relation to the cosmos will always be irreducibly different from the cosmos' relation unto God. Thus the relationship between them – the 'line' – can no longer be that of 'absolute difference', but must instead denote the *relationship* of two absolutely different beings and thus their concomitantly different relations. This relationship the later Vollenhoven calls the "Law".

This is no longer a line of specific difference – a similarity or a difference – but a third ‘being’, an irreducible reality that relates the irreducible reality of the relation of God to cosmos and irreducible reality of the relation of the cosmos to God. But, unlike the ‘thirdness’ of ‘infinity’ which is an ontologized line of specific difference, this thirdness does not ontologically subsume the irreducibility of two relations into only one relation belonging to God and creatures (the infinite ‘space’ within God-in-Christ). This thirdness is neither God nor cosmos, nor their ontological relationship of similarity or difference. It is, instead, their *relationship*, the very *terms* by which they relate.

Now, this is a whole different *way of thinking* of relationships.²³

The question of the irreducibility of relations has, interestingly enough, been asked in the 20th century by such figures as Frege, Meinong, and Russell and was, as Kok notes throughout his book on the early Vollenhoven, of tremendous interest to the early Vollenhoven (Kok: VHED). The problem of relations and the reality of relations, however, was largely limited to mathematical discussion, particularly the mathematical relation of *equality*, and the logical reality of *sentential* functions such as the words ‘before, after, between, loves, etc.’. For instance, in the sentence “John *loves* Mary” it cannot be the case that “loves Mary” is a predicate and “John” the subject, for clearly “Mary” is as much a logical subject as is “John”. Thus, “loves” must be a special kind of concept that extends at least *two* logical subjects rather than the single subject of subject-predicate logic, i.e., “John *is green with envy*”. This kind of special concept is called a *relation*. A relation is a logical concept that always extends at least two logical subjects. This is traditionally called the logic of relations.

Now, “John loves Mary” *always* implies some relation of Mary to John, i.e., “Mary loves John”, or, “Mary has never met John”. These relations *always* remain irreducible; ‘having never met John’ is a relation that belongs only to the person Mary in question and never to the person John in question. This is also the case for mathematical sentences of equality, i.e., ‘ $4^2 = 2^4$ ’ is a case of two formulae expressing the same thing, but each in a different *sense*. The relation of 4^2 is irreducibly different than the relation of 2^4 , yet these irreducible relations are related together in a *relationship* of ‘equality’.²⁴ These three things, ‘equality’, ‘ 4^2 ’ and ‘ 2^4 ’ remain irreducible to each other, for ‘equality’ is hardly limited to the statement ‘ 4^2 and 2^4 ’ (Mary and John may also be equal, although in different senses), while 4^2 can belong to other mathematical sentences with as much right at 2^4 . Russell, following Meinong, calls the togetherness of these a “complex” (See Russell: TOK, 80). But here is the point: a sentential complex *always* requires a

thirdness, that is a *relationship*²⁵, to hold the irreducible relations together. In the case of John and Mary it may well be the term 'marriage' or some other sequential event²⁶ which relates the two together in a sentential complex.

So far this thirdness is hardly ontologized, for in the discussion up to now it has only concerned the role of words like "loves" in a *sentential* mode, like the role of "=" in a mathematical formula. But what happens when we go beyond the irreducibility of the efficacy of a relationship in a sentential complex and approach the matter of all cosmic intersubjective relationships? John and Mary are not merely related differently as logical subjects in a sentential complex, they are also certainly related differently in *everyday life*. The relations of John and Mary, in *all* of life, *always* remain irreducible. This is, in a contemporary context, a very Levinasian intuition; the Other never adequately fits my own relation of intentionality as I can never adequately fit the intentional relation of the Other.²⁷ We are close, yet infinitely separate. But how can we explain the fact that One and the Other are, despite their irreducible relations, in fact relating at all? Is the 'marriage' of One and the Other some really real thirdness, some third thing that relates One and the Other together? *What* is this something called marriage? Is it a thing at all? This then becomes an ontological question, beyond the thirdness of logical sententiality, what then *is* this relationship of thirdness?

Now, this question hardly assumes an ontologization of the logic of relations, as though the logic of relations were superimposed upon all reality as the subfunctional *graph* for all reality – and thus the very means by which the question can be asked. After all, this is the very same question that subject-predicate logic seeks to answer with its line of specific difference, which *does* end up, unfortunately, logically graphing all reality. In asking the question of the relationship of God and cosmos we are confronted with irreducibility, a *line*, and this line must be explicated.

Thus, in approaching the reality of irreducible relations, the fact that God relates to us differently than we do to God – the fact that we shall never be like God²⁸ – the logic of relations remains a far better tool than subject-predicate logic in exploring this relationship. Thus, it is important from the start that our systematic reflections on the nature of the cosmos are at one and the same time not operating under the habit of an unhelpful logic. After all, if the nature of the cosmos is to be subject to God then one will never arrive at the conclusion that we share in God's own irreducible relation of infinity, for our reflections on the nature of the cosmos will always begin with the circumspective *confession* that all things are in a relation of being-subject to God which is finitude itself.

Now, this does not mean that epistemology precedes systematic reflection, as though one's logic should be 'cleansed' before it becomes the tool that systematically orders our world. An epistemological study of logic would hardly help, for one does not gain the proper tools by which to organize reality unless one has first systematically struggled with reality. One can only transform one's logic if one knows the *systematic* conclusions one reaches are *consistently* problematic, which is to say, that they *graph* the cosmos in a manner that does not confirm the irreducibility of both God and the cosmos' relations.

One's systematics and one's epistemology are only re-informed by one's continual reading of Scripture. All knowing starts and ends in Scripture, as we shall see for Vollenhoven. Scripture, after all, is God's irreducible relation unto the cosmos and one's consequent systematic reflection will always be an irreducible response unto God. Scripture, says Vollenhoven in section §13, teaches us both about God as sovereign, the cosmos as subject and the Law as their relationship.

Thus, attempts to systematically reflect on the cosmos without aid of God's relation to us in Scripture is to act as though logic itself could provide the answer. This was certainly the early Russell's problem, for he recognized that relations and relationships were not just the matter of sentences considered in their logical function, he realized that this is, in fact, the state of affairs of things. With the logic of relations as his only tool for understanding these instances of non-logical relations and relationships, he quickly ontologized the logic of relations such that Platonic universals, which functioned exactly like a concept in a logical sentence, extended the relations of at least two things into a complex unity. But one cannot do this, for so long as we are one of the *relata* related into a relationship, it is impossible to have a picture of the whole beyond our own cosmic relations. After all, the relationship of Platonic universals remains irreducible to the subjects it relates as extra-cosmic, how then could a subject's relation rise above this relationship? The answer is simple: since logic is said to graph all reality and since one possesses logic, logic reveals itself as the graph of all reality. This is the root of all speculation.

Led by Scripture, one must deny that logic is the graph of all reality. After all, logic is just one way of being subject, and being subject is an irreducible relation unto God, not the relationship that relates each into a complex unity. Thus, even the early Vollenhoven, who held on to a theory of Platonic universals at least understood that these universals, which are irreducibly different from both God and cosmos, must relate

the relations of God and cosmos as their relationship. Thus, instead of positing a conceptual universal as that relationship that logically relates two subjects, the early Vollenhoven understood the entire realm of universals as that non-logical (for they are the Father's Ideas and unknown to us) thirdness that non-logically and lawfully relates God and cosmos.²⁹

It should not be surprising that this non-logical graph of reality, where irreducible relations are held in relationship, should derive from Scripture, for, as already mentioned, Scripture itself employs a logic of relations when speaking of the relationship of God and cosmos. God Himself is revealed in Scripture as a relationship, i.e., the 'Trinity'. For the Trinity God is understood as the irreducible relation of Father to Son and the equally irreducible relation of Son to Father – terms that do not denote God in His substance, for relational terms like 'Father' and 'Son' denote the irreducible relations and thus the real distinction of Persons in the Godhead. These two relations resolved in their Fellowship, who is the very Person of the Spirit. The Spirit, as that thirdness that unifies in Her Personal relationship the irreducible relations of Father and Son is that relationship that allows us to speak of God as Triune, the thirdness is that which unifies the Godhead into a *tri-unity*.

This relationship of the Godhead, however, is still only revealed in the relation of God to cosmos. Thus, when discussing the Holy Trinity in section §13, Vollenhoven, following Scripture and its articulation in the doctrine of the church, refers to God in his relational *activity* to the cosmos. As God is triune so this irreducible activity to the cosmos is triune. In fact, Vollenhoven's confessional articulation of God's triune activity is lifted out of his confession of Reformational church doctrine. The "all-predestining Counsel" mentioned in section §13 is attributed to the Father in Belgic Confession Article 13 and Heidelberg Catechism Lords Day 9³⁰, the "creating activity" which is attributed to the Son in Belgic Confession Article 12³¹, and his "all dominating will", which is attributed to the Spirit in Belgic Confession Article 8 and 13.³² The Spirit, who is Herself the *relationship* binding the relations of Father and Son together will thus also be God's relationship in God's irreducible *relation* to the cosmos.

Hence, there is a relationship to every set of relations and a set of relations to every relationship.

But what is startling is Vollenhoven's suggestion that the Trinity is not the only structural tri-unity revealed in Scripture. The very *subfunctional graph* of the relationship between God and cosmos is itself tri-une, for by understanding the law as something

that is neither cosmos nor God but their *relationship*, Vollenhoven unifies the irreducible relations of God and cosmos in the thirdness of Law. Now, this graph did not precede God as a logical graph or any other graph, for the reality of God, Law and Cosmos is a reality that is “continually posited” by God, that is, it is a reality that comes ‘after’ the reality of God (Isagooge § 13).^{ix} In positing reality as a tri-unity in which the Trinity itself is active God denies himself as the only REALITY for a reality that, including his own relation within it, is completely dependent on his will. Thus, God is not subject to the Law, for this is the irreducible relation of the cosmos unto God, rather God is bound to the Law only in faithfulness (Isagooge § 13).^x

If the subfunctional structure of reality can only be understood relationally, then this can only mean that God be understood relationally, for God’s relation is but one relation in this subfunctional graph of reality, including the revelation of his own Tri-une being in Scripture. Given this, it should not be surprising that the Law shows up as a triunity in section §13 as does the relation of the cosmos to God; if the triunity of God, Law and Cosmos is to interrelate, then each *relatum* must itself be triune within this larger interrelative triunity. The cosmos, says Vollenhoven is “wholly subjected” to God, namely, “His sovereign law, word revelation, and guidance” (Isagooge § 13).^{xi} This is the relation of subjectivity to God, and the Law that relates them is nothing more than the sovereign law, word revelation, and guidance to which the cosmos is subject as the law of God (Isagooge § 13). These triunities are uncanny.

Section §13 of the Isagooge suggests that there are three horizontal tri-unities, the Trinity itself, the tri-unity of Law and the tri-unity of Cosmos, and these are related vertically by the irreducible relationship of law that is itself a horizontally tri-une relationship that at one and the same time holds in a vertical tri-unity the irreducibly threefold relations of God to cosmos and the irreducibly threefold relations of cosmos to God. God-in-Scripture reveals God as a Trinity, but more surprisingly, the reality of the relationship of God and cosmos is also a tri-unity. All of reality is understood relationally, both horizontally and vertically. And, the Tri-unity of God precedes all further tri-unities,

^{ix} “Deze grens nu is de wet Gods, door God blijvend aan het geschapene gesteld” (Isagooge §13: 13).

^x “God is niet aan de wet onderworpen al is Hij krachtens Z’n trouw wel aan de handhaving van Z’n eens aan het schepsel gestelde wet gebonden” (Isagooge §13: 13).

^{xi} “Op de vraag ‘Wie is de Schepper?’ antwoordt de Heilige Schrift ondubbelzinnig ‘God’/ Omgekerd ziet ze in Hem nimmer een regulatieve idee of speculatief begrip, maar steeds de levende God met zijn alles predestinerende Raad, scheppende activiteit, alles beheersende wil, kortum de Soeverein in de absolute zin van het woord” (Isagooge § 13: 12).

since it is only the Trinity that can posit further tri-unities into which it can vertically interrelate. Section §13 is a profound section, and once one realizes the confessional depth of these tri-unities one begins to see them everywhere in Vollenhoven's thought. Uncanny indeed!

Now, despite divergences from the early to late Vollenhoven, this intuition concerning the *graph* of reality remains the same. Perhaps the largest difference from Vollenhoven's early to later thought is the even greater consistency to which he *graphed* out reality based on this understanding. For instance, the early Vollenhoven saw each thing related in relationship to God through a Divine Idea which held for each individual thing and each individual thing alone. The Divine Idea for each individual thing was called the thing's 'substance'.³³ The later Vollenhoven disbanded all notions of substance, probably realizing that according to this scheme the only relationship needed for a thing's existence was its vertical relationship unto God and not its horizontal relationship unto other things. The later Vollenhoven, as I shall show later, thought of horizontal relationships as part and parcel of vertical relations, such that no thing exists unless it is at one and the same time related unto God and other things and other things unto it (in irreducible relations) via the relationship of God's Law.³⁴ This also permitted the end to Vollenhoven's uncomfortable essentialism.

These tri-unities, if they are not passed over, represent a golden thread in Vollenhoven's early and later works and represent the logic which is itself functionally graphed by this confession of the interrelational subfunctional graph of all reality. In passing through section §13 we seek only to give passage to another golden thread of the later Vollenhoven: the relationship between his systematics and his historiography, a relationship that has so far been difficult to establish for the Vollenhovian scholar. This *relationship* is his epistemology, a science that is neither primary nor secondary,³⁵ but their very bridge.

Since historiography is the study of what is right or wrong in other's *concepts* and systematics the conceptual study of what is in-itself *non-conceptual*, this paper, as already mentioned, approaches Vollenhoven's systematics and historiography through his understanding of a concept, that is, it approaches the tri-unities of Vollenhoven's systematics and historiography through his *epistemology*. It ends, as already mentioned, with anthropology – the very fleshed-out meaning of being a subject.

⊕ 2. the extent of the cosmos: open results

Vollenhoven begins his essay Calvinism and the Reformation of Philosophy with an observation regarding the status of Christian philosophy today. There are those “within our circles”, he says, “who, sometimes after serious study turn away from philosophy disappointed” (Vollenhoven: CRP, 15).^{xii} These people have well formulated objections, says Vollenhoven, “‘philosophy is too far away from life’, says the one, while another says that further work in this field is hopeless, and a third adds, ‘yes, and even dangerous’” (Vollenhoven: CRP, 15).^{xiii} “Twentieth century philosophy”, says Vollenhoven, “is in the grips of *anguishing* confusion” (Vollenhoven: CRP, 13)^{xiv}, and it would seem, from Vollenhoven’s cautious and disappointed interlocutors, that Christian philosophy is, at present, equally anguished.

This is not abstract. Anguish, perceptible anguish, is the existential issue here.

What is the source of anguish? Vollenhoven, after all, claims that a Christian philosopher should be “strengthened daily in the conviction that it [Calvinism] has the right view of life” (Vollenhoven: CRP, 15).^{xv} Is philosophy the problem that brings about the anguish that Vollenhoven’s interlocutors experience? No, for if philosophy is ‘righted’ then philosophy should rightfully flourish. The anguish we conceive is not conceptual, but nonetheless it is in a concept that anguish is first conceived. Anguish, we might say, is a *distinct* problem, a problem of distinction, and, as we shall see, a concept is always a matter of making distinctions. Philosophy needs a distinct re-righting, or: new distinctions from a distinctly different struggle. The problem is one of distinction: these “disappointed people”, says Vollenhoven have “fail[ed] to *distinguish* the Christian’s hope for the future and ‘idealism’”, and it is this failure of *distinction* that results in the “sad experience of failure”, a cautionary “withholding oneself from the study of philosophy”

^{xii} “Hun twijfel wordt gedeeld door de niet zoo weinigen uit onzen kring, die zich, soms na werkelijk ernstige studie, teleurgesteld van de wijsbegeerte afkeeren” (CRP: 15).

^{xiii} ‘Philosophie staat te ver van’t leven,’ zegt de een; de ander acht voort-werken op dit gebied ‘hopeloos’, en een derde voegt er aan toe: ‘en zelfs gevaarlijk’ (CRP: 15).

^{xiv} “en al moge toegegeven, dat de wijsbegeerte der twintigste eeuw aan een beangstigende verwarring ten prooi is...” (CRP, 13).

^{xv} Vollenhoven is speaking here of the Calvinist philosopher: “Voor hen ligt de moeite uiteraard niet in het Calvinisme; ze worden dagelijks gesterkt in de overtuiging, dat het den juisten kijk heeft op het leven” (CRP: 15).

(Vollenhoven: CRP, 16).^{xvi} Christian philosophy, something distinct from other philosophies, does not flourish well when its distinctness – its hope – is distinguished as co-equal with pagan hopes – for the hope of the non-Christian has its own distinctness. Such a failure of terminological *distinction* provides source for anguishing confusion.

The question becomes immediately epistemological: what is the nature of a true distinction, or, how is it that anguish can be avoided?

Now, there is no systatically true or false distinction for Vollenhoven when it comes to the norms for distinction making. Thus, when Vollenhoven states that the activity of coming to know is “correct distinguishing” (Isagooge § 153)^{xvii} by ‘correct’ he is not speaking of something universal, ‘the systatically true distinction’. Instead Vollenhoven means (or distinguishes) something else, something that he calls “knowledge or error” (see Isagooge § 174). But how does this distinction help? After all, what constitutes *knowledge* for Vollenhoven?

By *conceiving* philosophy as this failed alchemy of Christian hope and the contrary hope of secular idealism, Vollenhoven’s disappointed Christian interlocutors have erroneously *conceived* the task of philosophy. Theirs is a misconceived distinction; theirs are terms that are not helpful terms-by-which what is knowable is approached; accordingly, their Christian hope becomes terminally ill – ill through its terms:

...mised by a misunderstood term, they end up proposing a connection of Christianity and idealism and pass that on as a Christian philosophy. They work diligently to win others for this same mixture, without noticing that their own life of faith has lost all of its freshness (Vollenhoven: CRP, 13).

Thus, it is this *term*, the term “Christian philosophy”, that has been misconceived by past thinkers, and it is through conceiving this term erroneously that anguish has occurred, that Christian philosophy has gone stale. After all, a term is not only a distinction, but at one and the same time the very cultivated and conceptual terms-by-which one approaches what is knowable. A term thus determines one’s approach, and one’s approach either provides a resting-place (a terminus) for flourishing, or, on the other hand, terminates flourishing.

^{xvi} “Niet ongegronde vreez voor nieuwe ontdekkingen immers, maar droeve ervaring van mislukking bij anderen, vaak ook bij zichzelf, is het wat menigeeen waarschuwend zoo doet spreken. En ook deze onthouding van velen, die, de toekomstverwachting der christenen niet onderscheidend van ‘idealism’, en dus door een niet begrepen term misleid, een verbinding van christendom en idealism voor christlijke filosofie uitgeven en anderen voor dit mengsel trachten te winnen, zonder er op te letten, dat eigen geloofsleven reeds lange alle frischheid inboette” (CRP: 16).

^{xvii} “Het is goed-onderscheiden” (Isagooge § 153: 107).

Now, the term ‘philosophy’ in the term “Christian philosophy” need not be distinguished as that which is always a pagan approach. Philosophy need not always be a non-Christian discipline. After all, if Christian philosophy really means “Christian idealism” – if this is what is *distinct* about Christian philosophy – then this is a *contradiction in terms*. If ‘idealism’ is irreducibly non-Christian, then the term ‘Christian philosophy’, according to this distinction, really means something as disingenuous as ‘Christian non-christianism’. Hence, a contradiction in terms involves the warring approaches of two final resting places, in this case, one that allows for flourishing, another that causes unrest and anxiety. The distinctness of this battle is locked in an immobilized indeterminacy – locked in a distinction. A stalemate. No longer fresh. This anguished distinction is the one Vollenhoven’s Christian interlocutors have failed to address, and this *synthesis* has a long history:

The past teaches us that people in Christian circles usually laid the connection between Scripture and philosophy incorrectly. They proceeded from what was originally a pagan conception and then turned to Holy Scripture. The result was naturally a connection of pagan concepts with scriptural themes. In other words, synthesis. (Vollenhoven: SU&P, 98).^{xviii}

But the term ‘philosophy’ does not necessarily denote something secular; philosophy is not necessarily non-Christian terms-by-which one approaches what is knowable. As Vollenhoven states, his own term, “...’calvinian philosophy’ is far from being a contradiction in terms” (Vollenhoven: CRP, 16).^{xix} Instead, *Christian philosophy is that philosophy that only gives Scripture the last word* (Vollenhoven: SU&P, 101).^{xx} Scripture provides the terms for approach, for Scripture leads us to our final resting place.

Each term brings with its distinction a certain *conception*, and it is by this conception that the cosmos is *extended*. In the case of the stalemated term “Christian philosophy”, each *conception* is distinctly irreducible to the other: Christian hope for the future and pagan hope are contrary hopes, a marriage already divorced, two terms already terminating the other. Thus, says Vollenhoven, “[t]he impossibility of synthesis places upon us the obligation to make serious efforts to build our own philosophy upon

^{xviii} Het verleden leert, dat men in Christlijk milieu dit verband meestal verkeerd heeft gelegd. Men ging van een in oorsprong pagane conceptie uit en wendde zich vervolgens tot de Heilige Schrift. Het resultaat was dan natuurlijk een verbinding van pagane begrippen met Schriftuurlijk themata. Met andere woorden synthese (SU&P: 98).

^{xix} ‘calvinistische wijsbegeerte’ is allerminst een contradictio in terminis (CRP: 16).

^{xx} In de eerste plaats dat we niet met een eigen conceptie naar de Schrift gaan om die door Har te laten sanctioneren, maar het Haar laten zeggen in ons leven, van jongsaf (SU&P: 101).

the sound foundation of the Word revelation” (Vollenhoven: CRP, 16).^{xxi} This means that conception of the term ‘Christian’, ‘Calvinian’ or ‘Scriptural philosophy’ does not attempt to reconcile two irreducible conceptions. Instead it works only from Christian hope, or so it tries – a constant reckoning. “I understand by scriptural philosophy a philosophic basic conception that continually reckons with scripture” (Vollenhoven: CRP, 22).^{xxii}

An erroneous concept is one that arises from an erroneous conception, and an erroneous conception is that conception that does not “...let Scripture have the last word in our lives” (See Vollenhoven: SU&P, 101). Error is thus in the first place *circumspect*, error has to do with the “...alienation, found in different degrees, from the word revelation” (Isagooge § 178).^{xxiii} Again, this has to do with where one finds one's rest. For Vollenhoven, error is, in the first place, an incorrect *answer* to the question ‘what is subject to God?’ This answer, this *confession*, will guide all further questions in one's approach to what is knowable. This is the answer to which each is answerable before God's face, for this is answer is the very manner by which we face God's cosmos either in flourishing or in error. Thus, this erroneous misdirection results in a misconception, a misconception whose “concepts are...*false in their basic structure*” (see below), and this is only the case because *all structure is subject to God* (Isagooge §180). Both Christian and non-Christian thought conceptually extend the cosmos, and it is in this that the ‘basic structure’ of one's concepts become important, for it is paramount that

...the one *ordering* these concepts sees their extensions and mutual relations [of these extensions] correctly. For example, if you take the area of that which is created too narrowly, you will end up deifying that part of the cosmos that, as you see it, falls outside it and you will begin to ask all kinds of questions about the relationship between the parts of the one cosmos, which in this way have been thrown asunder, etc”. That makes it clear why whether or not one bows to the word revelation helps to decide about the value of such an ordering. He who obeys God's word can certainly *err* when it comes to details, but he who does not, arrives at concepts that are false in their *basic structure* (Isagooge § 180).^{xxiv}

^{xxi} Integendeel: de onmogelijkheid van synthese legt ons de verplichting op een ernstige poging te wagen op den vasten grondslag der woordopenbaring een eigen wijsbegeerte op te bouwen... (CRP, 16).

^{xxii} Onder schriftuurlijk wijsbegeerte versta 'k een wijsgeerige grond-opvatting welke voortdurend rekening houdt met de Heilige Schrift (CRP, 22).

^{xxiii} Het meest ingrijpende is echter de in verschillende mate voorkomende vervreemding van de woordopenbaring (Isagooge § 178).

^{xxiv} Vaandaar dat het voor deze ordening van het grootste gewicht is, of hij, die tot haar overgaat, die omvagen en hun onderlinge verhoudingen goed ziet. Wie b.v. het gebied van het geschapene te nauw neemt, zal dat deel van de kosmos dat z.i. daarbuiten valt, vergoddelijken, allerlei vragen gaan stellen over de verhouding tussen de aldus uiteengeslagen delen van de éne kosmos, enz.. Zo wordt het duidelijk waarom het al of niet buigen voor de woordopenbaring mede beslist over de waarde en onwaarde van deze ordening. Wie het woord Gods gehoorzaamt kan

One's ordering of concepts is thus orientated to the WORD revelation or is misdirected in that it deifies something other than the Triune God. Both directions already, as seen, imply a certain basic structure. The Christian whose heart is humbled in love and forgiven of shame should see all things as a subject subject to God. Conversely, those that deny God – through the willful or unwillful act of deifying something other than God – exclude all cosmic subjectivity as subject to God, and so, these subjects become 'sovereign'. Now, whether explicit or not, this 'basic structure' is itself tacitly conceptual, it is the conception by which all further concepts are ordered *in detail*. This does not imply, however, that an incorrect circumspection always produces incorrect detail. After all, as the above quote suggests, a Christian can err in detail yet still obey God's word. This will be discussed further in our next section. It is the answer that each has to answer for – the '*main issue*' – what Vollenhoven calls "circumspective concepts":

Whoever believes Genesis 1:1, for example, knows something about God, namely, that he created the world; and something about the cosmos, namely, that all the world is created by God. And this *knowledge* has to do with the *main issues*; if you will, with the *circumspective concepts*. Once I have this knowledge, on the negative side, it leaves no room for idolizing anything that is created, while on the positive side, it helps arriving at the *common denominator* of all creation – namely, that it is *subjected* to the law of God and, by that, to God Himself (Vollenhoven: FNSS, 76).^{xxv}

Un-erred knowledge does not end, but *begins* in this correct circumspective concept, this answerable resting place. Knowing oneself as subject-to-the-Triune-God is the confessional structure that circumscribes all further direction, and as we shall see later, this confessional Tri-unity of God is of primary importance to Vollenhoven.

A resting place does not imply a passivity, for even the heart at rest still beats. It is a place that is restless with boundless opportunities for rest. Knowledge itself is always deepened and altered as one increasingly deepens the very terms-by-which one approaches what is knowable. And, this is due in large part to the fact that what is knowable increases and alters in detail as well. As Vollenhoven states, what is knowable increases and changes, both in the word of God and the cosmos at large (See Isagooge

zeker nog wel in details dwalen, maar wie het niet doet komt tot begrippen, die in de grondstructuur vals zijn" (Isagooge § 180).

^{xxv} Wie alleen maar Gen. 1:1 gelooft, weet iets omtrent God, nl. dat Hij de wereld schiep, en iets omtrent de kosmos, nl. dat geheel de wereld door God geschapen is. En deze kennis raakt de hoofdzaken, wil men: de omramings-begrippen. Want heb ik eenmaal deze kennis, dan laat negatief geen plaats meer voor vergoddelijking van iets in het geschapene, maar helpt zij mij ook positief aan de algemene noemer voor al dat geschapene: het is aan de Wet Gods en daardoor aan God zelf onderworpen - Gode subject (FNSS: 75-6).

§ 178).^{xxvi} Truth, then, is nothing to be seized nor is it the passivity in which we are siezed. The provisionality of one's result and the constant play of the cosmos refuse the truth that would be itself unplayful. "Even when results appear to be sound", says Vollenhoven, "*they are never unchanging*, as is God's law, but must *be revised repeatedly*" (N&LN: 57).^{xxvii} And so, one remains always open, the Christian always "remains filled with expectation", says Vollenhoven, "attuned to new surprises that will no doubt complement the main conception that agrees with belief" (Isagooge §15).^{xxviii} Truth is always increasing, always surprising, always *complementary* to one's circumspective rest-in-God, and truth itself can change in augmentation and revisions, and in Vollenhoven's own words, these surprises will "time and time again supplement and usually alter earlier findings" (Isagooge §15).^{xxix} The deeper one is circumspectively answerable to God the deeper one's questions of what is knowable become, there is boundless detail to the ordering of concepts, boundless detail to ourselves and the cosmos. Yet, despite this continual dynamism, this boundless detail, correct "knowing", says Vollenhoven "is having knowledge, hence living in a state of *rest*" (Isagooge § 148).^{xxx}

Now, rest is not an arrested state of tranquil stillness. Rest is not the stasis of the eternal chord, but the eternal *eventuality* of the sound of new music, the advent of some always new event. If life is a constant increase of the knowable and knowledge then 'rest' is nothing more than the correct circumscription concerning those main issues *upon which one rests*. Now, Scripture, whose "words are peculiar in that its words point towards created things as well as toward the Creator", directs, like all words "the

^{xxvi} Het genetische in het kenbare

In het woord Gods. Dat dit niet stationair bleef, maar toenam en wijzigde zagen we reeds vroeger (zie par. 125-132)...Ook het voor menselijk onderzoek toegankelijke in de kosmos blijft niet gelijk" (Isagooge § 176).

^{xxvii} Vandaar, dat de principia soms door en door valsch kunnen zijn en ook wanneer zij deugdelijk blijken niet, gelijk de wetten Gods, onveranderlijk zijn, maar herhaaldelijk moeten worden herzien (N&LN, 57).

^{xxviii} z'n resultaat, hoewel systematisch verkregen, is steeds een voorlopig, want hij blijft vol verwachting ingesteld op nieuwe verrassingen, die zich wel in de met het geloof strokende hoofdconceptie zullen voegen, doch het vroeger gewonnene telkens zullen aanvullen en meestal ook wel wijzigen" (Isagooge § 15).

^{xxix} ...doch het vroeger gewonnene telkens zullen aanvullen en meestal ook wel wijzigen (Isagooge § 15).

^{xxx} Wat kennen is

Kennen is het hebben van kennis, dus het verkeren in een toestand van rust (Isagooge §148).

attention of the hearer or reader to that which is denoted” (Isagooge § 13).^{xxxii} Directed by these words, pointing to the WORD, one finds oneself pointed to, “[t]he understanding falls under the law that accuses and indicts, but likewise under the preaching of the Son who wants to save the understanding too and to sanctify it for service through his Spirit” (Vollenhoven: UoL, 130).^{xxxii}

And so, one is appointed in this pointing, one is commanded as expression of this service to “love ourselves and our neighbour as image of God” (Isagooge § 114).^{xxxiii/36} This is the appointment, the anointment, that has ‘saved the understanding’, saved it from dis-appointment. And this is good news for Vollenhoven’s disappointed Christian interlocutors, who have rejected their anointment in dejection. It is this knowledge of the main issues that circumscribes the ordering of all concepts, something Vollenhoven also calls ‘*wisdom*’: “even when it comes to knowledge, we are to begin with wisdom, with the wisdom that takes stock of the *relation* of God to man and the *relation* of man to God” (Vollenhoven: UoL: 130).^{xxxiv} Thus, ‘being subject’ is that wisdom that begins with the fear of the Lord – one’s circumspect answerability before the face of God. And it *is* fearful, for in so doing one must disband that greatest contradiction in terms, one’s so-called ‘sovereign subjectivity’. What is subject is always subject to what is SOVEREIGN, one can never be both.

Restored by the WORD through the words of the WORD one finds *rest* upon the Triune God, “...following Scripture, it honors him only as the *firm basis* of everything and sharply distinguished him from all things invisible and visible in heaven and on earth that *rest* upon this ‘basis’” (Vollenhoven: CRP, 23).^{xxxv} Recircumscribed by the WORD through the words of Scripture (or its teachers), the believer now circumscriptively orders concepts according to the “...restful language of faith” (Vollenhoven: CRP, 16).^{xxxvi} It is here that anguish ceases, the heart finds rest, life becomes fresh. But not quite: “this rest

^{xxxii} Nu hebben woorden een betekenis, door welke ze iets aanduiden en de aandacht van hoorder of lezer op het aangeduide richten. ‘t Eigenaardige nu van de Heilige Schrift is, dat haar woorden heenduiden zowel naar geschapen dingen als naar de Schepper (Isagooge § 13)

^{xxxiii} ...ook het verstand valt onder die wet die beschuldigt en aanklaagt, maar ook onder de prediking van den Zoon Die mede het verstand wil redden en door Zijn Geest heiligen in Zijn dienst (UoL, 130).

^{xxxiv} De bedoeling is wel deze: ge zult uzelf en de naaste liefhebben also beeld Gods, d.w.z. voorzovergij en jij als kinderen op de Vader in de Hemel gelijken (Isagooge § 112).

^{xxxv} Zelfs waar het gaat over de kennis, zullen we hebben te beginnen met de wijsheid, die stil staat bij de verhouding van God en mens, en van den mens tot God (UoL: 131).

^{xxxvi} Vandaar dat ze, in navolging van de Heilige Schrift, Hem alleen als den *vasten grond van alles* eert, en Hem scherp onderscheidt van de onzienlijke en zienlijk dingen die in hemel en aarde op dezen ‘grond’ rusten (CRP: 23).

is not without a struggle that is parallel with the preaching of blessing and curse in the full Logos revelation” (Isagooge § 133).^{xxxvii} Life lived in a state of rest is still life lived in a certain remnant of anguish, where “a struggle ensues in that heart between callousness and compliance, between the old hate and the new love, between ‘flesh’ in its bad sense and ‘spirit” (Vollenhoven: CRP, 43).^{xxxviii} We are, at least in this world, still caught in a stalemate.

Knowledge that is not error is thus knowledge that is not anguish. There is nothing universally systatic about this kind of knowledge, for knowledge is only true as a positivization whose structure allows – given the structure of creation as subject to God – flourishing. Thus, correct knowledge is knowledge that “may never deny or seek to push aside that which exists, not even to the smallest degree: to do so would be to deny either God or all or part of his work, or fail to do *justice* to its nature” (Isagooge § 15).^{xxxix} Conversely, the denial, the dis-appointment of God from ‘all or part of his work’ circumspectively leads one to what Vollenhoven calls ‘misformed concepts’, concepts that are at fault in their answerability because they insert fault lines, malignation, through God’s creation.

Misformed concepts will lead to a fault in the foundation that will prove to be devastating for the edifice built upon it. Owing to this, government, family, school, and church are continually undermined by an anthropology that places a part of man above God’s law” (Isagooge §180).^{xi}

Conversely, a “...life liberated by Christ from the power of sin may not trample indiscriminately over the rich diversity in the work of God” (Vollenhoven: CRP, 315).^{xii} Such trampling is the cause of all malignation and thus of anguish. For instance, in the case where government, family and school are undermined (as realms each uniquely subject to God) the result is that of “office bearers from one sphere of life tyrannizing

^{xxxvi} ...rustige taal des geloofs (CRP: 16).

^{xxxvii} Intussen is ook deze rust niet zonder strijd, die correlaat is met de prediking van zegen en vloek in de volle Logosopenbaring (Isagooge § 133).

^{xxxviii} Vandaar dat, wanneer Gods genade tusschen beide treedt, er juist in dat hart strijd ontbrandt tusschen verharding en verteederling, tusschen de oude haat en de nieuwe liefde, tusschen ‘vleesch’ – hier in den slechten zin van het woord – en ‘geest’... (CRP: 43).

^{xxxix} Wijsbegeerte mag nimmer het bestaande ontkennen of willen verdringen, zelfs niet voor het geringste deel: daarmee zou ze òf God òf Z’n werk geheel of ten dele loochenen of in z’n aard miskennen” (Isagooge § 15).

^{xi} ...verkeerde begripsvorming leidt hier dus tot de fout in het fundament, die op den duur funest wordt voor het daarop opgetrokken gebouw (Isagooge § 180).

^{xii} Wortelde de handhaving van dit beginsil in het inzicht, dat ook het door den Christus van de macht der zonde bevrijde even niet achteloos over de rijke verscheidenheid in het werk Gods mag heenlopen...(CRP: 315).

some other sphere [of life]” (Vollenhoven: CRP, 26).^{xlii} “True Christian freedom” says Vollenhoven, “is to be free from the sin that hinders us *in every realm* from serving God according to his word” (Vollenhoven: CRP, 26).^{xliii} Without inserting fault lines into a faultless creation one is faultless – without sin – a recircumscribed child of God; one is *in-line* with God's creation. One can, however, always default on such circumscriptions, at least in this life. The flesh, after all, is weak.

Care is required. This explains Vollenhoven's careful distinction making. After all, our circumspective concepts must “carefully” order our concepts in such a way that we will “be a blessing to others” (Vollenhoven: CRP, 319).^{xliiv} Since, as seen above, wisdom is that love of God neighbour and self – the very nature of subjectivity as being subject – that circumscribes all knowing, the task of bringing ‘blessing to others’ is hence the task of knowing. And, since blessing is that life that stands connected to God in lovingly subjected subjectivity, it is a disconnected life that causes the anguish of an *unrested* knowing, of not knowing God. In dis-appointing God one is unappointed and unannointed for love, and thus one finds life disappointing. It is the task of theoretic knowing to carefully re-connect life as expression of the care-full love of the other; even “science becomes a part of walking before his face” (Vollenhoven: FNSS, 77).^{xliv}

This is a helpful way to read the Vollenhoven's own work, so distinct in its overburdened detail that his statement that “nothing knowable be excluded from one's investigation” (Vollenhoven: CRP, 14)^{xlvi} almost sounds sinful itself, like some grand epistemic and systematic imperialism. It was Vollenhoven who said that ‘he who obeys God's word can certainly *err* when it comes to details’, but one begins to wonder if Vollenhoven has not erred in being too detailed!

One might ask whether Vollenhoven's overburdened distinctions are not a sign that perhaps Vollenhoven loved concepts too much. This would be uncharitable. For Vollenhoven, that which is subject to God is positively overflowing in detail and always

^{xlii} En juist wijl deze verscheidenheid het werk Gods is, verstaat men, dat de Calvinist zijn vrijmaking door den Christus óók beleeft in z'n erkenning van dezen rijkdom en in z'n strijd tegen alle kortzichtigheid, die, blind voor deze weelde, straks uitloopt op tyranniseering van het één levensgebied door gezagsdragers op een ander terrein (CRP: 26).

^{xliii} In de eerste plaats is daar de christelijke vrijheid. Zij is het vrij-zijn van zonde, die ons op alle gebeid belemmert God te dienen naar Zijn woord (CRP: 26).

^{xliiv} ...en kan straks wellicht dien anderen tot zegen zijn (CRP: 315).

^{xlv} ...wetenschap wordt dus een deel van ons wandelen voor Zijn aangezicht (FNSS: 77).

^{xlvi} Heeft men dit maar eenmaal ingezien, dan verstaat men gemakkelijk, dat het voor het wijsgeerig denken en voor het daarmee te bereiken resultaat, de wijsgeerige kennis, van het hoogste gewichte is niets kenbaars van z'n onderzoek uit te sluiten (CRP, 14).

changing, “he who believes that God created the cosmos, proceeds time and time again from the presupposition that the wealth in that which is created will be much greater than we ascertained up to that time” (Isagooge § 15).^{xlvii} The excess of being-subject brings about a sense of wonder and concomitantly a sense of awe-full (fearful) respect. Thus, it is not the self-centered avoidance of anguish that is the primary motivation for knowing, but instead it is this sense of awe, of worship, of love for God. And it is the expression of this love that concomitantly seeks love for one’s neighbour. Thus, the connected awe of oneself as subject concomitantly seeks the whole of life as subject together in this worshipful awe – re-connected, unfaulted (without fault and its fault-lines), the end of anguish, *in-line*. The “deepest motivation for a ‘scriptural philosophy’ is not the desire to avoid the anguish that any division of life brings with it, but respect for God who forbids fragmenting life in any way” (Isagooge § 12).^{xlviii}

Hence, for Vollenhoven concepts are one way by which creatures love, he or she who brings forth a concept that is *in-line* and not *maligned* with God’s creation brings forth a loving concept. This is what remains distinct about Vollenhoven’s philosophy, his distinctions are both a corrective and a praise. On one hand they are posited for the sake of reconnection and on the other hand they are a celebratory appraisal (praise) of this massive cosmic depth. To think that Vollenhoven’s detail entails some latent intellectualism is to err; it is to approach Vollenhoven’s detail with not enough detail, a mistake often made.

“Life”, says Vollenhoven “flourishes like nowhere else where people take God at his word” (Vollenhoven: CRP, 41).^{xlix} To know all things as subject to God is to have knowledge. To be subject is to bless and be blessed. To bless and be blessed is to flourish, and to flourish is the end of all knowledge. Thus Vollenhoven confesses this circumspective concept as a preface to all of his concept ordering, his way of facing each subject, the cosmos that is you and me: “because the whole cosmos is subject to God’s law and therefore to God, this being-subject is our *point of orientation*” (Isagooge

^{xlvii} Want wie gelooft dat God de kosmos schiep, gaat steeds opnieuw uit van de veronderstelling, dat de rijkdom in ‘t geschapene nog wel veel groter zal zijn en we tot op dat ogenblik ontwaarden (Isagooge §15).

^{xlviii} En’t diepste motief dat ons deze eis doet stellen is niet de begeerte de smart te voorkomen, die alle levensverdeeldheid met zich brengt, maar eerbied voor God, die al zulke levensdeling verbiedt (Isagooge §12).

^{xlix} Daarom bloeit het leven nergens zóó als dáár waar men God gelooft op Z’n woord (CRP: 41).

§ 17).^l This orientation, this circumscribing, this knowledge of the main issue, “the common denominator of all creation” is to live in a rest without anguish, rested upon the WORD whose word in Scripture is the “last word in our lives” (See Vollenhoven: SU&P, 125). Rested and restored, yet always changing – God its final resting place, resting in peace.

⊕ 3. positive exhaustion

Let us go into detail.

As seen, to err within one’s correct ‘basic framework’, that is, within one’s right *circumspective concept*, is not always necessarily an error of circumspection, but of *detail*. It is perhaps not strange then, when looking at Vollenhoven’s epistemology, that the only condition he ever mentions as an example of erroneous distinction making is “exhaustion”.³⁷ “If analytic functioning is poor due, for example, to exhaustion, then mistakes are made and the result is not knowledge but error” (Isagooge §153, 268).^{li} Now, Vollenhoven is not saying that the unexhausted will have flourishing knowledge, for such true knowledge is largely, as seen, *circumspective*, and concerns one’s ‘face to the world’ in either the resting place of either anguish or flourishing. Thus it should be clear that the unexhausted non-Christian certainly isn’t in a relation of asymmetric privilege to the exhausted Christian as far as attaining the *true* unanguished knowledge which is walking with God. Vollenhoven is talking about a different kind of knowledge here, a matter of detail. Vollenhoven is talking about the *details* that occur either erroneously or not *within* the ‘basic structure’ or circumspection of one’s confessed being-subject – one’s very answerability unto God.³⁸ He is talking about “*mistakes*”.

Now, one’s circumspect ability to distinguish is largely *determined* by the conceptual inheritance of one’s times, this is the spirit of one’s times, and thus the spirit of each person in that time. That is, the terms-by-which one’s times have approached the knowable provides the horizon for the terminology one will oneself develop, and thus also the terms-by-which oneself approaches what is knowable. This horizon is never exhaustive; it has never exhaustively seized in totality what is knowable and so it never

^l Wijl de gehele kosmos aan de wet Gods en daarmee Gode subjèct (onderworpen) is, is dit subjèct-zijn ons oriënterings-punt (Isagooge § 17).

^{li} Functioneert het analytische – b.v. door vermoeidheid – niet goed, dan maakt men fouten en komt men niet tot kennis, maar tot dwaling (Isagooge § 153).

should.³⁹ Yet, invaded by faultlines, one's times can *exhaust* one's positive intention for making unanguished distinctions, the "solution to a concrete problem must be seen in connection with the evil times that created the problem" (Vollenhoven: CRP, 19).^{lii} Let us find an example of this in Vollenhoven. Consider for example, Vollenhoven's example of Calvin.

Calvin, says Vollenhoven was a "child of a generation that, however it excelled, did not know its history very well" (Vollenhoven: CRP, 19).^{liii} That is, it did not know the historical determinants that provided the terms-by-which it approached the knowable. Consequently, it "doesn't take much to point out here and there that Calvin never quite rid of himself of his scholasticism" (Vollenhoven: CRP, 19-20).^{liv}

But, we must ask what chance Calvin even had for such critical self reflection on his inheritance. "We must notice the demands of his life...[h]is time was short and the task weighed heavily upon him" (Vollenhoven: CRP, 19).^{lv} Calvin's times did not allow for an exhaustive inquiry – times never do – but rather, already *exhausted* by the evils of his times, Calvin's scholasticism must be accepted in its provisionality. This is a matter of detail.

What is fundamentally important to Vollenhoven is Calvin's *principia*, "those thoughts that do not contradict each other and bear the edifice of his life's work" (Vollenhoven: CRP, 20).^{lvi/40} These *principia* for Calvin constitute the place of Scripture in one's life; they indicate that it has the last word.⁴¹ Scripture, as we have already seen, teaches first and foremost that all of life is subject to God, that all things rest in God. So, Calvin, like others, *correctly* proceeded from the circumspective concept of being-subject, but the *details* of his and their work still often proceeded uncritically from contradictory sources and thus contradict these *principia*.⁴² But, again, we need to remember that the details of Calvin's and other's "*terminology* often had to be devised in

^{lii} ...een concreet probleem niet meer ziet in verband met den boozen tijd die het stelde... (see CRP: 19).

^{liii} Daarbij was hij kind van een generatie die, waarin ze ook uitmuntte, het verleden niet bijzonder nauwkeurig kende (CRP: 19).

^{liv} Vaandaar is 't heusch geen wonder, dat CALVIJN hier en daar nog in de scholastiek is blijven steken (CRP: 19-20).

^{lv} En zwaar de taak die op z'n schouders drukte (CRP: 19).

^{lvi} Lettende dus zoowel op den nood van CALVIJN's tijd als op dien van z'n leven, vragen we alleen naar de principia van CALVIJN, en verstaan daaronder dan slechts zulke gedachten die niet met elkaar in tegenspraak komen, doch het gebouw van z'n levenswerk te samen dragen (CRP: 20).

great haste; in fact it usually relied upon that of others, for the simple reason that it was the *issues that were primary*” (Vollenhoven: CRP, 49).^{lvii}

Again we are back to the anguish of terms, anguished concepts that nonetheless appear in a circumspective conception that is, at root, at rest, *correct in principiis*. However, given the nature of flourishing, a circumspective conception that understands truth as *flourishing* always understands that questions of *detail* are constantly revisable, whether they be correct or incorrect. Though terms of detail may be devised from antithetical sources, it remains the case that the circumspective conception that hastily subsumed these anguished terms in the first place did so *primarily* in order to liberate in as to flourish. Thus, matters of detail can never congeal into hardened and staticized principles from which thought begins, flourishing is too dynamic a resting-place.⁴³ Thus, in a circumspective conception that seeks flourishing as its truth, matters of detail, contradictory to this conception or not, are always advancing, are always kept in play, “right after reformation the church must be open to new reformation” (Vollenhoven: CRP, 20).^{lviii} Thus, being correct is always a matter of being *corrected*, at least in this world.

But, error in detail need not necessarily produce anguish, as it did in the case of Calvin's own mistakes. In a world where circumspection is wholly in-line it seems possible to imagine mistakes that do not arise out of incorrect circumspection – one stubs a toe, one misunderstands what another is saying.⁴⁴ Error need not necessarily misalign the resting place of the human heart. Indeed, as Vollenhoven noted, one can err and yet obey God.

But this is our primary concern: what were these *primary* issues that Calvin was wrestling with? And what is the difference between these primary issues and the terminology gleaned in great haste from an inheritance circumspectively contradictory to Calvin's own rest in God? Calvin was primarily concerned with the structural *nature* of the church, that is, how the institutional church is structurally subject to God in its positivization. Realizing that there is a difference “between the church in the sense of the elect and the church in the context of the sacraments”, Calvin recognized that the “work of the Holy Spirit is *sovereign* and hence not bound to institutional limits” (Vollenhoven:

^{lvii} En in de tweede plaats bedenke men, dat de terminologie vaak inderhaast moest worden ontworpen, ja meestal steunde op die van anderen, juist omdat het allereerst ging om de zaak (CRP: 49).

^{lviii} ...juist na reformatie heeft de kerk naar nieuwe reformatie te staan – zegt het wel anders (CRP: 20).

CRP, 314).^{lix} That is, Calvin realized that what is *structural* about the institutional church as positivized – its structurally pistical delimitation – is different from the *normative* church that is the interconnected *hearts* of all believers. Given this, Calvin could argue for normative unity and interrelativity despite the positivized sacramental differences of each pistical institution.

Thus, in attempting to *know* something about something *knowable* – namely, the church – Calvin was not interested in consulting the sedimented history of *knowable* terminology already given as ‘the church’. This terminology was exactly the problem; it no longer allowed flourishing because it subjected all normative hearts in Christ (true catholicity) to a structurally sacramental institution (the Catholic Church) that swallowed all spheres of social subjectivity(-unto-God) under the pistical in the form of ecclesial control. It was secondhand knowledge, inherited and affirmed by generations. Calvin was concerned with the structural possibilities of the church as it is *primarily*, that is, how it is uniquely called by God in its very structural sacramental nature to flourish as one (of many) of God’s creatures. Calvin’s struggle with the church was *firsthand*, and consequently he had a great hand in showing people something *new* about the church.

This distinction between the primary issues and intergenerational secondhand knowledge is systematically worked out in the details of Vollenhoven’s epistemology. In the appendix to his *Isagooge*, Vollenhoven distinguishes two (earthly) knowables about which knowing is concerned, a *primary state of affairs* – the *primary* issue – and a *secondary state of affairs*, which we have called thus far ‘secondhand knowledge’ (See *Isagooge* § 171). Now, a primary state of affairs, says Vollenhoven, is “*what*, in that which is knowable, is not itself knowledge or error” (*Isagooge* § 171).^{lx} Calvin, for instance, in concerning himself with the *primary issues* or the *primary state of affairs*, was not interested in the church as it was secondhandedly knowable at the time, for this knowledge was erroneous and unflourishing as Calvin himself saw firsthand. Calvin was interested in the church’s *primary structure*, that is, whatever possibilities are structurally inherent to the church within the sphere of its irreducibility as opposed to the church as it was positivized, either correctly or incorrectly. Calvin sought a firsthand perception of the church as something other and beyond the already second handed-to-hand. A secondary state of affairs, then, is that inherited horizon of knowable conceptual results

^{lix} ...de werking van den Heiligen Geest is een soevereine en dus niet aan de grenzen van het instituut gebonden (CRP: 314).

that *always* as-such concerns a primary state of affairs. In other words, a secondary state of affairs is “what is knowable, but is also itself subsumed under knowledge or error *about* primary states of affairs” (Isagooge § 171).^{lx}

By struggling with the primary states of affairs Calvin not only struggled with the knowable as it was historically manifest – for it was manifest in his own upbringing – but also with the knowable as it could be *primarily*. Now, this does not mean that Calvin dealt with the church *as-such* as though there were some universal entity existing that is *primarily* and structurally ‘the really real church’. Instead he sought out the structural law that allows the church to flourish in its subjectivity in a way that was irreducible to and different from other social institutions – a move that strongly disrupted the hegemony of the church over all the social institutions of its day. The ‘church’ is not some potential substance not yet actualized, it is an institution that can increase in its cultivated subjectivity, as long as it exceeds within its structural limits and does not exceed without. Vollenhoven’s Isagooge in no way claims to disclose the church or the state *as-such*, but only how they irreducibly *differ* according to the law that calls each. Each differs according to different lawful terms, and the lawful terms do not disclose within themselves any systatic universality. Thus, God himself may have an ‘idea’ of what the church should be according to his own terms, but this does not mean this picture of the church is identical to the terms, only that it is demanded *through* these terms. Hence, the law and God’s ideas are not equivocal realities. The terms through which God relates to the cosmos is the law, the boundaries God set for the sake of cosmic flourishing, and these terms allow for the very irreducible *discourse* between God and cosmos.

Thus, as Moses, Noah, and so many of the Prophets did before, we are commanded to discourse with God on these lawful terms as God does with us.⁴⁵ And thus, while God’s perfect intrarelatational Trinitarian being does not change (His perfect love of Himself), God’s interrelation to the cosmos *can* change, hence allowing us to speak of God ‘changing his mind’. And so we can cry with Abraham, “*shall not the Judge of the earth do what is just?*” (Genesis 18:25). Even God may be answerable.

Now, the institutional church is not just the structural difference between it and (for example) the state. The institutional church is just as much the body of what has been *said* and cultivated through the interrelation of normatively called hearts (the

^{lx} de primaire stand van zaken, d.w.z. wat kenbaar is niet tot kennis of dwaling behoort (Isagooge § 171).

catholic church). Inasmuch as this secondhand body of knowledge flourishes from person to person in person to person, we can say that the church is *good* or *positive*. As all creation is structurally created *good* – as God said after each day – the secondhand church is *in-line* with its irreducible structurality when it flourishes within the terms of law appropriate for it, and as long as it does not subsume other institutions that are commanded under different terms of law.

The difference between something knowable as either a primary state of affairs or a secondary state of affairs brings forth a further difference already noted, that of normativity, of *knowing*. As primary states of affairs are irreducibly different than secondary states of affairs in the way they are subject to God, so also is *knowing* irreducible to the secondary knowledge of primary states of affairs. We mean ‘knowing’ in its broadest sense – the knowing of the heart.⁴⁶ Thus, knowing is not subject to one *mode of law*, i.e., the analytic, it is instead under an entire *command of law* which includes the analytic (and many other modes) as just one of its lawful aspects.

So, if we are to start always from our ‘being-subject’ as our point of orientation then we must note *three* irreducible states-of-affairs of being-subject. A primary state of affairs, considered alone, is subject to God free of human knowledge and error. Yet, primary states of affairs *qua* state of affairs are always in a relationship to other states of affairs of subjectivity, that is, they are also the positivized subject of human knowing. As positivized, the primary state of affairs are positivized or arranged either through the expectations of knowledge or error. Thus, *what* is positivized remains always different from its positivization. Finally, knowing, which is altogether different from the latter two – which are *know-able* to knowing (the irreducible relation of normative subjectivity) – is subject to God in the heart of each human, the appointed or dis-appointed face to the cosmos. These states of affairs – each under a different command of law – are interconnected *inasmuch as they are under law*, as we shall see.

Knowing, for Vollenhoven, is subject to a different command of law than the command of law that primary states of affairs, and, likewise, secondary states of affairs are subject to. Knowing, as mentioned earlier is subject to the lawful command that one love God and one’s neighbour as oneself, “love filled obedience is the *first thing that is*

⁴⁶ de secondaire stand van zaken, d.w.z. wat kenbaar is maar tevens zelf onder kennis of dwaling omtrent een primaire stand van zaken ressorteert (Isagooge § 171).

asked of every one” (Vollenhoven: SU&P, 98).^{lxii} For Vollenhoven, to be subject to the love command is to be subject to *norms*, and norms, unlike a structural command can be obeyed or disobeyed, “the requirement ‘Thou shalt’ is something other than meeting that demand” (Vollenhoven: SU&P, 104).^{lxiii} In other words, one can always disobey.

Though love filled obedience may be the first thing asked of everyone, “there is no talk of norm without prior creation” (Vollenhoven: UoL, 123).^{lxiv} Knowing, after all, needs some subject of knowing. Knowing is always a normative relation to the primary state of affairs. The primary states of affairs are always in an other equally irreducible relation to knowing.⁴⁷ Now, the structure for creation is that primary state of affairs, that state of affairs which the activity of *knowing* wrestles with normatively as the *primary issue*. Creation, unlike the ‘thou shalt’ of norms is subject to “commands which must be obeyed” (Vollenhoven: UoL, 123).^{lxv} The ‘thou-shalt’ *norms* the knowing that directs itself in the first place to the ‘primary issue’, the primary state of affairs, what Vollenhoven calls “the whole of the structure of what has been created by God” (Vollenhoven: BSHP, 2).^{lxvi}

The act of knowing, however, always has *results*, and these results form a *symbolified inheritance* – texts, buildings, etiquette, the oral tradition – signs. It is through this inheritance of signs that the primary states of affairs and knowing are unified. One can, after all, only wrestle with the primary issues within the results of others who have struggled with the primary issues, results that are themselves *knowable*, that form in all of its signs the secondary state of affairs.

Given this division in what is knowable, there are, thus, two types of results for the knowing that knows firsthand and secondhand. There are, thus, primary concepts concerning primary states of affairs, and secondary concepts concerning secondary states of affairs (Isagooge § 174).^{lxvii} Inasmuch as a result regarding the primary states of affairs is in fact *stated* to a second party (the other⁴⁸), these results become part of the knowable secondary states of affairs, a process we shall examine in the next section.

^{lxii} Voorts is die wereld door God gesteld onder Zijn wet: liefdevolle gehoorzaamheid is het eerste, dat van ieder wordt gevraagd (SU&P: 98).

^{lxiii} Want de eis “gij zult” is iets anders dan het aan dien eis voldoen (SU&P: 104).

^{lxiv} Inderdaad: van norm is geen sprake zonder voorafgaande schepping: want iedere norm onderstelt het bestaan van datgene waarvoor zij geldt (UoL: 123).

^{lxv} Het gaat daar niet over ideeën waarover we wat kunnen speculeren, maar over bevelen, aan welke moet worden gehoorzaamd... (UoL: 123).

^{lxvi} Dan houdt dezer in: heel de structuur van het door God geschapene (BSHP, 2)

^{lxvii} Primaire begrippen, d.w.z. begrippen omtrent standen van zaken die zelf niet kennis of dwaling zijn en secundaire begrippen, dat zijn begrippen omtrent standen van zaken die wel begrippen zijn (Isagooge §174).

Thus, the result posited by one to the second party can become the active position of the second party, becomes repositioned, deposited and then repositied by another to a third party.⁴⁹ Perhaps it is not strange then that Vollenhoven calls the law for the secondary states of affairs “Positive law”⁵⁰, for it is the law *for* that body of knowledge always posited, deposited and repositied. It is the law for what Vollenhoven calls “positive results”, the results each and every person positively offers – for the sake of *goodness* – as an answer to the *primary issues*, those primary states of affairs. In being pointed to by Christ, one’s appointment is to love, and love is always positive. That is, love is the position that always posits that which flourishes.

So what was Calvin’s state of affairs? Caught in a secondary state of affairs no longer flourishing, violently hostile to any flourishing beyond its own terms, Calvin’s struggle with the *primary issues* was hectic, hurried and dangerous. Yet his primary concept – his resultant struggle with the primary knowable state of affairs – despite the exhaustion that impeded an otherwise more exhaustive query, was altogether *new*, a new positing and a positive positing. But for Calvin the times were exhausting, the secondary state of affairs offered only the unpredictable violence of the second party, those who were determined to see only their positivized terms as the proper terms for approaching what is knowable. That Calvin sought from his secondary state of affairs some articulation for his primary concept, that this primary concept was ultimately subject to a secondary concept – a “medieval realism” (see Vollenhoven: CRP, 316) – we must attribute to his exhaustion. His was a positing that erred in detail though it was circumspectively correct, an error that was posited within true knowing – from the restful position of being-subject – yet was exhausted in its positing, positively exhausted.



4. apprehending the apprehensible: the signs of the end

Attend to the voice within, that whispers now and again that things are not going well (Vollenhoven: CRP, 313).^{lxviii}

All that is subject to God is restless. Things, *subjects*, are not going well – they resist their errant subjection – the signs are clear, we perceive them firsthand. What has been positivized holds structure within a structure of positization. Thus, each inherited

positivization is in-line or out of line with structure – either disconnected or connected. Each result shows itself as positivized in either its possibility or its perduring problems. And this is our inheritance: all structure and normativity, called to flourishing goodness, is burdened down as sin in the secondary states of affairs . Yet, called by God to flourish according to God's terms – God's law – one *knows* when violence or flourishing occurs. Created in connection, the signs of disconnection are perceptible as trauma and the signs of connection are perceptible as rest.

The Law for positing, the Law of the Spirit, is that command of law *for* the ever continual positive depositing and repositing of a position, is the command for the secondary states of affairs, where knowing becomes knowledge and knowable as such, where knowledge *determines* knowing, provides its terms, its concepts, from each person's conception. The secondary states of affairs are where the normative call to flourish and the structure called to flourish meet and point towards their great culmination: that unifying *relationship* of two irreducible flourishing relations of being-subject. The secondary state of affairs is the relationship where all flourishing meets, where structure is the subject of knowing and knowing the subject of structure via the positivized results that unify them. The secondary state of affairs is where the other irreducible states of subjectivity remain irreducible in their relationship with that third irreducible subjectivity that binds them together, an irreducibility that is, *qua* its irreducibility, their relationship. This matter will be further 'fleshed out'.

What is that point where knowing becomes the knowable secondary state of affairs, where the second party shares in one's own conceptual knowing? To answer this question we must consult Vollenhoven on the act of knowing and the various results of knowing.

Take for example the following. The act of knowing, for Vollenhoven, involves – at least as one determination of knowing – either perception or apprehension. Perception, as we shall see later, is but one determination or species of a primary concept, and apprehension but one determination or species of a secondary concept. In each case, because they are *acts*, neither perception nor apprehension ever involve purely passive psychic reception. Whatever is 'made passive' by perception is a *result*, even if that which is 'made passive' is itself more active than the one actively knowing.

As a *result*, what was simply-perceptible becomes now-also-perceived, and to that extent, something that is passive... The passivity of that which is perceived is simply the

lxviii ...en geve toch acht op de stem van 't eigen hart, die hier en daar toch nog wel eens fluisteren zal, dat het niet goed gaat (CRP: 313).

being-perceived. The term 'passive', then, should certainly not be taken here in a broader sense. Hence, it is possible that what is being perceived is very active, maybe even more than the one perceiving (Isagooge § 158).^{lxi}

Now this result, according to Vollenhoven, is what one *seeks* by the act of knowing, which is again either perception or apprehension. Thus, as an example for the case of perception, both Kepler and Galileo, says Vollenhoven,

...were not looking for "the emotional [psychic] effects of the color of stars or the noise of rolling balls on their senses! For even though the one as well as the other was present, they were there only as the substrate of something else. And that something else was the *answer to a question* that Kepler was seeking of the stars and Galileo was asking...of mechanical things here on earth [*italics mine*] (Isagooge §158).^{lxx}

Again, purely passive reception is never the act of knowing; instead knowing is that act that always *seeks* for itself a result.

Now, if 'love-filled obedience is the *first thing that is asked of every one*', then to *actively* seek an 'answer to a question' is always to seek a result through struggle with the knowable. And, this struggle *always* seeks a result in the knowable that is either self consciously knowledge or error. As Vollenhoven states, "we do not bring forth knowledge or error from ourselves, but *come to these two as though they were results*, to be gained only through the analysis of something knowable" (Isagooge §172).^{lxxi} Far from the neutrality of purely passive perception, the act of knowing always circumspectively seeks a result in a relation to the knowable that is already answerable to God as either flourishing or destructive. Thus, what is questioned in the knowable proceeds from a concept already determined in its circumspect answerability.

Each subjective state of affairs relates to the other under the law and its commands. Therefore, what is isolatable in a state of affairs is its relation to other states of affairs, hence a state of affairs cannot be considered in isolation. Thus, that perceptive concepts are a species of primary concepts is due to the fact that there is, in fact, a primary state of affairs that knowing *qua* knowing is always relating to.⁵¹ Likewise, a

^{lxi} Dit woordt daardoor van louter-waarneembaar tot nu ook waargenomen, dus in zoverre tot iets passiefs...De passiviteit van het waargenome is dus uitsluitend het waargenomen worden. Men neme dan ook de term passief hier vooral niet in een bredere zin. Dus is het niet uitgesloten, dat het waargenome zeer actief is, zelfs in hogere mate dan de waarnemer (Isagooge § 158C).

^{lxx} Men zegt toch, dat Kepler door waarneming van de Marsbaan en Galilei door het aflezen uit zijn experimenten antwoorden hebben gevonden op vragen die hen bezig hielden. Wat ze daarbij beoogden was toch niet de emotionele werking van de kleur der sterren of van het geruis der balletjes op hun zintuigen! Want al was het één zowel als het andere aanwezig, dan toch slechts als substraat van iets anders. En dat andere was het antwoord op de vragen die Kepler aan sterren en Galilei allereerst aan mechanische voorwerpen op aarde stelden (Isagooge § 158).

primary concept is only normative inasmuch as it cultivates or maligns that which is structural. What is cultivated is that which is instituted or positivized; it is no longer the act of conceptual extending but the affirmed and shared inheritance of results through which conceptual extending cultivates or maligns that which is structural. Hence, what is cultivated or maligns in result is that which is correct or erroneous in its positivization, yet this positivization always remains a positivization *of*, thus *what* is positivized is neither *primarily* correct nor erroneous in structure. Structure relates to knowing in its *yes* or its *no*, it either resists the problematic or erroneous positivization that holds it captive or opens itself up to the possibilities of further cultivation. But then again, even structure is cursed, it relates to normativity also as a *no* that resists the normative *yes* – the ground that shall be cultivated (*yes*) is already riddled with weeds and thorns (*no*).

Likewise, normativity approaches structure in its own answerable *yes* or *no*, the results of which hold structure either in a problematic or positive way. In either case, structure relates to normativity by disrupting or opening up that which has been already positivized while normativity opens up or holds bondage structure through what has already been positivized. Held as either a problem or a possibility, the secondary state of affairs is that space in which the signs of covenant or curse are brought to bear.

Thus, in normatively approaching that which has already been positivized by a secondary concept one is always approaching structure. Yet, within the positivization of structure one perceives either malignation or room for deeper cultivation (or both). Thus, through what has been positivized one can approach structure as that state of affairs beyond positivization that can be further cultivated (or maligns). This then is the unification of states of affairs under the commands of law: what is positivized is that through which structure is approached in the same way structure approaches normativity through signs of its *yes* or *no*. Positivization holds in relationship the irreducible relations of these states of affairs, and thus the law for positivization holds in relationship not only the states of affairs under command of law, but the vertical thrust of these states of affairs in their irreducible response (*qua* cosmos) to God.

Hence, perception is both a structural matter and a normative matter, there is a structure to the act of perception and an act of perception upon structure – including the structure of one's own perception. In fact, that one normatively perceives and positivizes the structure of one's own perception is the very self reflexivity that marks analytic

^{lxxi} ...we brengen kennis en dwaling niet uit onszelf voort, maar komen tot die twee als tot resultaten, alleen bij de analyse van iets kenbaars te winnen (Isagoge § 172).

functioning within a creature.⁵² In other words, that one perceives that the structure, normativity and the positivization of one's own perception are each irreducibly subject to different laws is the very grounds for self-reflexivity.⁵³ Thus what is structural about perception is always active in the act of normative perceiving, yet normative perceiving can never discern and positivize the totality of its own structure. Thus, what is positivized about perception remains irreducible to the structure of perception yet forms the positivized inheritance through which perception (and all else) is perceived.

Now, to perceive what has been already cultivated is different from the perception that sees the signs of further flourishing or the trauma of malignation beyond and through that which has already been positivized. Structure, after all, is always present in each positivization in its *yes* or its *no*, and it remains always larger than its apprehended positivization. This is why Vollenhoven always stressed the provisionality of every result. No result can pretend to have siezed structure, structure always plays beyond its positivization, subject to its own lawful command. Each result leads only to further results, this is the very pedagogy and provisionality of result, it opens up a creation that beckons cultivation for the sake of ever increasing flourishing. Perception senses that openness or that malignation. Far beyond the signified apprehension of structure, perception sees further signs.

What is apprehended is always an abstraction of structure, thus, the very act of apprehension is the conceptual understanding of that which has been positivized. That is, one understands structure in *this* or *that* way. Perception, however, does not seek out that which has been abstracted in the secondary states of affairs, in the open spaces beyond abstraction it seeks out further events of abstraction either as corrective to abstractions already positivized or as the expressive co-creating of something new. Thus, perception seeks out the structure beyond the positivization of structure, it seeks out a state of affairs beyond the secondary state of affairs yet which the secondary state of affairs always concerns.

Thus, *that* there is an interrelativity of primary and secondary state of affairs implies that normative subjectivity will interrelate with each and thus have concepts concerning each. These are, respectively, primary and secondary concepts. Or: because the structural subjectivity is in relation to normative subjectivity and because positivized subjectivity is the relationship between normative subjectivity and structural subjectivity, there will be two types of concepts for normative subjectivity as it approaches its subject.

However, considered from the side of normativity rather than the side of that which relates to normative subjectivity and that which normative subjectivity knows, there are different determinants of these primary and secondary concepts. That is, primary and secondary concepts are distinguishable into a number of different determinants of primary and secondary concepts. Primary concepts, for instance, are at least partially perceptive in character while secondary concepts are at least partially abstractive in character. Vollenhoven also points out (but does not elaborate!) the difference between “simple and composite concepts” (Isagooge § 174).⁵⁴ This, as I will show later, is one of the other determinants of primary and secondary concepts and has to do with the determination of one’s inherent and normative *conceptual arrangement*.

Let us illustrate with an example provided by Vollenhoven: Whereas Galileo and Kepler sought their answer to a question in the primary states of affairs, the secondary states of affairs are far different for analysis, because, unlike perception, what is known in apprehension as abstracted is fundamentally known through *symbols*, and what is known through these symbols is a *thought*. When “I apprehend a result that someone else arrived at” – i.e., a secondary state of affairs – says Vollenhoven,

...the point is not, assuming it happens by means of symbols (spoken, written, or printed words), whether the tone or typeset was pleasing to me or not. What I am keenly interested is the *thought the words refer to* that can provide me a link still missing in my demonstration, or an example that illustrates one of my expositions, or a possible counter example prompting me to be more careful when defending a particular thesis (Isagooge § 158).^{lxxii}

Thus, the very positivization of the primary state of affairs, requiring the *sharing* of results from one to a second party is a sharing that is fundamentally a relation of *symbolified* sharing: “when, in instances like these, language plays a part, we talk about ‘apprehending’” (Isagooge § 158).^{lxxiii} ‘Apprehending’ – from the Dutch ‘*vernemen*’, to learn, hear, to be told, to understand – is that affirmed inheritance of *knowable* thoughts that concern the primary states of affairs as passed along through *language*.⁵⁵ They are knowable thoughts that are not identical to the primary states of affairs, but *about* the

^{lxxii} Want in het laatste geval moge dat geschieden door middel van symbolen (gesproken, geschreven of gedrukte worden) ook daarbij gaat het er niet om of stem en lettertype me rustig dan wel onrustig stemmen. Wat me levendig interesseert is de door de woorden aangeduide gedachte die me een schakel kan brengen welke me nog in mijn betoog ontbrak, of een voorbeeld dat én mijner uiteenzettingen toelicht, of ook een tegeninstantie die me tot voorzichtigheid bij het verdedigen van een stelling maant” (Isagooge § 158).

^{lxxiii} Nu spreekt men in laastsgenoemde gevallen, in welke de taal een rol speelt, van ‘vernemen’ (Isagooge § 158).

primary states of affairs in either knowledge or error. They are of a different nature – *abstractions*.

Surely, however, there must be a difference between the act of conceiving and the result that is shared. Calvin, for instance, did not present us with his active abstracted concept, for it is by an abstractive act of conceiving that we read Calvin. What is shared, then, from one party to another, is shared in a different manner than that by which the result was first actively conceived (i.e., a resultant flourishing or violence). The irreducible difference between a normative activity and its positivized result comes to bear in this discussion, a discussion that concerns the difference between the conceptual result that is always already answerable in its circumspect extension of structure and the *discerned* result (detail) that is given to another in a *statement*. Thus, we require a discussion (statements) of even greater detail on this matter.

Let us start with the irreducible relation of analytic functioning. Both a concept and a statement are *analytical*, that is, they involve at base the making of a *distinction*. Distinction making can be *normed*, as in the case of the law of non-contradiction, which demands that each conceptual extension of structure has certain conceptual limits such that discernables such as *this* belongs to *this* concept only and *that* belongs to *that* concept only. But distinction making, as in the case of perception, is also a structural matter. That is, we must be able to make some positivized distinction concerning structure that describes the structural terms-by-which all normative distinctions are made. This too will be a provisional result. In other words, the lawfulness of structural analytical law response is that *functional* trait that we claim all concepts and statements will possess, regardless of whether they are normatively consistent or not.

Now, the structural lawfulness or functionality of normative distinction making itself involves, at root, a distinction regarding structure, a structural distinction that is the very condition of possibility for all normative distinctions. Thus, Vollenhoven, following Frege and Russell among others, distinguishes between a *concept* and a concept's *extension*; and it is this distinction that structurally – inasmuch as we have here understood structure – provides the distinct structural conditions for all normative distinctions. Problems with this positivization of structural analyticity have yet to surface. What can be said is that this definition of structure flourishes well beyond traditional logics, which understand the analytical only in terms of an Aristotelean logic of subject and predicate.

Frege radically transformed Aristotelian logic by distinguishing clearly between what a *logical* subject is (an object) and a *logical* predicate is (a concept), at least inasmuch as each functions sententially.⁵⁶ We might say that Frege saw clearly the difference between the structural irreducibility of logical and lingual structural functioning. Thus, whereas in lingual subject-predicate functions a lingual subject can also function as a lingual predicate in another sentence, *what* is a logical subject can never be a logical predicate.⁵⁷ So, *what* is it that makes a *what* a *what*? What are we talking about?

For Frege, the function of a concept is to *express* something *about* something, namely, an object. What is expressed is always functionally, and therefore *distinctively* non-identical to the 'what' that this expression is *about*, "extensions of concepts...are objects, although concepts themselves are not" (Frege: F&C, 32). The difference between what is being *expressed* and the 'what' that the expression is *about* is irreducible, that is, each functions *distinctly*, giving rise to the very structural nature of distinction. Now, a concept always needs a 'what' to express something *about* – it *extends* a 'what' as a *conceived* 'what' – that is, it needs some variable *x*, which, when named, is the asserted truth value for this expression.⁵⁸ When this empty extension, 'x', is intended (intensed) or given a concept it is said to be *saturated* (Frege: F&C, 24, 31).

Now, without saturation, a concept is never a case of 'red' or 'man', for none of these can stand as proper names, but rather 'x is red', or 'x is a man', since the function of a concept is always to extend some 'x', which when named, saturates the concept. For example, the concept of "Caesar conquered Gaul" is "x conquered Gaul", where "Caesar" is that named or *saturated* truth value claiming the spot of *x*, *about* which "conquered Gaul" *functionally* expresses as its extension (see Frege: F&C, 31). From the distinct point of view of the concept, 'Caesar' is the concept's *extension*, from the distinct point of view of the extension, 'x conquered Gaul' is the subject's *intension*, or concept.

Now we err, as seen, by either conceptually approaching the knowable with a result already in place, that is, seeking a result that either cultivates or corrupts. This is the answerability implicit in the (never neutral) question wherein structure is conceptually extended. All questions are loaded questions. But how does this actually manifest itself?

As mentioned earlier, it is important that "...the one *ordering* these concepts sees their extensions and mutual relations correctly" (Isagooge § 182), but what does this mean?

If one approaches the knowable seeking a result concerning a knowable state of affairs that is either self consciously knowledge or error, one is fundamentally in the

activity of normatively *extending* a detailed state of affairs under an already answerable circumspective result – that is, one’s circumspective *concept*. This concept, as it stands, is unsaturated, it is a loaded question without *detailed* result. Thus, one seeks *detailed* results within the already answerable result of one’s circumspective concept. The detailed results – the saturation – will thus be different from the already answerable result, the circumspective concept through which this result was found.

Now, one approaches the knowable in a manner of already answerable active *extending*, and it is this *conceptual extending* that will extend the knowable states of affairs in either a flourishing or non-flourishing way. Now, this conceptual extending never seizes and exhausts a ‘what’ in its irreducible structural detail, for knowing is always *conceptual*, a normative question that either correctly or incorrectly *makes distinct* something that remains irreducibly distinct in its structural lawfulness – that is, something that is *not* already human knowledge. It is surely a non-flourishing state of affairs to imagine that a concept could extend every thing and a thing could be named in the totality of a concept. Structure is always irreducible and greater than that which is positivized concerning it. Results lead only to further results. It bears repeating: “he who believes that God created the cosmos, proceeds time and time again from the presupposition that the wealth in that which is created will be much greater than we ascertained up to that time” (Isagooge § 15, 185).

Now, this ‘making distinct’ of things requires not that a concept extend a thing (or things) in its conceptual activity *qua* concept. This is impossible. One cannot extend a thing unless one sets a conceptual context for that thing. That is, a thing is only ever perceived as the extension of some concept that extends this thing in a determined manner. The conceptual context in which a thing is extended sets a certain conceptual state of affairs for that thing.⁵⁹ And this state of affairs, being normative or positivized is never the same state of affairs in which a thing is found in its irreducible structural relation.

The act of normative conceptualizing is a contextualizing approach, a question, and this question is the heuristic range or extension for the possibility of one’s pointing out actual things, a range directly determined by one’s circumspective concept, one’s conceived anthropological subjectivity. Thus, the conceptual extending, as we shall see later, is tied up to an already maintained conceptual *arrangement*, and this arrangement sets the range for further conceptual arranging, that is, further extendability.

Now, this normative and active perceptual extending of the primary state of affairs is surely different from the secondary state of affairs, which is, as mentioned, the knowable symbolified abstractions that, as result, concern the primary states of affairs. Whereas the normative act of extending the primary states of affairs through an already loaded and answerable question delimits a range of possible discernments without saturating the concept, this remains different from the actual act of *discernment*. What is given in a positivized result is some *named* discernment whereby the concept is saturated, as in the statements ‘*all dogs are mammals*’, or ‘*this dog is a mammal*’. The act of conceptually extending delimits but does not saturate the concept in question. Inasmuch as this conceptual range conceptually delimits a heuristic range of discernable entities, the act of naming *this* or *that* under a concept can take place. Thus, it becomes clear that *this* discernable belongs to *this* concept whereas *that* discernable clearly does not. It is only here that the norm of non-contradiction can at all be understood.

Hence, the extending of one’s conceptual extension is already subject to the norm of non-contradiction, the conceptual range delimits *what* will be included in the range and this *what* will not. But this is hardly precise work. After all, our conceptual extension takes the form of a *question*, ‘what if I looked at things according to this concept?’ – one will discern *what* does and *what* does not fit into this extension, or whether or not this extension is a flourishing manner by which to extend things.

Hence, this act of conceptual extension hardly knows each and every discernible detail within its range. Asking a hypothetical (yet loaded) question is never the same as saturating that question with detail already present to hand. Thus, just because a conceptual question draws a sharp line of delimitation regarding what is discernible, that does not at all imply that this line is seen in its sharpness. That is, it does not at all imply that all possible details are immediately discerned within the heuristic extension of one’s concept. This is an important point, for once one asserts that a concept has a delimitable range (extension), it becomes all too easy to demand that this delimitable range be counted and present for the concept to hold. But the act of counting in this case would be an act of discernment, and this discernment is irreducibly distinct from the concept that extended the cosmos according to some inerrant or errant hypothesis. The act of conceiving is irreducibly different from the act of discerning, the first is a loaded question, the second is the answer to this question, ‘yes, this fits; no, this does not; this may or may not; this I am not sure of’. *That* a concept has a delimited extension does not mean that all of *what* is possibly included and not included is already spatially present as

discerned. What is discernable is still in question, and this is the very loaded nature of one's conceptual question. But this question must be answered.

An answer is a matter of resultant detail, a question a matter of resultant answerability. This is an important distinction that plays a huge role in Vollenhoven's historiography. An answer is that which is positivized as result, a question that normative and circumspective approach to the knowable through the inherited results of others – they are different because they are *different states of affairs* of the subject.

Now, speaking of circumspective concepts, every *what* that is extended is extended according to that before-mentioned 'picture of the whole', that is, all of *what* is conceived as or as not anthropologically subject to God. Thus, in approaching the knowable with the loaded question, 'what is that which is created?', the resultant *discernment* that 'a, b, and c, are that which is created' will either extend things too broadly⁶⁰ or too narrowly. Since this now arranged discernment determines the course of all further distinction making this concept will circumspectively affect the conceived *relations* between what is discerned and further discernable. If the concept 'x are human' is saturated only with 'males' then surely the relations between males and females will change, given that each are discerned according to a different conceptual extension. Thus, as already mentioned: "if you take the area of that which is created too narrowly, you will end up deifying that part of the cosmos that, as you see it, falls outside it and you will begin to ask all kinds of questions about the *relationship* between the parts of the one cosmos" (Isagooge § 182, 283).⁶¹

Now, to Vollenhoven, no one should approach the knowable state of affairs without the WORD revelation in which all things rest, that WORD revelation that dynamically restores one in the circumspection that all things rest upon the Triune God. One can certainly err in details, as Calvin did by extending the sacramental Church under the concept of the state, but it is that *principium*, that resting-place that circumspectively allows one to be correct even in error. Error need not always lie in circumspection. The devil, indeed, may lie in the details.⁶²

Now, as alluded to, it is within this active (normative) conceptualizing and its extension (range) that one can *discern* that *this* or *that* (or *this and that* in the case of universal statements) subject in the primary state of affairs is in fact a delimitable extension in the range of *this* or *that* normative concept. This *discernment*, inasmuch as it saturates the concept with *detailed* results, is the stage between the normative activity of conceptualizing and the result given to the second party, which is symbolified in the

secondary state of affairs as a *statement*. Shared with the second party, the result becomes knowable and not merely an act of normative *knowing*, it becomes, in other words, the secondary state of affairs.

Now, discerning is that *judgement* that judges a knowable '*what*' as best fit under the extension of this or that concept, be it a perceptual or abstracted concept. Now this discernment, though it provides the foundation for lingually *stating* that this or that is an extension of this concept – thus *saturating* a concept's extension – is not necessarily a lingual act for Vollenhoven, "discerning is...distinct from lingually formulating and didactically ordering simple statements as well as from connecting the constituents and presuppositions of simple statements" (Isagooge § 181).^{lxxiv} This is especially important when considering the transference of primary concepts into lingually abstracted (primary) statements, which form part of the symbolified as the secondary state of affairs. As seen, primary concepts, unlike secondary concepts, are attuned to the depth of structure that plays behind and within all abstracted positivizations and is itself non-abstract. Since discernment is not necessarily lingual, a perceptual concept can be *saturated non-lingually* in its extension, that is, one can non-lingually yet analytically discern this or that '*what*' as an extension of this or that perceptual concept. As one opens oneself to the structural play beyond all positivizations, the play that is always, *qua* play, in relation to normativity, one discerns the signs of possibility and of shut down possibilities according to the circumspensive depth of one's *yes* or *no*, a depth that shall surely increase or decrease in the continuity of perceptual exploration. These are the doors of perception. In *yes*, in openness, the truth reveals itself in connection and through the expanses of wonder. The *yes* is an open question, an open expectation, this is the danger of *yes*, the fear and trembling. One asks the openness what cannot be known, one asks whether the question is worth asking, whether such defencelessness isn't murdered in such a world – whether structure isn't inherently violent.

When one has perceptively discerned the answer, when the answer reveals itself as truth one can make a statement to the Other – this is the origin of language. One says *yes* through one's primary statement, a *yes* repeated and affirmed in the second party's affirmed apprehension of what one has stated. This non-lingual conceptualizing and discernment are the preconditional terms for a primary statement, a statement that

^{lxxiv} Van dit oordelen is echter zowel het linguaal formuleren en het didactisch ordenen van enkelvoudige oordelen als het verbinden van de bestanddelen en onderstellingen der enkelvoudige oordelen onderscheiden (Isagooge § 181).

presents a new abstraction, a new discovery, a new cultivation or corrective to the inheritance of results that is the secondary state of affairs.

A statement is a *lingually saturated* concept, a lingually saturated concept that is knowable and is, in turn, abstractively approached by another (or oneself once again, as one rereads her own text) knower with her own conceptual approach. This knower, in turn, can abstractively discern the original statement – this lingually saturated concept – such that it in turn is the lingually saturated *subject* of her own apprehensive or abstractive concept, “

Someone analyzing focusses on the stated relation, making a simple statement into the subject of a composite statement and the quality of the simple statement into the predicate of the composite one...for example: “*The statement: ‘S did not pass by recently’ is negative*” (Isagooge § 187).^{lxxv/63}

And so, what was once a *primary statement* is re-stated as the subject of another statement, the reconceived, rediscerned stating of the secondary state of affairs back to the second party. Inasmuch as this latter statement is about another statement (which is itself about the primary states of affairs) we are speaking of a *secondary* statement. What one already shares with the second party in the secondary state of affairs can thus be re-conceived, re-stated, passed along to a third party, taken from the third party and passed on and on in a conceptual *inheritance*, always and again the secondary state of affairs.

Now, what is stated to the second party is not the primary state of affairs as though seen *prima facie*, instead, it is the stated result and thus discerned range of what is ultimately derived from the inheritance of one’s circumspective concept. Thus, a statement *transfers* the primary state of affairs – so to speak – into a particular conceptual arrangement according to one’s circumspective concept. This transference does not by any means deny the irreducibility of the primary states of affairs, which remain to be subject to God qua structure. That is, the primary state of affairs does not in any way become itself human knowledge by its becoming knowable according to some stated and thus discerned concept.⁶⁴

But this also does not mean that the primary state of affairs, now transferred in a primary statement, now affirmed in a secondary statement by the second party, will ever be the same. What is named can be summoned by that name, can be destroyed by that

^{lxxv} De analyse ziet op de oordeelsbetrekking. Men maakt een enkelvoudig oordeel tot oordeelssubject in een samengesteld oordeel, en de kwaliteit van het eerste tot predikaat van het tweede. Voorbeeld: “Het oordeel: ‘S passeerde zoeven niet’ is negatief” (Isagooge § 187).

name, can flourish by that name. Although held by law, the primary states of affairs are likewise held in their conceptual positivization. Thus, though the primary state of affairs remains vertically subject to God in its own right as structure, this structure will respond *horizontally* to normativity in ways that clearly show the malignation or flourishing of its structure.

And malignation runs both ways. Malignation is not only a case of the horizontal relation of normativity to structure which structure resists in its own relation back. As Vollenhoven makes clear, the cultivation of the earth (which is a normative relation to structure) is impeded by the curse that God placed upon the ground⁶⁵ (Isagoge § 120). This curse, birthed of the initial transgression, as well as the constant curse of our own maligned transgressions against creation – extinction, trauma, exhaustion – is ‘settled in’ to creation, and creation, thus unsettled, relates this curse not only to the one who first cursed, but to the fourth generation of his and her descendents.⁶⁶ The curse first birthed becomes *inherited*, rebirthed and rebirthed again.

These deeply compounded curses, generationally repressed and seething in their archeological pressure show their own ‘signs’ in the secondary state of affairs as trauma. These are matters of perception, for the signs of perception are different from the signs of apprehension. Apprehension remains the analytically abstracted, the lingually symbolified, the web of affirmed statements that make up the very fabric of one’s circumspective inheritance. One ‘sees’ the signs of connection and disconnection in perception according to one’s *yes* or *no*. Truth reveals itself in the recognition of perceptible signs, the signs of one’s pain made clear, the signs of healing grace as present long before the choice (*yes!*) for healing began.

These are the ‘signs at the end of an age’, the ‘signs of things to come’ (Matthew 24:15). Each positivization is always already internally and externally ruptured by these signs, the ‘signs’ of injustice may be the reason for one’s statement, but one’s statement, plagued by ‘signs of the times’ and the ‘signs’ of one’s embattled heart, signal both exhaustion and error in the result. Our giving of signs displays its own worrisome signs. Trauma is fought inside of trauma, trauma is given inside of trauma, and though the Spirit moves all things to flourishing beyond this or that trauma, the undisclosed trauma moves on nevertheless to the fourth generation. It shows its ‘signs’ in the making of our statements, in the disruption of our statements, in the maintenance of our statements. It is the spirit of an age, refusing or accepting the leading push of the Spirit. It is underwritten into all that is written and, inasmuch as it is a corrective, the reason for all

that is written. Neither deep enough as grace nor as powerful, it snakes through generations as the infection of seed.

Thus, it would be intellectualistic to think that the Other need always make the statement 'I am suffering', 'I need shelter' as the first cause of some new positivization. The signs are clear, they lie within the positivized: the mad, the opulent, the impoverished, the depressed, the signs are clear. They are perceptible. They are, in fact, apprehensible – too horrible to look at, to perceive. As something apprehensible to our perception, they are a challenge to the already arranged, the already recollected. The signs are clear: exhaustion, depression, nausea, anxiety and panic; these are the traumatic 'signs' that point to events yet unresolved.

But this is also true: the giving of signs also brings about 'signs' of renewal, the cultivation of structure – still cursed – flourishes while it perceptibly groans in sighs too deep for words – beyond apprehension. These sighs, too, are signs. The expressive co-creating which deepens structure in its positivization sees signs of uncanny fertility, one engenders a new corporeality, a new way of being⁶⁷ – yet still cursed. Signaled from beyond to deeper flourishing, the Spirit shows Her 'sign' of the covenant to Her creation. This, then, is the secondary state of affairs: amidst both the 'sign' of the covenant and the 'sign' of the curse, the secondary state of affairs is where signs are given unto the second party either for flourishing or for ill. Moreover, within these resultant abstractive positivizations of structure, structure is positivized either erroneously or correctly, and thus structure, in its own irreducible relation, relates to normativity with its resistance to the positivized or its opening up to the positivized.

Thus, the relation of structure to normativity and normativity to structure is held in relationship in the already established and the already knowable inheritance of the positivization of signs. Hence, an inheritance of the problems and possibilities inherent to each positivization lie in each positivized result. These are the perceptible signs of problem and possibility within each positivized signification. Each positivized sign *qua* sign holds the signs of problem and possibility in its very knowability as the secondary state of affairs. And, beyond these positivizations, normativity seeks new positivizations and structure opens itself to possibilities beyond all human knowledge. Each an irreducible relation each under a different law; each held as signified – bearing signs – in the irreducible relationship of the positivized – led by the Spirit to that great culmination.

⊕ 5. transference love/affirmed in love: the statement

“No” - Yes

“Yes” - Yes

Whoever blasphemes against the Spirit will never be forgiven; he is guilty of an eternal sin (Mark 3:29)

It should be no surprise that Vollenhoven gives primacy to primary concepts and the statement that expresses their discernment, a *primary* statement. Like Adam in the Garden of Eden, our first task is to name the primarily states of affairs for ourselves.⁶⁸ Thus, the primary state of affairs is conceptually *transferred* into the secondary state of affairs. Yet, not being primarily conceptual, it maintains its irreducible structural subjectivity. This abstracted *transference* of primary states of affairs is given (stated) to the other in a statement. Conversely, statements about statements, which are the continued state of the secondary states of affairs, are statements *about* statements passed on to a second party that are always about the primary state of affairs. Thus, that one restates a statement about a primary state of affairs implies either a certain affirmative or negative conceptual circumspection concerning that primary statement (Isagooge § 187).⁶⁹ For one is re-stating not only a statement as that statement's subject, but ultimately that range of discernment that the original concept stated gives extension to.⁷⁰ Thus, a secondary statement is not a *transference* given by one to another but, inasmuch as it is positive, an *affirmation* of one's primary statement by another, the very continuity of a concept as inherited.

Hence, all primary statements are given their concrete context in the affirmed cultural inheritance of continued secondary statements. Thus, a primary statement is always given within an already affirmed background of secondary statements (except for Adam who had no prior inheritance as he named the animals). To employ a long held reformational axiom: revolution is impossible; for revolution is convinced that the baggage of inheritance can be erased in a series of brand new primary statements. Vollenhoven employs a careful and patient epistemology (and thus: a careful and patient historiography), it takes time for the discernment of problems as it takes time to assert their solution.⁷¹

Thus, a primary statement is not a re-statement in the sense that it re-states a statement already made about the primary states of affairs – but is instead a re-conceived, re-discerned and hence re-stated wrestling with the primary state of affairs. A primary statement re-states a different state of affairs than does a secondary statement. It *transfers* the primary state of affairs, and while this immediately is part of the secondary state of affairs, it does not re-state the secondary state of affairs. It is not yet ‘secondhand knowledge’, for it is not necessarily affirmed by a second party in a secondary statement (that statement [x is p] is true), nonetheless it does breathe new life into the body of statements, since it is always an (apprehended, re-arranged, re-membered) reconception of what has already been stated.

Now, we are all faced with the primary issues and each of us is called to do something good, something *positive* with them, we are called to face each subject, each face, for the sake of flourishing subjectivity, to change the very face of the world. By being immersed in the secondary state of affairs – our relations with the other in cultural mediations we have culturally affirmed⁷² – we are all constantly forced to ask the question whether this or that shared answer to this or that primary issue in fact encourages flourishing, and so again we are faced with the primary issue. It is this flourishing, this ‘voice within’, this anxiety in the face of violence, this longing for rest, this voice that ‘whispers that things are not going well’ that moves us either to further flourishing or its negation. Truth, in its *prima facie* flourishing – that call that startles us – is the structure by which we conceive, discern and state, it is the truth of things in their primary states of affairs as subject to God. Violence or truth is the birth – the *conception* – of the secondary state of affairs, always a response to and for the second party – a response that sediments in an inheritance of either flourishing or violence.

The primary states of affairs are primary to our concerns. “It is no small matter,” says Vollenhoven, “if someone like Kierkegaard collapses on a street in Copenhagen at the age of 52 as a result of the seriousness with which he sought to implement the existential attitude towards life” (Vollenhoven: UoL, 121).^{lxxvi} This is far different than Calvin’s exhaustion. Existentialism, according to Vollenhoven, is that disillusionment with the secondary state of affairs that at one and the same time sees no escape from the

^{lxxvi} Wanneer een Kierkegaard op 52-jarige leeftijd in Kopenhagen op straat in elkander zakt ten gevolge van de ernst waarmee hij deze existentiële levenshouding heeft trachten waar te maken, is dit geen kleinigheid (UoL: 121).

secondary state of affairs, for the reason that it denies the existence of a primary state of affairs

the mistake of contemporary existentialism is precisely the priority given to science. After recognizing that it doesn't work, they put the domain of practical reason in its stead, only to embrace irrationalism when practical reason falls short as well (Vollenhoven: UoL, 129).^{lxxvii}

Practical reason, according to Vollenhoven, always comes *first*. For existentialists, the secondary states of affairs, science, is given priority – it is made *primary* – despite the fact that it recognizably (perceptibly) does not flourish, and the primary states of affairs, to which practical reason orients itself, is considered *secondary*. All that exists is the already affirmed to the existentialist, the already arranged, the already apprehended, the already recollected, there is nothing primary to expect. Thus, says Vollenhoven,

The order should be reversed. How we sequence these things should be *dictated not by the course of affairs* [the secondary state of affairs] in a failed Europe, but by the *structure of life as God has made it*. What is *primary* then is the knowledge of God and ourselves. It is on this basis that we move into everyday life (Vollenhoven: UoL, 129).^{lxxviii}

Vollenhoven's entire *Isagooge* could be seen as *his* knowledge of self based on the rest he has upon the knowledge of the Triune God upon which all things rest for the sake of flourishing – a *good* creation. One is not the sum of what is secondhand knowledge about oneself, i.e., what it means to be a man, a woman. Instead, each person is called to wrestle with the primary states of affairs because the primary state of affairs one wrestles with is also primarily *oneself*. Each person is uniquely called to flourish in one's irreducible structure, each is called to struggle with the primary states of affairs and therefore also the structure of the evil of one's time. We are each called to 'make a statement'.

This can be seen at the very beginning of the *Isagooge*.

The very task of introducing philosophy, notes Vollenhoven, is fraught with difficulty. Some introduce the results of others as their result; some introduce their own reflection on primary issues as their result.

To introduce the thoughts of others is either *critical*, which means it has nothing primarily new to say, or else "it remains directly an adduction to thoughts and books of another and only indirectly to the problems, namely, to the extent they were seen and

^{lxxvii} Want de fout van het tegenwoordige irrationalisme is juist, dat men de wetenschap voorop stelt, en dan, ziende dat dat niet gaat, daarbovenop bouwt het terrein van de practische rede, en, als dan óók de praktische rede te kort schiet, men in het irrationalisme vlucht (UoL: 129).

solved by this other person” (Isagooge § 2).^{lxxix} Introducing philosophy is itself either a matter of making affirmative or negative secondary statements about another’s primary statements, or else it is one’s own wrestling with the primary state of affairs, one’s own primary statement. Secondary statements, while non-identically re-positing already posited positions of others, do not posit anything fundamentally (primarily) *positive*.

But a primary statement need not always be positive, for in negating that which does not flourish one ruptures what has already been positivized with a challenge to reposition itself, to re-posit. One does not simply negate a secondary state of affairs with a new position already conceived, discerned, and ready to be stated. Such an intellectualism would have very little room for the visceral intuition which lies at the basis of a ‘no’, the deep perception that something structural is fundamentally maligned in what has been already apprehended and culturally affirmed (as a what). One primarily says ‘no’ for the sake of ‘yes’, for the sake of flourishing. The visceralness of “No! this or that only causes pain” is a primary statement. This is a negative yet a primary positing, a new position given to a second party as a secondary state of affairs. After the ‘no’, life between one and the other can never be the same.

Now, a *positive* positing of a primary statement results from one’s own position, one’s own struggle with the perduring problems of thought, the very positivized terms by which one faces each face. These are the same problems that faced and face each human. One does not therefore simply re-posit the de-positing results of the past, “the point”, says Vollenhoven “is to learn to approach the difficulties faced by thinking from one’s *own point of view*”, this, after all, is our *appointment* (Isagooge § 3).^{lxxx} Now, to develop ‘one’s own point of view’ indeed requires knowledge of the secondary states of affairs – for through one’s inheritance one is in constant contact with the Other already from conception – but it also requires knowledge of God and oneself, a primary issue. one’s ‘point of view’ comes by result of being ‘pointed to’, accused and redeemed in love, appointed to be a lover to the second party, in every event, at every second.⁷³

^{lxxviii} De volgorde is precies omgekeerd: men moet zich die volgorde niet laten voorschrijven door den gang van zaken in een mislukt Europa, maar door de structuur van het leven zoals God het heeft gemaakt (UoL: 129).

^{lxxix} Toch blijft ook zulk een inleiding rechtstreeks slechts toeleiding tot gedachten en boeken van een ander en eerst indirect tot de problemen, n.l. voorzover ze door een andre zijn gezien en opgelost (Isagooge § 2).

^{lxxx} Het gaat er nl. om, te leren de moeilijkheden voor welke het denken komt te staan, aan te pakken vanuit eigen standput (Isagooge § 3).

One is, via genesis, always already deposited, conceived as knowable, into the secondary states of affairs⁷⁴, One's circumspective position is largely determined by relations with the second party through the affirmed secondhand statements shared. Yet it is under this law or command of the Spirit that one is nonetheless called under law to another command, the love command. The love command is the law by which one is restored in rest to positively posit one's own circumspect position, which always *rests* in confession, one's answerable subjectivity unto God. But this answerable subjectivity requires that one does *good* – which requires the recipient second party – it requires one to present to the second party something *positive*, something correct. One is called not just to re-affirm what is already abstracted, but to conceptually transfer the primary state of affairs into a positivization that is *in-line* with the flourishing called for vis-à-vis the primary states of affairs under structural command of law.

What is posited to the second party? Nothing other than the second party (any subject that is *qua* subject, subject to God) made knowable in the secondary state of affairs, transferred into a statement whether in violence or in love, whether the second party has affirmed such a stated transference. One is or is not named in love, transferred in love – transference love. From the primary statement that transfers the primary state of affairs into a statement, to the second party who may resist the continued affirmation of herself in secondary statements, the secondary states of affairs are always the meeting ground between the primary knowable and the one called to know, including oneself (for one might very well affirm him or herself in a violent manner). Positive law, or the law of the Spirit is that command of law that binds the relationship between the irreducible relations of the primary states of affairs (under the creation command) to the state of affairs that is knowing⁷⁵, and the relations of knowing (under the love command) to the primary states of affairs.

This doctrine of the threeness of law, where the law of the Spirit horizontally unifies in its verticality the irreducible horizontal relations of the two other vertical commands of law, is the very meaning of *being-subject*, which Vollenhoven confesses as his circumspective starting point. Since Vollenhoven's circumspection rests in his confessed *being-subject* to the Triune God it is not at all strange that a subject should be subject to God under *three* of God's commands of law; the third of which binds the latter two, and itself, into a tri-unity – what Vollenhoven calls the “unity of life” (Vollenhoven: UoL: 153). Vollenhoven's terminology, his conceptions, notes Wolters, must be understood “in the context of his basically Trinitarian framework” (Wolters: VWG, 5).⁷⁶

Indeed Vollenhoven himself states (confessionally) that “the real unity of life can only be had where we hold to the triune law of the triune God” (Vollenhoven: UoL, 128).^{lxxxix}

This, then, is Vollenhoven’s central circumspective concept; being subject is not just being subject to any God, but *being subject is being subject to the Triune God*, and this Tri-unity should make a distinct difference, a difference of distinction, in one’s thought.⁷⁷

Now, the Father, in reformational confession is the Creator, thus the creation command that holds for the primary state of affairs is put forward [*gesteld aan*] by Him (Vollenhoven: BSHP, 2). As alluded to in Isagooge § 13, the Father’s irreducible relation to the cosmos through this law is one of “all predestining Counsel” (Isagooge § 13, 183).^{lxxxii} This is worth a brief note. Vollenhoven does not appear to see predestination as God’s foreknowledge of each actual event, for an event, as we shall see, is always an event of human response to God, and thus an event, being irreducible to God’s own relation to the cosmos, is thus unknown to God. All structure is subject to God, thus no cosmic responses to God can occur unless they are always already structurally lawful in their own irreducible destination. This is not fate, but destiny – results that lead to that great destination, the final culmination. What the event of response will be, even God does not know, but *that* this response can structurally be positivized means this response is always lawfully subject to God.⁷⁸ This range of structural possibility, bound by the creation command, relates irreducibly to normative subjectivity as that great open expanse that opens itself up to the cultivation of an always increasing connection-in-love. This brings us to the love command.

Now, all that was created, we confess, was created in Love and for Love, that is, through the Son. Structure is the playground for love, the place where love is cultivated and maintained as positivized. The love command is the very ‘boundary’ between God and cosmos, says Vollenhoven (Vollenhoven: BSHP, 2). Now, this is not a boundary in the sense of a “spatial line” or even in the phenomenological sense of “horizon”, but instead *the being-bound*, the ‘binding’ of God to the cosmos in love via His own terms – lawful terms that are “continually posited” by God, the terms which are the relationship relating the irreducible relations of sovereignty and subjectivity between God and

^{lxxxix} ...dat echte levens-eenheid alleen kan worden bereikt daar, waar de mens zich houdt aan die drieënige wet van de Drieënigen God (UoL: 128).

^{lxxxii} alles predestinerende Raad (Isagooge § 13).

cosmos (Isagooge § 13).^{lxxxiii} God is ‘bound’ in His own sovereignty, that is, “he is bound by virtue of his faithfulness to maintain his law once put to the creature” (Isagooge § 13).^{lxxxiv} But this means that the law is *dependent* on God and does not pre-exist God, for it only binds God after God *has bound himself to it* in faithfulness. Thus the nature of this dependence – and thus the further correlation of law with the cosmos, for one cannot exist without the other – is one of love. The law, says Vollenhoven, “is dependent on God and correlate with the cosmos. *When I speak about the law in this way, then I mean the law as love command*” (Vollenhoven: BSHP, 2).^{lxxxv} Thus, the self-binding of God in faithfulness is the in-written terms of that law of love by which God binds himself in a relation of sovereignty to the cosmos – it is, in fact, the very law that guarantee’s the continual positing of this very law. That there is any law *at all* – and thus a correlate cosmos – is the very meaning of the love command of law, for both law and cosmos were posited only by love, which is why all creation is called to love, to flourish.

God, therefore, *loves* His creatures through the terms of law that He continually posits on his own terms, that is, in love. The subjected-creature, in turn, responds to God through these terms, in love or not, although the creature is always loved, at least *primarily*. This relationship, says Tol, is one of a “religious discourse” (Tol: TCV, 101). Vollenhoven calls it a “walk in covenant with God” (Vollenhoven: CRP, 43).^{lxxxvi/79} It is before the face of God that one faces each face with terms of love, for these are the very terms by which one subsists, the very terms by which loving relationships are *created*.

The Son, who is the very incarnation of the love command, puts forward, therefore, the love command. Thus, in terms of God’s irreducible relation to the cosmos, Christ is He who relates in “creative activity” (Isagooge § 13)^{lxxxvii}, who beckons his creatures to co-create in enriched connected expressivity. It is the Logos who commands Adam and Even to ‘be fruitful and multiply’, writes Vollenhoven (See Isagooge § 119). The structure of creation is continually created, continually deepened, in the creative relation of subjects to Christ and Christ’s creative relation to the cosmos. This is the religious discourse of cosmos and God.

^{lxxxiii} Deze grens is nu de wet Gods, door God blijvend aan het geschapene gesteld (Isagooge § 13).

^{lxxxiv} God is niet aan de wet onderworpen al is Hij krachtens Z’n trouw wel aan de handhaving van Z’n eens aan het schepsel gestelde wet gebonden” (Isagooge § 13).

^{lxxxv} Maar, afhankelijk van God en correlaat met den kosmos. Wanneer ik zo over de wet spreek, dan bedoel ik de wet als het liefdegebod (BSHP, 2).

^{lxxxvi} ...wandelen in het verbond met Hem...(CRP: 43).

^{lxxxvii} scheppende activiteit (Isagooge § 13).

Now, the Spirit, says Vollenhoven, “maintains the *structure* of human nature and through his work there are men and women who not only hear the *norm*, but also listen to it” (Vollenhoven: UoL: 127).^{lxxxviii} The Spirit leads that *relationship* of what is normatively subject and structurally subject according to the command of law that the Spirit is faithful to. Thus, it is by the Spirit that structure flourishes in love by the normative act of lovers in love, it is thus the Spirit that – through the law She is bound in faithfulness to – shows openings in structural subjectivity through what has been already positivized while leading normative subjectivity to greater cultivations of love. *What* is structurally cultivated in love and loved in cultivating is neither strictly structural nor normative, but instead a positivized response to God. And though God has predestined lawful limits to the cultivation of structure, even God does not know *what* will be positivized in this bound subjectivity.⁸⁰ The Spirit does not command *what* must be positivized, She only leads Her subjects to greater positivizations, to the great culmination, to our destiny. The law of the Spirit, says Vollenhoven, is “*the law of culmination*”, and this cosmic culmination is a *process*, for Vollenhoven notes that the law of culmination was present already at the time of creation, for it was only when the spirit moved over the water that the works of the Father were made manifest (Vollenhoven: UoL, 126).^{lxxxix}

There is no final result, no spiritually blessed positivization that subsumes structure finally – this is not our destiny. Government, for instance, does not describe some scientifically determined systatic state of affairs to which its subjects must conform, instead government aims to lead its subjects from one [disconnected] state of affairs to another:

In that practical knowledge of everyday there is also the law of the Spirit's leading. It is there that we see the value of positive law which, in the case of government, tries to apply God's will, his law, to a specific situation that in no way meets that law. That does not happen by decreeing, i.e., ‘the Netherlands is now Christian!’ But it can happen by giving leadership, proceeding deliberately, moving things in a specific direction (Vollenhoven: UoL, 130-1).^{xc}

^{lxxxviii} Maar zijn leiding wordt niet afgebroken. Hij handhaaft de structuur van 's mensen natuur, en door Zijn werk er mannen en vrouwen, die niet alleen de norm hóren, maar ook naar haar luisteren...” (UoL: 127)

^{lxxxix} Ten slotte: daar is nog een derde wet: de wet des Geestes. Ook daarvan is al sprake bij de schepping: *dat is de wet der voltooiing. De Geest Gods zweefde over de wateren, en dan gebéurt er iets met dat werk van den Vader* [italics mine] (UoL: 126).

^{xc} En ten slotte is er in die praktische kennis toch ook nog de wet van de Geestesleiding: daarin ziet ge de waarde van de positieve wet, die tracht als overheid Gods wil, de wet Gods toe te passen op een bepaalde situatie, die geheel en al niet aan die wet beantwoordt. Dan kan niet

But this is true for all results, all descriptions even. Each result leads to even greater results. That is, each correct result has inherent within it a wealth of questions to be searched out in detail. There is no systatic and descriptive state of affairs to positivize, instead, one must only “positivize and...maintain the law that holds for that particular connection” (Isagooge § 109).^{xci} And this is an expansive and open task. Deepening the meaning of the church, for instance, means only to *maintain* its pistical lawfulness in one’s positivizations, and who knows what that will be?

This, then, is a deepened understanding of Vollenhoven’s continual insistence that all results are provisional. All results are a positivization, and each positivization, rooted in some conceptual question, finds a pluriformity of further questions in its discernments. Each question leads to further questions, this is the pedagogy of each result. Structure is too large, too vast to be held in some abstraction.

Thus, the Spirit relates to the cosmos in Her “all dominating will” (Isagooge § 13)^{xcii} (which only means that there is nothing that isn’t subject to Her will since all things are subject to the faithfulness of God). Still the will of the Spirit is never *this* or *that* positivized law. Rather, *this* positivized law can lead to *that* positive law, *ad infinitum*.⁸¹ And the Spirit leads through a command of law which the Spirit Herself remains faithful to, a law that provides the terms by which both God and cosmos relate. The will of the Spirit is never the law nor is the law identical to the laws we have positivized. Positivizations remain responses that are lawfully bound while the Spirit leads the cosmos to deepened connections that are faithful to the law that the Spirit has bound Herself to. Thus, the law is positivized inasmuch as one is subject to the law and maintains or maligns the lawful connections that hold for the whole of the cosmos in the act of positivization. These lawful connections are neither God’s Ideas nor God’s will, that is, it remains distinct from God’s own irreducible relation to the cosmos. The law, including the command of law that we call ‘Positive law’ or the ‘Law of the Spirit’ is simply the lawful terms by which the relations of Sovereignty and subjectivity interrelate.

But this command of law is neither structural nor normative, instead, it binds the creation and love command into a relationship that remains irreducible to those

door te decreteren: Nederlands is Christelijk: maar dat kaan door leiding geven, langzaam voortschrijden, in een bepaalde richting stuwen (UoL: 130-1).

^{xci} Terwijl tenslotte de gezagsdragers – uiteraard niet zonder contact met de ontzagbieders – de wet, voor het betrokken verband geldend, hebben te positiveren en te handhaven (Isagooge § 109)

^{xcii} alles beheersende wil (Isagooge § 13).

commands, and leads all structure and normativity to its *culmination* (UoL: 126). Hence, the work of the Spirit is *leading*, that is, the Spirit blesses leaders and their results only inasmuch as they *lead* to further results – that is, a deepened understanding of one’s own leadership in each area of life. There is no final end result, no law passed down from heaven, for the final result is only the new cosmos, where life is forever *led* without the trauma or possibility of sin – a life forever deepened and forever led.

⊕ 6. the declassified subject

A concept, for Vollenhoven, as seen, is always the active *conceiving* of a primary state of affairs. It is that rightly or wrongly loaded question through which that which is structural is framed or extended, the question that allows for either the correct or erroneous discernment of detail. A primary concept, therefore, is not about a *what*, but is always about the state of affairs in which that *what* is found, it is that conceptual context or conceptual state of affairs *about* the state of affairs in which that *what* can be *discerned*.

We ask here: how can a concept be *about* a primary state of affairs?

A concept *qua* concept can never be about just one thing as recent logicians have recently become aware. As Langer states, “logic does not deal with specific men or animals; it can apply to individuals if they are members of a class, but it can actually mention them only as members, not as individuals” (Langer: Symbolic Logic, 113). For a thing to be distinguished it must, at least according to Langer, already be a related member or instance of a class, and it is this being classed that allows some ‘sight’ of the things in a class.

A concept, as shown earlier, can never be identical to that primary subject that it holds in question, the distinction between a concept and its extension is the very structural basis for distinction making (inasmuch as we have understood structure), and thus must always be held distinct. Thus, a concept that extends only one subject is still a *conceptual extending* of that one thing, it still extends this thing according to a conceived state of affairs. And this state of affairs always finds that one subject in some determinant relation to other subjects. Thus, the conceptual extension of only one subject always already requires a broader conceptual extension of this one subject. That

is, it requires that this subject be isolatable only in its relationship to another subject, which, as we shall show later, is either the relationship of intersubjectivity, inherence, or genesis. Thus, a concept only isolates subjects inasmuch as they are already interconnected members under the concept in question, something Langer calls a *class*, “the fact that such individuals may be members of classes makes it possible for logic, which deals only with ‘some, or all members of a class,’ to apply to individuals” (Langer: Symbolic Logic, 113). Thus, the class of men will be classified according to the concept of what a man is. The class, for Langer, is not the concept, it is the *number* of individual members extended by that concept.

Now, there is something certainly true about Langer's intuition here. However, this concept of a class is not generally affirmed (very little is) in the philosophy of logic. Langer, like Russell, identifies a class with the extension of a concept. That is, all extensions are alike in that they are *numerical*, that is, the membership of subjects is either empty (\emptyset), singular (1), or includes a succession of members (1+n), this numerosity of extension is the class of a concept. Now, the extension of a concept is always *delimited* by that concept. That is, given the concept ϕ , *a* is included under this concept but *b* is not, this is the reason why the law of non-contradiction holds. Now, one can go two ways here. If the extension of the concept is considered to be a *class*, then one will generally insist that all class members must be numerically present-to-hand as the extension of a concept, otherwise we could not speak of the total number of the class at hand. Now, this, as the early Vollenhoven objected to, is problematic if there are infinite sets present, for numerical infinity means infinite succession, and infinite succession is always ongoing, that is, it cannot be siezed as a moment as the class of a concept. On the other hand, if the extension of the concept is not defined as a class, then the potential members are *held in question* and are a matter of [successive] discernment.

This is, in fact, a problem of discernment. If the only discernment that takes place is that of those subjects numerically present-to-hand in a class – already known – then there is no accounting for the discernment that heuristically (conceptually) *transferred* these subjects into something named and thus as something known.

There is, perhaps, an understandable difficulty in all of this. A concept *does*, in fact, delimit subjects according to its conceptual range, or extension. Thus, it *must* be the case that something will belong and something else won't belong to the extension of this or that concept. It becomes easy to imagine – in spatial terms – a complete set belonging

to this concept and a complete set belonging to that concept. Thus, if this subject does not fit under that concept's extension, this is clearly a matter of this subject not belonging to the numerically complete class of that concept's extension.

But this hardly needs to be the case. If discernment, in its simplest act is nothing more than the non-linguistic act of pointing a finger, the act of pointing out *that* subject according to some perceptual concept, then discernment is always a matter of *answering* a concept in question; a concept that is, fundamentally, a question – a way of approaching or extending the world. But the extension of this question for discernment is hardly already numerically complete in some frozen moment of space, as long as the extension of a concept is held in (a) question, its numericity is likewise held in question – it remains unknown and unnamed. Its numericity is a matter of successive and heuristic discernment, of saying '*aha!*', where one heuristically *answers* the conceptual question by discerning a subject that seems to fit under this concept's extension. This numericity, then, is a matter of the actual act of discerning, that is, a matter of *counting*, a matter of counting *this* among one's discernments, a matter of making this discernment count for oneself, a matter of discerning what counts and what does not. This hardly demands numerical completeness. In fact, while some numericity will always be *present* in the extension of a concept – since all subjects are subject to numerical laws – this does not necessitate that numericity reside in a concept as the form of a *class*.

Now, as seen, if one's concept extends subjects in the primary state of affairs according to a conceptual question, one is always extending a *range* of subjects that will either discernably fit the concept in question or will not. Thus, even without their being discerned and counted-in, the concept-in-question relates a multiplicity of subjects into its extendable range. But a problem arises. If the subjects are as yet undiscerned and unaccounted for in their multiplicity, *what* is a concept *qua* concept actually extending in this range held up in question?

The answer, as Vollenhoven sees it, is a *state of affairs* (Isagooge § 174). One is not extending a subject in a primary concept but a *state of affairs* in which subjects are found. Moreover, one is not only extending already known subjects in a primary concept, but rather a *primary state of affairs*. As seen earlier, primary concepts are, after all, about "*states of affairs* that are themselves not knowledge or error" and secondary concepts are about "*states of affairs* that are conceptual" (Isagooge § 174).

Now, if a concept is never identical to that which it conceptually extends we might say that an individual thing, as such, is knowable, yet ungraspable in its structural totality

by the normativity of a concept – in its primary state of affairs. This marks the very irreducibility of states of affairs under law. Thus, the irreducibility of *what* is extended and the given intensionality of this *what* is ensured in its irreducibility, the irreducibility of being subject to a different command of law. Normativity conceptually *intends*, while what it conceptually *extends* remains in itself structurally non-conceptual. And, any linguistically *stated* conception is, as seen, a secondary state of affair. Thus any specific thing transferred to the second party and affirmed by the second party is always a conceived primary state of affairs (and thus non-identical to the primary state of affairs).

Moreover, to *discern* this specific thing in the first place requires the conception not of a thing, but rather a normative conception of the primary states of affairs in which that thing is approached, that is, it requires a concept. Hence, a concept conceptually extends the primary state of affairs such that specific things in the primary state of affairs can be discerned and given unto the second party in a statement, now the secondary state of affairs. But again, to conceptually transfer a thing, to name or give a name to the second party is never identical to the thing itself in the primary states of affairs. You remain a mystery to yourself and I to you. While always the subject of human conceiving, the primary state of affairs, in their irreducible relation to normative subjectivity, are never subjectively already the named.

If the primary states of affairs, though subject to knowing as knowable, are untouched by knowledge in its own relation to normativity, then this knowable unknown must be 'named' or known as unknown. This has been the struggle of logic for ages, and has largely been the reason for the development of a logical syntax, a set of rules by which a thing is named in its open variability or its discerned unnamefulness.⁸² Following these advances, we might want to 'name' subjects in the primary state of affairs with the open variable 'x', an 'x' that names something that is in itself primarily non-named, not subject to either human knowledge or error, an extension subject to a different law than that of logical intension, a *subject*. This is how 'x' functions in analytic philosophy; analytic philosophy has long recognized a subject beyond its abstraction in language.⁸³ Hence, 'x' is never a name, it is a nameplace for that which can be named, it is a non-naming act that 'names' its 'x' as primarily non-named.⁸⁴

But Vollenhoven goes even further. It is not only a subject that is 'x' in the primary state of affairs, but the primary state of affairs in which these subjects are found is equally beyond its nameability. Hence, a concept does not only extend some as-of-yet unknown 'x', it extends an 'x' that is always already in relation to another 'x' in the

primary state of affairs. Thus, to extend 'x' and 'x' and 'x' according to a concept is not only to relate 'x' and 'x' and 'x' according to the concept, but to extend 'x' and 'x' and 'x' as subjects that are already related beyond the relationship of a concept in the primary state of affairs.

Thus, in understanding the extension of a concept as a class one grants the 'x'-ness of a subject yet refuses to speak of this 'x' beyond its discernability as already languaged. Thus, there is no extension of 'x' unless 'x' is already named, there is no process by which 'x' is extended as 'x', there is no access to things in their primary states of affairs. How 'x' ever entered the world of language as 'a' is unaccounted for, except in the correspondence theory of truth, where subjects are present as named yet neutralized from the loaded question by which they were discerned.

This is not to say that early analytic philosophers do not try to speak of subjects in the primary state of affairs. But in so doing, philosophers have to speak of the *state of affairs* in and by which these subjects are found, that is, the relationality of these subjects beyond the relationality of the concept that relates or extends them. This, of course, becomes very difficult, for one is asking what unknown relationship relates already unknown subjects together in their primary state of affairs. Honouring the primary unknowledge-likeness of this relationship becomes very difficult. The early Russell, for instance, bridged the difference between these subjects as 'x' and as named, 'a', by stating that the concept or predicate that extends 'a' is akin to a Platonic universal, and it is this Platonic universal that relates 'x' and 'x' beyond the world of sentential discourse.⁸⁵ By stating that a subjective linguistic predicate has direct correspondence with an extra-subjective Platonic universal, Russell could draw a connection between subjects related in the world of language and subjects related beyond the world of language.

But this is deeply problematic, as the later Russell admitted (he called such thinking a 'mysticism'⁸⁶). The predicate that conceptually extends subject is selfsame to the Platonic universal that relates subjects primarily and beyond conceptuality. The numerical completeness of a conceptual class is guaranteed by the numerical completeness of subjects under a universal that is claimed to be extra-cosmic and non-conceptual. The class of subjects under an extra-subjective universal is thus the same as the class of a selfsame concept. Discernment of an 'x' is thus guaranteed by the *already named* universal that relates an 'x' and an 'x' into a state of affairs. A class, then, is always already extended before its conceptual extension, and this class is always

already named in its very systatic universality, and while this pre-originary name precedes the conceptual act of naming, they turn out to be one and the same thing.

Unlike Wittgenstein and the later Russell, Vollenhoven refuses to remain silent about the primary state of affairs. But if it is not some pre-originary name that extends subjects in the primary state of affairs then how can we at all explain the relationship of subjects as structural in the primary state of affairs? That is, do we not immediately fall into a coherentism or historicism, where truth has little to do with what is structurally in-line but more to do with the fittingness of new concepts with their conceptual antecedents?

Now, truth is flourishing for Vollenhoven, and flourishing is *in-line* and not *maligned*. The law, for Vollenhoven, *is* the line between God and cosmos, thus one is quite literally 'out of line' with God when the law for structure is violated, that is, when the trauma of each subject shows its horrific and anguished signs.

This is not privileged epistemic knowledge. The signs are for all to see.

Vollenhoven does not at all pretend to claim some privileged epistemic knowledge into the primary state of affairs, but he is convinced that the same laws that govern it govern also normativity and what is positivized – that all creational states of affairs are under law – each under a different command of law. What is out of line reveals itself as untruth, and this reveals itself perceptibly in the signs of pain and joy. When one perceives, for instance, a certain irreducibility between the analytic and the biotic one is liberated from the loss of agency that one previously affirmed as a socio-biologist. When one percieves, for instance, that the power of the sacramental church is best left out of the affairs of the state, one affirms a certain lawfulness for each institution. These laws are given names: the biotic, the analytic, the juridicial, the pistic. They are positivized but as law they remain beyond all positivizations, beyond all subjectivity. Hence, the laws do not exist *as names* in the primary state of affairs, they exist only as *laws*, laws that we have named and positivized through our either breaking or deepening these laws (which are themselves a matter of positivization). There is no law *qua* law that is called 'the pistic', but we know very well that there is some irreducible lawfulness that *we* call the 'pistic', we know this in our joy of worship and the violence of overextended ecclesial authority. We have learned through trial and we have learned through error. We bear the trauma and the joy.

Hence, Vollenhoven is in complete agreement with modern analysts that one can never isolate the individual *as such* in the process of conception, things are always held

in relationship according to the extendable range of a loaded conceptual question. But, for Vollenhoven, this relationship is not only a conceptual matter⁸⁷, but a matter that has to do with the primary states of affairs, with 'matter itself', we might say. In the same way that there is no class unless there are members of a class – held in relationship by a (stated) concept – so there is no primary subject unless there are other primary subjects held in some *primary relationship*. This is the very state of affairs of the primary subject, the very meaning of the primary state of affairs. We name the subject of this primary state of affairs with the non-name of 'x', we name the relationship of these subjects in a state of affairs with the equally open variable 'α'. Thus, just as there is no 'as such' individual in a (positivized) concept so there is no 'as such' individual in a primary state of affairs. This is, as we shall see, *determinantly* true for all states of affairs, all three states of affairs are further unified and correlated in three determinants of interrelating subjectivity. As we shall see, each determination is a cross section that determines and therefore unifies the structure, normativity, and positivized subjectivity of subjects in relation.

Hence, Vollenhoven would agree that that there is a primary state of affairs in which a subject is made manifest, but this state of affairs is not a primordial class. A class does not mediate the 'x' of a concept nor does it mediate the 'α' of a primary state of affairs. Since such a conceived class is systatically and externally always already a name, there is no recognition of a primarily un-named state of affairs. To do so is to systatically hypostasize the results of the secondary state of affairs into terms by which 'x' and 'x' are connected in a primary state of affairs. Hence, what is in itself primarily un-named in its irreducible relation to normativity becomes primarily named – becomes normative.⁸⁸ Despite the subjects being open and variable in such a system, the 'x' that is a 'man' is nonetheless always already an instance of the always already named 'man', for 'man' mediates each 'x' that is a man in the primary state of affairs, like God's own ideas.⁸⁹ This, for Vollenhoven, is to equate the knowable with human knowing, for it is only what is human knowledge that is made to exist systatically and external to the actual act of human. If "human knowledge exists independent of us," then the knowable is no longer know-able, but becomes a "source of knowledge" (Isagooge § 171).^{xciii} To

^{xciii} De beide middelen, door welke we God, Zijn wet en (een deel van) de kosmos kunnen kennen, noeme men liever neit "kenbronnen". Deze term onderstelt nl. de juistheid van het beeld alsof menselijke kennis onafhankelijk van ons bestaat niet slechts in het als menselijk medegedeeld woord Gods en in de kennis van onze medemensen, maar in geheel in natuur,

think the primary state of affairs as always already named, as a 'source of human knowledge,' instead of being primarily un-named, a state of 'x's' lawfully (' α ') subject only to God without any trace of human-like knowledge, Vollenhoven calls a "realism." It is, he says, "a *misconception* of the diversity in the cosmos and overestimates the class concept" (Isagooge § 183).^{xciiv}

The misconception of the class concept is, in this case, to think of a concept as extending a class even before the formation of that concept. Now, a class, for Vollenhoven is always a component of making secondary statements, although secondary statements are not limited to statements that classify (secondary statements are merely *composite* – *about* primary or secondary statements) (See Isagooge § 183-4). That is, a class *lingually* recapitulates, or *classifies*, what has already been said in a primary statement. Classes are one manner by which one re-affirms the already transferred; it is a way of re-stating statements, of *classifying* primary statements into the discernible subjects of *abstractive* re-conception. Thus, the statement "'bees collect honey' is not the same as the 'bees belong to the class of honey-makers' says Vollenhoven (Isagooge § 183).^{xcv} The statement "bees collect honey" is a primary statement which, as part of the secondary state of affairs, can be further affirmed. One must *abstract*, via an abstractive concept – "the inherence of a particular characteristic occurring within a number of animal species into a class...[that] owes its being there to an abstractive organizing principle" (Isagooge § 183).^{xcvi} This abstractive concept allows for the discernment of this or that bee, as well as any other thing that is a discernible extension (and thus the class) of the abstractive concept 'honey collector.' Thus, to claim a class as the primary state of affairs is to claim an abstractive concept, which is a particular type of specific human knowing, to be something externally knowable to human knowledge, that is, to be a human knowledge that pre-exists human knowing.

Now, for Vollenhoven, there are three determinants to each state of affairs. That is, there are three determinants of what is a structural state of affairs, of what is a

waardoor men gevaar loopt het verschil tussen het voor mensen kenbare en de door mensen verworven kennis uit het oog te verliezen (Isagooge § 171).

^{xciiv} Dit is echter een miskennen van verscheidenheid in de kosmos en een overschatten van het klassebegrip (Isagooge § 183).

^{xcv} "Bijen verzamelen honig" is iets anders dan "Bijen behoren tot de klasse van honig-verzamelande dieren" (Isagooge § 183).

^{xcvi} De verheffing van een bij meerdere diersoorten voorkomende inherentie van een bepaalde eigenschap tot een klasse, die, anders dan de soort, niet een reële voortplantingssamenhang onderstelt, maar haar aanzijn aan een abstract indelingsprincipe dankt (Isagooge § 183).

positived state of affairs, and of what is a normative state of affairs. Each determination in each state of affairs is different from the other determinants in that same state of affairs. Now, this already disrupts the idea of the primordially of classes, for a primordial concept would only be about a single state of affairs and the extensions that make up its class. Thus, the primordial concept 'dog' includes all species of dog as the extended class of this primordial concept. There is no primordial concept 'dog' for Vollenhoven, instead, for a concept to be about dogs the concept must extend dogs according to some determination in which dogs are found – that is, some determination *of a state of affairs*. Thus, Vollenhoven is concerned with the determining condition for a concept's being *about* a state of affairs. Dogs are not discerned because there is some primordial concept 'dog', but they are nonetheless discerned in a subjectively *determinant* way.

Since a concept, for Vollenhoven, is *about* a primary state of affairs, and each determinant of the primary state of affairs is different from the other, *both* a concept and its 'x' is *determined* by these determinants inasmuch as a concept *qua* concept is about a state of affairs.⁹⁰ As we shall see later, this is because a determinant is a discrete determinant of structure, normativity, and what is positivized within a determination. Thus, as there are different determinations of states of affairs so there are determinantly different concepts. That is, there are three different yet determinant ways that concepts are about the primary state of affairs. Perception and apprehension, as we shall show, are but one determination of this conceiving.

Now, the primary statement 'bees collect honey' is at base a "simple statement, specifically one of *inherence*", says Vollenhoven (Isagooge § 183).^{xcvii} That there are inherent states of affairs, that is, states of affairs in which subjects are found as inherent, determine that there are concepts of inherence. Inherence is a determinant way in which we conceive the primary state of affairs. Thus, our concepts, which are about a state of affairs, are *about* these states of affairs in a determinate way. That we have concepts that are *about* primary states of affairs are explained by the certain determinant manner in which a concept can be about a primary state of affairs.

Thus, in order to conceive the concept 'x collects honey,' one is in the process of extending the range of what will end up being discernible under this concept. But whereas the *statement* 'bees collect honey' discerns the subject 'bees' under the extension of the concept 'x collects honey', the concept 'x collects honey' is itself conceptually *about* a knowable primary state of affairs, an 'x' that in this case has to do

with *inherence*. To state a primary statement after wrestling with the state of affairs ‘bees collect honey’ is to tacitly recognize in this wrestling that the stated *concept* ‘collecting honey’ is *inherent* to a number of discernible extensions, including what we have discerned as ‘bees’ in the primary state of affairs. Thus, the concept ‘collecting honey’ need not be an externally universal systatic class. ‘Honey-makers’ is not the condition for subject-membership in a primary state of affairs, instead, at least one of the primary state of affairs – essentially unnamed – *has to do with* what we here call ‘inherence’, and this ‘inherence’, we claim, determines our concept and its object itself; it determines the very terms by which we conceptually extend an ‘x’ in one of the primary state of affairs.

Now, there are other determinants of states of affairs, states of affairs that have nothing to do with inherence. Thus, we extend the same ‘x’ differently in each state of affairs; in other words, we extend the same ‘x’ of inherence in *determinantly* different ways. We encounter the ‘x’ of inherence (ourselves and the Other) in different determinants of a state of affairs.

⊕ 7. the primary state of affairs; stated secondarily

“In our investigation of the cosmos we have come across many things, but no substances” (Isagooge § 137).^{xcviii}

“...a thing without interrelations does not exist” (Isagooge § 69).^{xcix}

The primary state of affairs, for Vollenhoven is that state of affairs of subjects that are subject, as we have seen, to God through what he calls the “creation command”, or elsewhere “structural law”, that is, law as structural (Vollenhoven: BHED, 3). Now, the primary state of affairs, for Vollenhoven, can be seen as a state of affairs in which at least two subjects are connected via some determination or *determinant* of this structural law. This also goes for the states of affairs under the other commands of law. As we shall see, the lawful subjectivity of subjects under each command is connected in the determinants. The point elaborated in the following is this: a subject can never be isolated apart from another subject and the law that holds for each, this is the very meaning of a ‘state of affairs.’

^{xcvii} ...eerstgenoemd oordeel is een enkelvoudig, nader een inherentie-oordeel (Isagooge § 183).

^{xcviii} Bij ons onderzoek van de kosmos hebben we wel vele dingen, maar geen substanties aangetroffen (Isagooge § 137).

^{xcix} ...een ding zonder samenhangen (een ‘Ding an sich’ in deze zin) niet bestaat (Isagooge § 69).

A state of affairs *qua* state of affairs is, for Vollenhoven, the very correlativity of the law and cosmos. That is, there is no law without at least two cosmic subjects to lawfully relate and there are no cosmic subjects without a law to relate them into a relationship. This means that subjects are always found in relations or connections to each other: “the validity of one law almost always holds for a manifold of creatures” (Vollenhoven: N&LN, 55).^{c/91} Now, if a subject is primarily concrete (unabstracted) and always found in some relation or connection, this unique concreteness of a subject is always found in its relations or connections to another equally concrete subject. Thus, it is the relations or connections of one subject to another that express each subject’s own primary concreteness and thus uniqueness. Primary uniqueness is always found in the relation of one subject to another, and these relations are irreducible. I am structurally different from you, and you from me, and these relations are irreducible, *neither subject ever relates to the other in the same way*. We discover the subject only in its irreducible relations, the discovery of which is our own irreducible relation to the subject.

But how can we be said to relate at all?

If neither subject relates to each other in the same way – that is, if each subject’s relations are parallel but have absolutely no one-one correspondence – then how could two irreducibly relating things be said to relate at all?

We require a third irreducibility, a relation that relates, a further relatum.

For Vollenhoven, if each subject relates on its own irreducible terms, then there must be a further set of terms beyond the subject’s that lawfully relate the irreducible terms of each subject to the other subject.

There is, for Vollenhoven, something lawful in each exchange. In each irreducible relation of subject to subject there is a universality of law response. If we are not communicating well, we are nonetheless still communicating. Hence, these terms are the ‘law,’ the terms set by God for His own relation unto the cosmos and for the cosmos’ relation unto God. The law is not the relation, but the *relationship* between God and cosmos.

Now, a cosmic subject never relates to God unless it is always already in relation to another subject, subjectivity requires the recipient second party. There is no instance of only one subject and God. Not even prayer accomplishes this isolation. Thus, the law is not only the terms by which God relates to subjects, but the terms by which subjects-

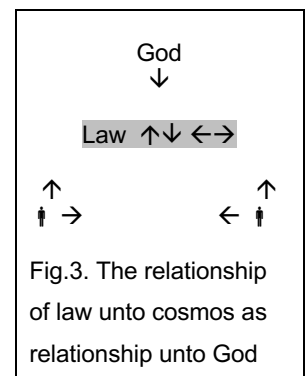
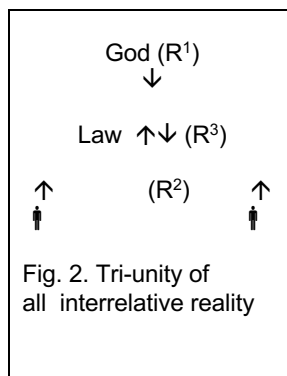
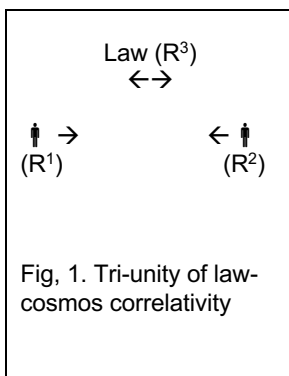
^c En het gelden van één wet is niet zelden een gelden voor een veelheid van schepselen (N&LN: 55).

already-in-relation relate to each other and thus unto God. The law is also then the *relationship* between cosmic subjects. To love God is also to love others.

The 'Cosmos' *qua* cosmos (in the tri-unity of God, Law, and Cosmos) is always the inter-relation of at least two cosmic subjects. The cosmos is not a single world-subject, but rather the state of affairs in which subjects are lawfully upheld in their relations. Each intersubjective relation, then, *is always already a lawful response to God*. Hence, the tri-unity that is the correlativity of law and cosmos – where at least two subjects are lawfully held in a state of affairs – is part of a larger tri-unity, that of God, Law and Cosmos.

A relationship does not belong to either subject for it relates subjects; it is a 'thirdness', not a subject itself, for subjectivity is the irreducible relation of the cosmos.⁹² Thus, in the correlativity of law and cosmos, law – which is not a subject – functions nonetheless as another relatum, it functions as the *relationship* that relates the irreducible *relations* between at least two cosmic subjects. There can be no relations without a relationship and no relationship without relations to relate, this is the very correlativity of law and cosmos.

Since subjects are always found in relation to another subject it is in this *relationship* that one sees the very nature of being a subject, that is being lawfully subject to God. A subject that is subject in its relation to God is *always* a subject in a lawful relation to another subject on God's own terms. Thus, whatever relation a subject has with another subject it is always and at the same time a relation of being subject to God – a *relationship* that is always in the first place, as seen, a call to flourish, terms set by God Himself for relations of love between Himself and the subject. Flourishing in each state of affairs is always held⁹³ in relationship by the terms set by God that the relations under these terms relate without violation, without violence.



So, if there is a tri-unity between at least two subjects relating via the relationship of law, this tri-unity is only made possible within the context of a larger tri-unity, that being the very parallel yet non one-to-one corresponding relation of the *cosmos* – which can be defined as the states of affairs of subjects-in-relation (to other subjects) – to God and the relation of God to these subjects. God relates to the cosmos through His own lawful terms of love to which He is bound in an irreducible relation of *sovereignty* while the cosmos, called to flourishing relations according to these terms, relates to God in an irreducible relation of *subjectivity*. Thus, the very lawful terms that relates at least two subjects *as subject* is the same law by which God relates to creatures. These terms hold God and cosmos in a *relationship*, but only on God's terms, since these lawful terms in which God Himself is bound in "faithfulness" do not pre-exist God, but are "*continually posited*" by God (Isagooge § 13).

Now, the law is God's *terms* (plural) for His relation of sovereignty and the cosmic interrelation of subjectivity. But there is more than one lawful term. We shall term this plurality as follows: there are several *modes* of this law. Now, a *mode* of law is different than a *command* of law. The law, in each of its commands – and thus for each state of affairs – is multi-modal. Thus, the modes of law are present, *qua* law, in each command of law, and each command of law commands these same modes of law for different states of affairs; the structural, the positivized, the normative. Thus, in each state of affairs under law we find subjects in relation to other subjects via the modal terms of the command of law that determines that particular state of affairs.

Now, there are fourteen such modes of lawfulness as Vollenhoven perceives it: the numerical, the spatial, the kinematic, the physical, the psychical, the analytical, the techno-formative, the lingual, the social, the economical, the aesthetic, the juridicial, the ethical and the pistical (Isagooge §31).

As already seen, lawful analytical subjectivity is both a structural, positivized and normative state of affair. The analytical mode of law will thus bear a different character in each irreducible command of the analytical mode of law. As seen, the structural distinction between a concept and its extension is always different, for instance, from the normative law of non-contradiction. In either case we are speaking of the same mode of law that relates subjects-in-relation according to different commands of law. This gets even more detailed.

Each command of law co-relates at least two subjects into a structural, normative, or positivized state of affairs. This reflects the tri-unity of the different

commands of law. But there is also a tri-unity of cosmic subjectivity, otherwise we would not be able to speak of the unity of the subject who is structural, normative, and positivized. Nor, for that matter could we discuss the *actual interrelative irreducibility* of these subjects lawfully upheld in different states of affairs. Hence, there must be some subjective determinations of structure, normativity and positivization that unify each subject in its irreducible relations to other subjects. Thus, these determinations unify the states of affairs of subjectivity and the states of affairs of subjectivity unify the determinations; this marks the correlativity of law and cosmos. Hence, there are *determinantly* different ways in which subjects are subject to law under each command of law.

A subject can never be considered as merely structural, or merely normative, or merely positivized. Each and every subject is an irreducible relation of structural and normative subjectivity held up in an equally subjective relationship of positivization. Thus, a subject can never be viewed in only one state of affairs, a subject is always the positivized subjective tri-unity of structural and normative subjectivity. But there must be something irreducibly cosmic that unifies these states of affairs such that subjects can relate to other subjects each in their own determination of unified subjectivity, normativity and positivization. The three commands of law, as we have seen, uphold at least two subjects-in-relation in their relationship, but what about the irreducible cosmic response to this law? Should this not be determinantly different? In terms of cosmic response, this positivization of lawful structure and lawful normativity is found in different cosmic determinations of these irreducible subjects-in-relation.

As a cosmic response, each determination is a different yet connected meeting point of subjective normativity, structure and positivization. Now, there are three of these subjective meeting points, that is: three of these determinants. This marks the very correlativity of law and cosmos. The law organizes the cosmos into three states of affairs to which subjects-in-relation are subject, while the cosmic subjects respond to these laws in three determinantly different ways. Each determination of response is one determination of the states of affairs in which subjects are subject to each command of law. There are three of these determinations. And as with all of Vollenhoven's uncanny triads, we should not be surprised to find a tri-unity here either, for as the states of affairs are unified in determinations, so also are determinations unified in states of affairs. Indeed, there is one subjective determination through which all other irreducible subjective determinants are held in relationship; and it is in this determination that the tri-

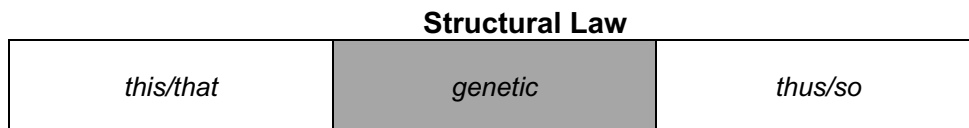
unity of states of affairs under law and the tri-unity of the determinants meet in unified subjectivity to God. It is here that we meet the unified subject.

Hence, when analyzing a single state of affairs one is always analyzing a single *determinant* of subjects in this state of affairs. This determinant is always part of a larger determination. Likewise, when one is analyzing a determinant one is always analyzing a determinant case of either structural, normative, or positivized subjects-in-relation. Thus, whatever is isolated is isolated only in its irreducible relation. Wherever a single state of affairs is analyzed one is analyzing the interrelating determinants of that state of affairs, and thus one is led to the interrelation of states of affairs in each determinant. Likewise, where a determinant is analyzed one is led to a structural, normative, or positivized determination.

Moreover, each determination is an instance of subjects-in-relation lawfully responding to God in a particular state of affairs as each state of affairs is a determinant way in which subjects are called to respond. Thus, each case of a state of affairs held in relationship and each determination held in relationship is always a case of at least two subjects in lawful relationship unto each other and thus unto God.

In analyzing a state of affairs we are necessarily analyzing the relations of its determinations in that state of affairs. Likewise, in analyzing a determination we are necessarily analyzing the relations of its states of affairs. Thus, in each cross section of a determination and a state of affairs we find a *determinant*. A determinant is whatever is its own discrete box in the diagram below. These determinants of subjectivity operate within a state of affairs but also within a determination, they too can only be isolated in their relation to other determinants of subjectivity.

Following Vollenhoven, these are the names of the determinations: the *this-that*, the *thus-so*, and the *genetic*. The *thus/so*, as we shall see, has to do with what we have already named 'inherence'. The genetic, as I shall later show, is the *relationship* relating the relations of the other determinants into a tri-unity. Thus, under structural law there are the following determinants.



Now, the genetic is the relationship relating the relations of subjects relating as *this* or *that* and subjects relating as either *thus* or *so*. A relationship is coloured grey.

Thus, in the genetic, we also find irreducible subjects-in-relation, which, as I shall argue later, is a matter of sexed subjectivity. Now, subjects relate structurally as *this/that* and *thus/so* if and only if structural subjectivity is always already in relation to normative subjectivity. That is, one's own structural subjectivity is in relation to one's normative subjectivity, and this subjectivity is always lawfully in relation to other subjects. Hence, subjects found as *this* or *that* are not only a matter of structure, but also a matter of normativity and positivization. Hence:

| |
|-----------------------------------|
| <i>this/that</i> (structure) |
| <i>this/that</i> (positivized) |
| <i>this/that</i> (normative) |

Here, subjects relating as either *this* or *that* are found to be determined as a structural *this/that* a normative *this/that* and a positivized *this/that* (which is shaded in grey as their relationship). .But it is also the case that the other determinations are likewise determinations of structure, normativity and positivization, each according to their unique determination (i.e., *this/that*, *thus/so*, genetic). Hence:

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>this/that</i> (structure) | <i>genetic</i> (structure) | <i>thus/so</i> (structure) |
| <i>this/that</i> (positivized) | <i>genetic</i> (positivized) | <i>thus/so</i> (positivized) |
| <i>this/that</i> (normative) | <i>genetic</i> (normative) | <i>thus/sp</i> (normative) |

Thus, in each determination there is one determinant that relates into a relationship of tri-unity the other determinants interrelating within that determination. But it becomes clear that if there is to be unity then interrelations between each

determination must also be in some sort of relationship. This relationship is once again triune. Thus, it is the case that:

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>this/that</i> (structure) | <i>genetic</i> (structure) | <i>thus/so</i> (structure) |
| <i>this/that</i> (positivized) | <i>genetic</i> (positivized) | <i>thus/so</i> (positivized) |
| <i>this/that</i> (normative) | <i>genetic</i> (normative) | <i>thus/sp</i> (normative) |

That is, where states of affairs are tri-unified in each determination of subjects-in-relation it is also the case that determinations of subjects-in-relation are tri-unified under each state of affairs. Now, the relationship of determinations and the relationship of states of affairs must themselves be unified under law if law is to truly relate into a relationship the irreducible relations of God and cosmos. Thus, as states of affairs are unified in the secondary state of affairs (the positivized) and determinations unified in the genetic, the specific determinant of genetic positivized subjectivity is the relationship unifying all determinations of subjectivity and all subjective states of affairs. Hence:

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>this/that</i> (structure) | <i>genetic</i> (structure) | <i>thus/so</i> (structure) |
| <i>this/that</i> (positivized) | <i>genetic</i> (positivized) | <i>thus/so</i> (positivized) |
| <i>this/that</i> (normative) | <i>genetic</i> (normative) | <i>thus/sp</i> (normative) |

This will have consequences later on.

Now, a state of affairs is always a case of subjects-in-relation under a particular command of law. A determination, conversely, marks off three different determinations in

which these subjects are in fact held in different sorts of relation. Inherence, for instance, is a particular determination of subjects-in-relation as *thus* or *so* under each law. Thus, the determination of inherence is expressed differently, as structural, positived, or normative, in the response of at least two subjects in lawful relationship unto God.

If this isn't complicated enough, one must recall that the law itself is modal and that these modes of law operate differently according to each state of affairs, hence there is a difference, for instance, between analytic norms and analytic laws. Now, however, these modes of law are further diversified with each determination. Thus, the structure for the analytic will have three determinantly different expressions as will the norms for the analytic. So, for example, the analytical mode holds subjects-in-relation in a determinantly *inherent* way yet this inherence is *inherently* different in its expression from one state of affairs to another state of affairs in that same determination. Hence, a determinantly structural state of affairs is, *qua* 'determinant', *inherently* different from a determinantly normative state of affairs. This is true also for each other mode of law. Therefore, each determinant is nothing more than an irreducibly determinant relation of lawful response to God, and this lawful response is always modal. Thus, each determinant is a different determination of cosmic response to God which occurs under the different commands of Law. The Law upholds at least two subjects in relation while these subjects in relation respond to Law in determinantly different ways.

Now, beyond determinations and states of affairs, the most we can ever isolate, it would seem, is a single determinant. Yet, this determinant *qua* determinant is always active with a determination or a state of affairs. But one can go beyond, for a determinant is nothing more than the case of two whole subjects interrelating in a highly determined manner. By 'whole subjects' we mean two subjects each of whom are unified in their irreducible determinations of subjective interrelation and are connected with each other via the unity of states of affairs. Moreover, since all interrelations between subjects in a determinant occur in a state of affairs, all interrelations are lawful and therefore subject to God. Therefore each determination is a case of the interrelation of God, Law and Cosmos, as is the complete correlation of God, Law and Cosmos in the unification of determinations and states of affairs. Within each determinant as well we find a different state of affairs and determination of modal law, which open up limitless boundaries for intersubjective law responses.

Thus, each determination must be unified in each state of affairs and each state of affairs must be unified in each determination, and the unity of these determinations

must be held under the unity of the law – which is only to say: there must be some subjective relationship related to God by the very relationship of the Law which, *qua* Law, relates the irreducible relations of God and Cosmos. This, again, marks the very correlativity of Law and Cosmos. Where the law unifies the cosmos – for which it holds – we find the cosmos unified in its subjection to the law.

Now, the difference between each determination is always a difference of subjective law response. It is now time then to ask what the nature of a cosmic law response is, or how it manifests itself. Each structural, normative and positivized law response marks an *event*, and events make up the fabric of *temporality*. As Vollenhoven states, "only when we come to events is there talk of temporal order" (Divergences: 115).^{ci} Thus creatures, who are by nature *subject to God* manifest their subjectivity in the temporality of their events. Thus, inasmuch as a subject is subject by relating intersubjectively in a lawful relationship unto God, this irreducible relation of subjectivity is always a *temporal* relation.

This brings greater depth to our understanding of determinations. Since subjects are temporal, their law responses mark *events* in (as) time, and so, if there are different determinations, each determination marks a different determination of subjective events. Now, this temporal response of a subjective determination, let us call it T¹, will be different according to the different commands of law that hold for the states of affairs in each determination. Let us consider the *thus/so* determinations, which as mentioned earlier, has to do with *inherence* (this shall be explained further along). Inherence will now be a matter of structure, normativity and positivization. Thus, the nature of inherence is threefold, such that inherent structure will be inherently different from inherent positivization, yet each remain a matter of inherence.

Since all subjective interrelations are a matter of law response unto God, time is constituted by the multitude of *events* where subjects-in-relation respond lawfully unto each other and thus unto God. The irreducible relation of the cosmos to God is thus a series of relations that are best described as *events*, and this eventuality may best be the definition of temporality. Temporality is the eventual response of subjects-in-relation relating unto each other and thus unto God. Time, says Tol, implies change (Tol: TCV, 100). Every subject, if it is to be a subject, will respond to God *eventually*. If a subject does not eventually respond it is no longer a subject. *Thus a subject is eventually*

^{ci} Tegen het eerste werd opgemerkt, dat men van tijdsorde slechts bij gebeurtenissen kan spreken (Divergences: 115).

constituted, its entire subjectivity an event-by-event response to God in relation to other subjects. Even though we eventually will sin, even this is subject to God.

We are to start, as mentioned, with the primary state of affairs. This will no doubt be difficult, for this essay is written from the point of view of Vollenhoven's epistemology. That is, we are already aware that the primary state of affairs is only known in its irreducible relation to normativity in each determination. But this essay is a series of secondary statements, therefore let us review what Vollenhoven has to say about the primary state of affairs.

In the primary states of affairs, which are subject neither to knowledge or error but only to the structural law of God, a creature's eventual response to God is not one of a normative "thou shalt", but rather a 'command that must be obeyed'; a command, as we have seen, to *flourish* since all things are created good. Since God is not subject to His law but is bound only by faithfulness, God does not respond to the law, but rather posits it for Himself and His creatures as those terms-by-which they relate. Thus, while God is outside of time (since God is not subject), God's interrelation to that which is in time can always change, but only by the terms He remains faithful to. Thus God, as we know Him, as He knows us, can also change.⁹⁴ But this is another matter.

Thus, God remains faithful to His creatures through His law (on His own terms) by calling His creatures to change. He does so via his various commands of law: the creation command, the love command and the so-called 'Law of the Spirit', or: Positive law. Each demand for change and each response – happening 'all the time' – means that each eventual response to God in cosmic intersubjective relations always marks an eventual change, and it is this continual change that is the very *flourishing* of the life of subjects; that structure flourishes in its cultivated positivization – it's co-creation.⁹⁵ This eventual change is the very meaning of a response, and a subjected response is the very meaning of time.

If there are three determinants by which subjects-in-relation respond to God in the primary states of affairs then there are three determinant subjective responses to law in the primary state of affairs (which is always a relation to normativity), each temporally different, each with its own deepened modalities according to each determinant in this state of affairs. Again, in each determinant of this state of affairs, we find subjects-in-relation, that is, at least two subjects co-related under the *relationship* of a mode of law, constituted through that law and responding through that law. Thus, in the first place we find subjects in their being determinantly *thus* or *so*, that is, the *inherence* of modal

functioning (or 'properties') in a subject's law response *qua* subject-in-relation.⁹⁶ This is the *inherence* we have for so long foreshadowed.

Now inherence is not only a matter of what *modal* functioning is inherent to a subject according to law, but the different deepened expressions of subject functioning to each of these inherent properties. That is, the more (of the fourteen) functions are inherent to a subject the more they imply a deepened or richer functioning to the subject not only by the subject having more functions than another subject, but a broader range of law response in *every* function inherently present. This requires explanation.

Vollenhoven explains these greater or lesser expressions of functional inherence with the terms *anticipation* and *retroicipation*. Take the instance of psychic-functioning for a subject, a *thus* or a *so*; "in animals the brain anticipates the psychic only...In man, on the other hand, it also anticipates the superpsychic", that is, the psychic functioning of the brain will have *greater* inherent expression in a human because this function *anticipates* other functions, "...we need only think of the significance of this organ for thinking [analytic law] and speaking [lingual law]" (Isagooge § 61).^{cii} A person, created *thus*, is subjectively richer in its psychic functioning than an animal, created *so* even though each inherently relate psychically, a person's psychic functioning *anticipates* more than does the animal, namely, the supra-analytical functions. Each responds to the same law, for it is only by the *relationship* of this law that they can be said to be functionally similar in law response as, say, psychic subjects-in-relation, yet each law response to law marks an *inherent* difference in a *thus* or a *so*, a difference of their functional anticipatory and retroicipatory law responses.

The *thus-so* determinant of subjective law response in the primary state of affairs has nothing to do with the concrete difference between an animal and a human; this is a *genetic* difference. Thus, we are able to compare two subjects-in-relation with the *same* number of subject functions and note their irreducible law responses, after all, one subject is *inherently thus*, and the other *inherently so*. Each human is gifted with his or her *own* inherence of structural law responses that is irreducibly different from another's inherence of structural law response. Thus, each each subject responds to the same law in their relations to one another, but these relations are *inherently* irreducible to each subject, for this subject is *thus* and that subject is *so*. No two people are structurally

^{cii} Tevens blijkt ook weer hier verschil tussen dier en mens: bij dieren anticiperen de hersenen alleen op het psychische, bij de mens daarentegen ook op het boven-psychische – men denke slechts aan de betekenis dezer organen voor denken en spreken (Isagooge § 61).

alike, which is the same as saying, everyone responds to the same modes of law in their own *inherently* different way. Even identical twins have each their own irreducible relations of inherence, despite such apparent commonality of visual inherence – the one's irreducible relation of inherence is never the others, they remain irreducible. This is the state of affairs of inherence, two irreducibly different law responses of a *thus* or a *so* held in relationship by the modes of law to which those responses respond.

Now, despite the fact that a *thus* may not inherently possess as many of the subject functions as a *so*, it remains the case that it will nonetheless respond to law in all of its modes. This is a case of *dissimilarity*. A subject that has no inherent analytic subject function can, for instance, nonetheless respond to the analytic mode of law by inhering as the analytic *object* of a subject who *does* inherently possess an analytic subject function. This objectification is clearly a matter of positivized cultivation, requiring a normative relation to structure. This situation, one of a *subject-object* relation also marks two irreducible connections of subjective inherence unified by the law that holds each irreducible law response in *relationship*.

Inherence, as mentioned has to do with temporality and the eventual nature of cosmic subjectivity in its lawful relations to God. To be a subject with greater inherent subject functioning than another, or, to be a subject that is the object of another subject with greater inherence is always a matter of *durational* law response. Inherence *durates* within a subject in the relations of that subject to other subjects. If a subject possesses inherent subject functions it does so always in lawful relation to other subjects. Inherence says nothing about a 'subject-in-itself', but only the subject inherently relating to other subjects. The event-by-event response to law with these inherent subject functions marks the *eventual* duration of a subject. These subject functions change *eventually*, that is, each law response is always irreducibly different from the last. One's blonde hair turns grey, one's body becomes ravaged by disease, one colours one's hair, one is cured. Each *durating* law response, different already from a *thus* to a *so* is different with each individual event, such that one is *thus* a 'different person' – yet remaining *thus* all the same by God's lawful sovereignty – which happens to all of us eventually.

Thus, we conceptually find subjects in a state of affairs by their determinantly being a *thus* or a *so* given their inherent law responses. But while this determinant of the primary state of affairs explains the *durating* connection of subjects under modes of law, it does not account for the contemporaneous interrelations between subjects under law. That 'x' and 'y' both inherently relate in having blue eyes is irreducible to the *eventual*

interrelation where 'x' and 'y' contemporaneously each see each other with these blue eyes. Put another way, duration explains the different 'vertical' connections of lawful subject functioning for each subject as a *thus* or *so*, but it does not hold in relationship the 'horizontal' interrelations between subjects as discrete *individuals*. Whereas being *thus* or *so* has to do with the lawful relationship of (at least) two subjects each with an irreducible character and number of vertical connections responding to the correspondent laws, the 'horizontal' interrelation of subjects has to do with the law responses of subjects under one (conceptually highlighted) mode of law, a mode of law in which individual subjects are found relating with each other *contemporaneously*. Thus, the same modes of law are present in each determinant of the primary state of affairs, but inherence concerns the lawful connections of inherent modes for either a subjective *thus* or *so*, whereas horizontal interrelation concerns the lawful interrelations between (at least) two subjects, a *this* or a *that*.

Take for instance the analytical mode, present in the very reading of this essay. The interrelations are irreversible; only one is the writer and only one is the reader, yet both are connected under a common law response, that is, both are making analytical distinctions. A friendship, for instance, is not a *relationship* in the sense of it being a 'term of law', for a friendship can only be one pluriform manner of law response. Thus, the relationship we call friendship has no efficacy as a lawful relationship; it remains a positivized relationship (holding structural and normative subjects) which is a subjective law response. Instead, the two irreducibly relating subjects that have formed a 'friendship' on their own pluriform terms have done so only by the ethical terms of law that hold the positivized terms for the irreducible relations of that friendship.⁹⁷

The eventuality of the *this-that* determinant of the primary state of affairs is one of *successive* contemporaneity, both subjects are present to each other as contemporaneous individuals and relate in a succession of irreversible interrelations. Thus, friendship is never a *durational* eventuality, it is something that 'emerges' *eventually* in the lawfully ethical successivity between subjects relating to each other as *this* and *that* (See Tol: TCV, 109). Inherent durationality is not an eventuality that requires contemporaneity nor successive interrelation, it is the event of inherence, an event that is not the contemporaneous interrelation between two subjects, but their relations as *connected* in irreversible inherent responses to the same law.

Though distinct as determinants of law response and therefore distinct in *eventuality*, the *thus-so* and *this-that* determinants in the primary state of affairs are

themselves not unconnected. A state of affairs *qua* state of affairs, after all, is the (tri-) unification of its determinants, and a determination is, again, a (tri-) unification of structural, positive, or normative law. Hence, the subject that horizontally interrelates as a *this* or a *that* with other subjects is at one and the same time the same subject that is connected with other subjects in vertical inherence as either a *thus* or a *so*. In the same way the subject of a determination is a unification of structural, positivized, and normative subjectivity, we encounter the same subject in different determinations; that is, we encounter different determinations of that same subject. These different determinations of subjects-in-relation would be a matter of encountering different subjects per determination if and only if these determinations were not unified. Thus, we do not speak of a different subject when we speak of a *this* and when we speak of a *thus*, the same subject is determinantly *this* and *thus*, but we must speak of this unification. Hence the unification of determinations is the unification of interrelative subjectivity under law.

To affirm the subject as determinantly tri-une in a state of affairs is unique, for one can affirm the unity of a subject all the while recognizing the irreducible determinants of this subject-in-relation in a state of affairs. Since we do not start from the position of sovereign subjectivity – a paradox with no principle of unification – we need not affirm subjectivity as something over and above its timed *eventuality*. There is nothing supra-temporal about subjectivity, being subject is responding to law, and each response to law marks a temporal event. The subject is not, says Tol, “something that is itself or distinct from the change of created reality” (Tol, TCV, 119). The ‘true’ subject does not lie as an essential unity behind its determinations, for its determinations bind the unity of that subject in the subject’s lawful interrelations with other subjects (and thus unto God).

The determinant connection that connects both determinants in the primary state of affairs is what Vollenhoven calls the *genetic*, and it functions as a subjective *relationship* that unifies in its thirdness the irreducible determinance between the determinants of either being *thus* orso subject-to-law and either *this* or *that* subject.⁹⁸ Now, the only way that the genetic unifies into a tri-unity the other two determinant states of affairs is in its being a determinant state of affairs itself, that is, a determinant state of affairs where at least two irreducible subjects are co-related by law. This is not uncomplicated. Subjects-in-relation in each determinant are not only relating to each other but are, in relating to each other, relating to each other also in other determinants of subjectivity. Each determinant relation of this subjectivity-in-relation is irreducible and

must be unified if the subjects are to be unified. The unification, then, must also be an instance of subjects-in-relation relating each irreducible determinant relation of subjects-in-relation. The lawful unification of subjects-in-relation in each determinant must then be lawfully unified in a determinant that unifies all subjectivity in its very being-subject.

Each determinant, as already mentioned, is an instance of at least two subjects in their irreducible relations unto each other and their unification under law. Hence, naming this a '*this*' refers to its irreducible relation to '*that*', and vice versa. I encounter your generosity, your beauty, your wisdom, your colour. But what relates you irreducibly as *that* to me? How are you irreducibly *so*? And who am I? What relates me as irreducibly *this* and irreducibly *so* in my relations to you?

The irreducible relation that relates all irreducible relations is that of sexed subjectivity. Vollenhoven does not explicitly name subjects in the genetic determinant as he does in the other determinants. Or is this true? Each determinant is named after its irreducible relationship of lawful subjectivity. Could the genetic also be named relationship-wise? Isagooge section §100-101 certainly suggests that the determinantly genetic temporality of law response for genetic subjects is one of irreducible sexed subjectivity – whether asexual (§100) or sexual (§101). In section §111, where Vollenhoven is only speaking of humans, he states that the “genetic relationship is determined by the genesis of full human life...*It is rooted in sexual reproduction*” (Isagooge §111).^{ciii} For those who would doubt that Vollenhoven saw clearly the irreducible relations between the sexes, consider that Vollenhoven’s entire way of thinking (his logic) is committed to the absolute irreducibility of interrelationality and their relationship – the irreducible interrelationality of God and cosmos, of *this* and *that*, of *thus* and *so* – Vollenhoven’s method reflects a commitment that *seeks out* irreducible interrelationality, and it should be no surprise that he discovers this in the irreducible interrelationality of sexed subjects. This should hardly be revolutionary.

Yet, this has huge relevance for current continental philosophy today. It may well be argued that our western philosophical tradition has generally treated the subject under discussion as neuter. “Sexual difference”, says Irigary, “is one of the major philosophical issues, if not the issue of our age” (Irigary: EoSD). If sexual irreducibility is the relationship that holds all determinant subjectivity into a subjective unity, we may well

^{ciii} De genetische verhouding.

Zij wordt bepaald door de genesis van het volle menselijk leven. Deze wortelt in de geslachtelijke voortplanting... (Isagooge § 111).

confirm Irigaray's intuition that most of the dis-eases of our age – the faultlines⁹⁹ – stem from the violence of this relationship (although she would hardly find these violences mutual, whereas I certainly would). Whether Vollenhoven would have affirmed this is not clear, we will leave this up to his biographers. In any case, we do not encounter a *this* or a *that*, but a male *this* or a *that*. And humans are not inherently just *thus* or *so*, but are irreducibly male or female in their inherent connections. Hence, we encounter not only *this* or a *that* and *thus* or a *so*, but also – and this is their subjective relationship – a *he* or a *she*. This is the determinant unity of (human) subjectivity under law.

Now, inherence requires an *inheritance*, as does contemporaneous interrelation. Genesis does not determine inherence or contemporaneous interrelation as though it were over and above the latter, but could be considered the “concrete context” in which *thusness* and *thisness* relate.¹⁰⁰ Although *thusness* explains the deepened during expressions of subjects in their functioning response to law, it cannot explain *why* an animal does not durate as super-psychic in its functioning, or *why* a plant is different from an animal. That is, it cannot explain the differences in the *kingdoms*.

Likewise, though *thisness* explains the successive interrelation of things, it cannot explain sexual reproduction where sexual interindividual interrelation brings forth a whole interrelating being. This is not just contemporaneity, but a matter of *evolution*. The genetic, says Vollenhoven, is “the evolving of the younger thing out of one or more previously existing things” (Isagooge § 98).^{civ} This ‘derivability’ is a matter of *kingdoms*, the passage from earlier to later is always delimited by the modes of functioning for each kingdom, “the genesis of these things takes place within the realm to which that thing belongs” (Isagooge § 97).^{cv} A plant never transcends its realm, it always subjectively responds to law no further than the biotic law response. Thus, contra the theory of evolution-*ism*, it is impossible, says Vollenhoven, “that the superstrate functions of the same thing proceed out of the substrate spheres” (Isagooge § 98).^{cvi} Vollenhoven would certainly admit to a certain evolution within each kingdom (this is, after all, a matter of ever deepened cultivation!), yet it remains impossible that one kingdom could evolve into the functioning of another.

^{civ} Het typerende voor het genetisch verband is evolvering van het jongere ding uit één of meer reeds vroeger bestaande (Isagooge § 98).

^{cv} De genesis dezer dingen speelt zich af binnen het rijk waartoe het betrokken ding behoort (Isagooge § 97).

^{cvi} ...de superstraatfuncties van hetzelfde ding voortkomen uit de substraatskringen (evolutionisme). (Isagooge § 98).

Structurally speaking the evolution possible to the kingdom of humans requires the differences of sex.¹⁰¹ This, then, is the concrete context of the human kingdom, one is either irreducibly a male or female in being an irreducible *this* or *that*, an irreducible *thus* or *so*.

The genetic, as already mentioned, has to do with the “earlier or later of things” (Tol: TCV, 114). This is the temporality of law response in the genetic determinant, and it is this temporality that holds the temporality of the other subjective determinants in a subjective unity.

Temporality is not merely the biological act of reproduction, but rather the carrying, through change, into the later of *all* lawful responses from what came earlier, biological reproduction is merely one aspect of this. Genesis is not the law response of a single mode of law (i.e., the biotic), but the passage from the earlier to later of every subjective law response. Genesis is the very *momentum* of the subject, thrust into its futurity, the subject from moment to moment as male or female, tracing a *line through time*, what Tol calls a “life line” (Tol: TCV, 115). Thus, evolving, or “development, involves the life history (the line through time) of things or persons in their concrete context of history and geography” (Tol: TCV, 115). One’s *momentum* carries with oneself not only genetic traits, but “something of what passed earlier and is expected later” (Tol: TCV, 115). But the concrete context of history and geography is not itself an entity outside subjects, it is the momentous “past and future of each thing” (Tol: TCV, 115). The past and the future is not some essence behind and beyond, they are the irreducible relations belonging to each subject – the momentum of shared expectations and recollections. The past and the future dwell in the relations of subjects-in-relation relating unto each other.

Now, the past and future of each thing certainly demonstrates the irreducibility of subjects in the genetic determination, but what holds this irreducibility into a ‘context’? A *kingdom*, as we have seen, regulates the *momentous* and irreducible flows of the earlier into the later and is thus the concrete context for *thusness* and *thisness* – all the while remaining its own discrete determinant in the primary state of affairs. A kingdom, by tracing in a time line from moment to moment the *inherence* and *interrelation* exclusive to each subject, unifies the interrelative and inherent law responses that each subject-in-relation has.

⊕ 8. the body positivized (or: engendering)

Societal differences are given, be it potentially, with the structure of the human body, by virtue of creation (Isagooge § 111).^{cvii}

There are still no civil rights proper to women and to men...Strictly speaking, there is still no civil law in our era that makes human persons of men and women (Irigaray: ILTY, 21).

As Vollenhoven's logic preserves the subject as *this* subject or *thus* through the irreducibility of each subject's relations, so also is sexual difference maintained according to the irreducible relations of each *he* and each *she*. Perhaps it would be foolish to turn Vollenhoven into a present-day feminist, but if one reads Vollenhoven as committed to the irreducibility of *he* and *she* one observes that the interrelation between the sexes is not only where we find the origin of sin, but also where sin and redemption finds its genesis throughout human (male's and female's) history. "The Mediator, as the seed of the woman, will live in enmity with the seed of the serpent, but will be victorious in that struggle" (Isagooge §127).^{cviii}

The story between the sexes begins in Genesis. It is only by seeing the sexual diversity of the animals (as he names them) that Adam notices that he is lacking a partner, says Vollenhoven (see Isagooge §119). "He has a need for companionship of a woman..That is why God's providing him with Eve is the solution to a problem that he posed himself" (Vollenhoven: UoL, 125).^{cix} While this may perhaps seem sexist, it also speaks of the dynamic genesis of God's interrelation with humanity, a religious discourse of such magnitude that man can ask for something that does not even cosmically exist. Now, the creation of Eve means that religion is "no longer the the religion of a single person, but of a married couple" (Isagooge §119).^{cx} It is this union of the male and

^{cvii} Daar de samelevingsverbanden weliswaar blijkens de structuur van het menselijk lichaam krachtens de schepping in potentie gegeven zijn... (Isagooge § 111).

^{cviii} ...reeds in het paradijs kondigt Hij de Middelaar van het Nieuwe Verbond aan. En wels als het zaad der vrouw dat in vijandschap zal leven met het zaad der slang, maar in deze strijd overwinnen zal (Isagooge § 127).

^{cix} Maar anderzijds is hij toch ook weer een gewoon mens: een man die behoefte heeft aan gezelligheid, en juist aan de gezelligheid van een vrouw. Vaandar, dat wanneer God hem Eva toevoert, dit de oplossing is van een probleem dat hij zich zelf heeft gesteld, en de vervulling van een wens (UoL: 125).

^{cx} De religie.

female that is the "first spiritual institution" says Vollenhoven, "wedlock is viewed here as a relationship of two fellow humans both of whom are created in the image of God" (Isagooge §119).^{cx1} This family does not mean that woman follows or 'helps out' in man's already defined path, but that together their task opens up to new depths and new heights. And so, the dominion of man is no longer confined to the garden, but together with woman dominion is extended the whole creation over when they are *together* told to "subdue the earth and have dominion over the fish of the sea" (see Isagooge §119).^{cx2}

Vollenhoven is certainly no feminist. Despite talking about the "mutual relationship" between "his and her neighbour" and how each neighbour is "equipped in a different way" but still stands "in the same relationship to God" under law, Vollenhoven still seems to see Adam as the sole office bearer despite the fact that the entire dominion of creation was open only to the two of them together. Thus, while Eve, who Vollenhoven calls the "weaker one" succumbed to the enemy, Adam, who Vollenhoven calls the "head of the covenant" was "willfully disobedient" to God's law (Isagooge §120).^{cx3} Perhaps this is an effort to place the source of the fall away from the woman, but one cannot be sure (why is it always one or the other and not both?).¹⁰²

In any case, it remains relevant that sin and redemption is understood as nothing more than the maligned or flourishing interrelations positivized between a man and a woman. And these curses and blessings are carried forth genetically as the lifeline of good and evil. Thus, sin is not just a matter of alienation from God, it manifests itself equally in human life, in Vollenhoven's own words: "there are repercussions for human life: Adam and Eve were initially alienated not only from God, but also from each other" (UoL: 125).^{cx4}

Zij is niet meer die van één mens, maar van een echtpaar. Dit bracht tweeërlei mee. (Isagooge § 119).

^{cx1} Het eerste samenlevingsverband wortelt van meetaf in het prefunctionele: de huwelijksband wordt hier gezien als een verhouding van twee naasten, die beiden naar Gods beeld geschapen zijn (Isagooge § 119).

^{cx2} Onmiddellijk op het gebod der vruchtbaarheid volgt de opdracht: "en onderwerpt de aarde en hebt heerschappij over de vissen der zee", enz. Vergelijkt men deze taak met die welke Adam zich voor de schepping van Eva zag toevertrouwd, dan blijkt, dat zij aanzienlijk is: de opdracht is niet meer tot de hof beperkt maar heeft ook op de aarde en de zee betrekking. Deze uitbreiding houdt wel verband met de mogelijkheid der ontplooiing van het menselijk geslacht met de schepping van Eva gegeven (Isagooge § 119).

^{cx3} De eigenlijke catastrofe vond plaats toen na Eva ook Adam bezweek. Want daarmee bleek ook het hoofd van het verbond ontrouw tegenover God, moedwillig ongehoorzaam aan Diens wet en de zwakkere tegenover de vijand (Isagooge § 120).

^{cx4} Gevolgen ook in het mensenleven: Adam en Eva vervreemden aanvankelijk niet alleen van God, maar ook van elkander; en Kain slaat straks zijn broeder neer (UoL: 125).

Now, let us bring this back to our discussion.

A single determinant of subjectivity, as mentioned, is never isolatable apart from its subjective relations. Thus, a single determinant of subjectivity is always found relating under the same command of law to other determinants of subjectivity. Moreover, this single determinant of subjectivity is also relating to other determinants of subjectivity within a larger determination. Thus, taken wholly, a subject that relates as *thus* to another subject relates as so in a determinantly structural, normative, and positivized way if and only if it is also, at one and the same time, a determinantly sexed *thus*, and concomitantly found determinantly relating with *that* other subject as *this*. The unity of all determinant subjectivity is found in its positivization, thus you and I relate through the tangle of recollections, apprehensions, and the already arranged cultivation of structure. Now, the unity of this positivized tangle of cultivations lies in the very positivized unity of the genetic determination. We relate in our *thisness* and *thusness* as an already positivized *he* and *she*, and it is in the relationship of these positivized genetic responses-to-God that sin or healing is taken forth to another generation. The unity of the secondary state of affairs lies in the relations of *he* and *she*, and the unity of the *he* and *she* lie in the positivization of this sexed relationship.

Thus, I can only relate as *this* or *thus* in my maleness, and my maleness is related as a male *this* and a male *thus* in the interrelations of my own structure, my own normativity, and the shared positivizations that bind me as one subject in relation to another. I am *thus* a male: unlike you, whether you be male or female, there is no male created like me. I relate as *this* male to you: you did not write this, you will only ever be my reader, I will only ever be your reader. The relationship of my normativity and structure is unified in the cultivated positivization of my sex. Myself as a structurally and normatively positivized *this* and *thus* is unified in the structurally and normatively positivization of myself as male.

The unity of you and I in our subjective determinations as a *he-and-she*-relating reveals, then, the unity of the positivization of ourselves as *he* and *she* – for this is the very means by which we relate unto each other in our determinations of structure and normativity. Thus, in the unity of this positivization we also find the unity of all our determinant subjectivity – we find ourselves as *thus*, we find ourselves reduced to *this*. We find our structure and normativity trapped in the already apprehended: a repressive etiquette, a singular sexed civility, inopportunities and stereotypes. We find our structure and normativity limited by an arrangement that has positivized you (she) as *thus*, and I

(he) as so. The ‘masculine’ woman (who is still a woman) and the ‘feminine’ man (who is still a man) find themselves de-masculinized and de-feminized in the positivized singularity of the idealized masculine male and feminine female.¹⁰³

Our subjective determinations of structure and normativity are unified in our genetic determination while the unification of these determinations is found in the positivized state of affairs, a state of affairs unified in the positivization of you and I as *he* or *she*. Thus, the relational unification of our structural and normative determinants as *this-that* or *thus-so* (the white boxes, below) is unified as a “He-She [(*this-that*) (*thus-so*)]” in our genetic determinant of structure and normativity (the patterned boxes, below), where He is *this* He and He *thus* and She is *that* She and She as so. Hence, where our structure is unified in ourselves relating as either structurally *he* or *she*, and our normativity is also unified in our sexed determination, each of these unifications are further unified in the positivization of our sexed interrelations (the dark grey box).

At the same time, these same interrelating determinants of structure and normativity (the white boxes, below), are unified in each determination of ourselves positivized as *thus* or *so* and as *this* or *that* (the light grey boxes, below). But these positivizations are further unified in the positivized unity (or disunity) of ourselves as *he* or *she* (the dark grey box). In our positivization of ourselves as *he* and *she* we find the very unity of life, that is, the unity of our structure and normativity and the unity of our determinant relations.

Key: ($\leftarrow\uparrow\rightarrow\downarrow$) are irreducible **relations**, ($\leftarrow\rightarrow$) ($\uparrow\downarrow$) are irreducible **relationships**.

| | <i>this-that</i> determination | <i>genetic</i> determination | <i>thus-so</i> determination |
|--|--|---|---|
| structural <i>state of</i> affairs | Structural <i>this-that</i> (\downarrow) (\rightarrow) | Structural <i>genetic</i> (\downarrow) ($\leftarrow\rightarrow$) | Structural <i>thus-so</i> (\leftarrow) (\downarrow) |
| postivized <i>state of</i> affairs | Positivized <i>this-that</i> ($\downarrow\uparrow$) (\rightarrow) | Postivized <i>genetic</i> ($\downarrow\uparrow$) ($\leftarrow\rightarrow$) | Positivized <i>thus-so</i> (\leftarrow) ($\downarrow\uparrow$) |
| normative <i>state of</i> affairs | Normative <i>this-that</i> (\uparrow) (\rightarrow) | Normative <i>genetic</i> (\uparrow) ($\leftarrow\rightarrow$) | Normative <i>thus-so</i> (\leftarrow) (\uparrow) |

And this itself is unified, for subjects do not relate to each other in states of affairs or determinations unless there is a law to unify their irreducible relations of subjectivity. This is the very correlation of law and cosmos. In the genetic determination of the positivized, or the positivized genetic determinant we find the very unity of life, that is, the

unity of all states of affairs and determinations under law. Here the very correlation of law and cosmos is unified, for here the lawful relationship between God and cosmos is unified; for it is only in the unification of the correlation of law and cosmos that the cosmos lawfully responds to God in its subjective unity through the unity of the law. God relates to His subjects as subjects that are always in relation, and lawfully relates to these subjects-in-relation as they have positivized their own structure and normativity, that is, in their positivized subjectivity as sexed subjects. As structure groans unto God and normativity commands its own sovereignty, God Spiritually relates to His creatures in their positivized rebellion and reformation, leading them to relationships of flourishing and rest.

If genesis is the *momentum* that provides a 'life-line' or a 'line-in-time' of each subject-in-relation's sexed structure and sexed as they move moment-to-moment from earlier to later, it should not be surprising to find that the genetic determinant of positive law is at root based in the communion of the sexes in the institution we call family. And family is not merely about biotic reproduction for Vollenhoven, it is rather the site in which the reproduction of culture, of ideas, of all human cultivations under law occur. This is why Vollenhoven mentions family as that place where one's circumspection is nurtured either errantly or inerrantly, for instance, when speaking about the development of knowledge, Vollenhoven states:

What does encumber this process is the lack of knowledge too often evident about the word revelation, either because parents themselves lack this knowledge or because they have forgotten it or deliberately keep it from the child. The deprivation or withdrawal of this light will cloud the mind (Isagooge §178).^{cxv}

Family is the site where one is already conceptually affirmed or disaffirmed the moment one is conceived in the womb – birthed in language and the birth of language. Family is that called-to-flourish positivization that provides concrete context for the very *momentum* of all normative relations with structure and all structural relations with normativity. It is, in other words, the concrete context for *society*; it is what Irigaray calls an "elementary social community" (Irigaray: ILTY, 28). Hence, family makes possible the very birth of one's own answerable circumspection. It is the already affirmed transference of the positivized subjectivity is passed from parent to child and is

^{cxv} Wat dit wel verzwart, is het niet zelden voorkomende gemis aan kennis omtrent de woordopenbaring hetzij doordat de ouders zelf deze niet bezitten, hetzij doordat zij haar vergeten of ook opzettelijk aan het kind onthouden. Het ontbreken of onttrekken van dit licht betekent verduistering van het verstand (Isagooge § 178).

expressed in the sexed subjectivity of a male and a female. It is the already positivized site whereby one cultivates oneself as a sexed subject, the very religious context of one's own transference love or hatred, of one's own answerable question in the struggle with oneself and others as structural subjects.

Thus, a family that does not flourish as positivized structurally has an effect on the normativity of the child and on that child's normative relation to structure. A family that does not flourish does not *engender* flourishing, it does not know by its actions that all is subject to God and all subjectivity is irreducible and called to flourish. It is not *in-line*, it is out of line; faulted, a fault line. It is faulted, and thus it is answerable.

We have a view of life and the world within which we can place all those experiences. We have *circumspective concepts*. They too were given to us. Not in the sense of apriori concepts. We received them through nurture and upbringing, in the light of God's word or not (Vollenhoven: UoL, 131).^{cxvi}

And thus, again:

What does encumber this process [of knowing] is the lack of knowledge too often evident about the word revelation, either because parents themselves lack this knowledge or because they have forgotten it or deliberately keep it from the child. The deprivation or withdrawal of this light will cloud the mind (Isagooge § 180).

This clouding of the mind - already clouded circumspectively in one's parents even before one's conception - is of terrible importance to Vollenhoven. For, if family is the *momentum* of all structure and normativity in the positivized state of affairs, it is thus also the *momentum* for all determinations of subjects-in-relation. Irreducible subjectivity meets in the irreducibility of the sexes, and it is here in the union of the sexes that the structure and normativity of all subjectivity is positivized in the institution we call family, this first spiritual institution. The structural and normative violence between subjects is rooted in the positivized circumspection which gave birth to the seeds of love or hate. Family is the crux of the matter¹⁰⁴, if you will, the very intersection of the sins carried over to the fourth generation and the redemption that came from the generational line of David. This is the life line of the positivized state of affairs – carrying forth the sign of the curse and the sign of the covenant – history is salvation history. Clouding of the mind means denying the irreducibility of subjects lawfully subject to God for the sake of flourishing. That is, the clouding of the mind inserts faultlines into a creation that was created good.

This nurturing aims to prepare their children for living not only in their own family, but also in *all other social institutions*. That is why for the future unfolding of future life immeasurably much depends on this nurturing, on answering the question whether this task is seen by both parents and whether in so doing they have an eye for the uniqueness of the different institutions (Isagooge § 111).^{cxvii}

Denied the uniqueness of flourishing sexuality in the family institution, it can be understood that all other institutional life – held in momentum by family – will be equally violated in its prescribed and irreducible intersubjectivity. These other institutions, determinantly different from family, are mentioned as “static”, for Vollenhoven, after all, as positivized, they only hold in a relationship a single determination of structure and normativity.¹⁰⁵ Family, on the other hand, holds in *momentum* these determinations and thus also their irreducibly different determinations of structure and normativity. Family is the positivized momentum of structure and normativity, and of subjects as either *thus* or *so*, and *this* or *that*. This is the very origin of circumspection, of one’s answerability, of one’s own transference love, of one’s struggle with the primary state of affairs, of one’s passing onto the second party one’s result. This is where one is positivized and where one positivizes. This is the very life line of salvation history, the crux of the matter.

But what remains important is this *nurture* mentioned above. For if the genetic truly indicates the division of the sexes such that it is the concrete context for being an indicative *this*, *that*, or a *thus* or a *so*, then *engendering* is a fundamental part of this nurture, as Irigaray states, “engendering a child is to be understood by the same measure as the engendering of society, History and the universe” (Irigaray: ILTY, 30). If family is the elementary social community, if societal differences are given with the very structure of the human body (Isagooge §111), then this structure of *he* and *she* must be attended to and engendered, “nurturing aims to prepare children for living not only in their own family, but also in all the other social institutions...That is why for the future unfolding of human life immeasurably depends on this nurture” (Isagooge § 111). Proper nurture, according to Vollenhoven, allows one to see the “uniqueness of the different institutions” (Isagooge § 111). Given with the very structure of the human body – as *he* and *she* – these institutions are always already necessarily engendered, thus it becomes

^{cxvi} We hebben eens levens- en wereldbeschouwing, waarin we al die ervaringen vatten. We hebben *omramings-begrippen*; ook dié hebben we gekrégen, het zijn geen apriorische begrippen: we hebben ze gekregen door opvoeding, al of niet bij het licht van Gods Woord (UoL: 131).

^{cxvii} Deze opvoeding nu beoogt de kinderen rijp te maken voor de sameleving niet slechts in eigen toekomstig gezin, maar tevens in al de overige levensverbanden. Vandaar dat voor de toekomstige ontplooiing. En binnen opvoeding weer aan de beantwoording van de vraag, of deze

important, as Irigaray notes, that these institutions neither become exclusively male or female. If family is the communion of male and female and if this elementary social community is given with the structure of the human body, then it is difficult to argue that only men can engender one part of society while females engender another.

⊕ 9. the structure of knowing

If, in each primary state of affairs is found a subject, this subject is also, as seen, a subject commanded not only under structural law – hence the primary state of affairs – but also the love command and positive law. This, as mentioned, is due to the fact that the structural subject is only a structural subject if this structural subjectivity is relating to normative subjectivity (and is thus positivized) in a determination. Since these commands of laws are the tri-une diversification of the law proper, the law we refer to in the tri-unity “God, Law, and Cosmos”, each of these three commands of law are correlate to the cosmos by co-relating at least two subjects into a lawful tri-unity, a *relationship*. Now, whereas the primary state of affairs is the primarily un-named subjects-in-relation subject to God through a modally *structural* state of affairs and its determinants, the subjectivity-in-relation subject to God under the love command will not be unified in a *structural* state of affairs, but by the ‘thou shalt’ of *norms*. This is the state of affairs we call knowing, under the normative command of law.

Now, the subjects of structural law and normative law are *not*, as mentioned, different subjects. Two subjects, connected in religious response under a normative command to love, even in a ‘heart-to-heart’ conversation, are not primarily *unstructured* or disembodied subjects. After all, we cannot speak about normative subjectivity unless normative subjectivity is already in relation to structural subjectivity – body and soul are only body and soul if they are in relation, neither can be isolated in themselves and each can only be isolated in their irreducible relations unto each other. These relations are unified in the positivization of the subject – the spirit in which the subject relates. Mouths must move, and the grammar and vocabulary must be already affirmed. The *unity of life* is precisely the tri-unity of a subject in its structure-made-to-flourish, its normativity-called-to-flourish, and the positivized knowledge of self that unifies the latter two into an

taak door beide ouders wordt gezien en of zij daarbij voor de eigenaardigheid der verschillende levensverbanden oog hebben (Isagooge § 111).

irreducibly distinct, yet wholly unified subject – and, of course, that this subject is, *qua* subject, lawfully related to other subjects.

Now, as mentioned earlier, this tri-unification of states of affairs occurs as or in a determination. A determination is that which is horizontally tri-unified to other determinations under the different commands of law. Since there are three determinations, each determination extends its structural, normative or positivized states of affairs under law differently. Thus, a subject is that inherent, interrelating, and inheritance of not only the primary state of affairs, but that inherent, interrelating and inheritance within the secondary state of affairs and the state of affairs we have called knowing. But the subject *qua* subject is determinantly threefold; thus there are three irreducible determinations of inherence, interrelations, and inheritance.

All of this is *temporal*. That is, each determination marks a different co-relation of subjects under law and thus a determinantly different law response, which is the very *event* of time. The event of my speaking is structural, normative and positivized, this interrelation of my states of affairs occurs as an *event* as I relate to you and you to me as subjects-in-relation. Thus, the heart, contra Dooyeweerd, is not supra-temporal. Held in its positivization, an event of the heart is an event in relation to structure and requires the equally cosmic relation of structure to the heart. The normative act of speaking requires the bio-mechanics of a mouth and the shared language of a culture, the rupture of a disease never occurs without its normative response – as structure deteriorates in death, so does normativity, death is the temporal event where soul and body are annihilated in the cessation of their interrelation. Each event is under law, under different commands of law, but under law; and inasmuch as this event is always under law, this event marks the very temporality of subjectivity unto God.

If each law correlates three different determinations of subjects-in-relation then the law *qua* modal law for each determination bears a different character per determination.¹⁰⁶ Thus, the analytic mode of law is different, for instance, in each of the three determinations. Consider the relation of analytical lawfulness in each determination. Analytical subjectivity is a matter of determinant inherence, inheritance and interrelativity, and each of these determinations reveals subjects-in-analytical-relations that are determinantly structural, normative, and positivized. This is also the case for all other modes of lawfulness in each state of affairs and each determination. Thus, the law *qua* modal law is different in the relation of each isolatable determinant.¹⁰⁷ The possibilities for systematic elucidation are simply dizzying.

Now, one cannot speak of the structure of knowing unless one is already positivized and has already, by an act of knowing, made distinct a primary state of affairs through which the structure of knowing can be determined or made distinct. That is, the act of knowing does not first approach itself for results, but approaches the primary states of affairs, and it is only by the structure one perceives in the primary states of affairs that one can at all consider the act of knowing. Thus, the act of knowing can only explain its own interrelation with what is structural by first elucidating what that structure is via some already answerable question.

Thus, having transferred in love the primary state of affairs through the positive positing of a position, Vollenhoven has a structure by which to explain the very structure of knowing. This is why Vollenhoven's epistemology is an appendix of his Isagoooge, his first task, given his own terms (as seen), was to give his account of the primary states of affairs.

Now, we are considering here the relation of normativity to structure. In each determinant of normativity it will be the case that the concept will be *about* structure in a determinantly different way. This also coincides with the relation of structure to normativity. Perception and apprehension, for instance, are the conceptuality belonging only to one determination. This has as much to do with the determinant structure of perception and apprehension as the determinant act in which perception and apprehension are normatively carried out. Thus, conceptual extension of the primary or secondary state of affairs will take a different normative character in each determination.

Now, in each state of affairs under commands of law, as already seen, a subject is always related alongside another subject, thus the conceptual extension of a primary state of affairs always requires that at least two subjects-in-relation are conceptually extended in their primary state of affairs. Furthermore, since the secondary state of affairs is always already about the primary state of affairs, this goes also for conceptual extension of the secondary state of affairs. In either case the very relation of a subjective knower who conceives and the structurally subjective knowable that is conceived is *always* a case of two subjects related into a relationship by a modal law in a determination and each state of affairs under law in this determination.

Since the genetic determination is a determination where subjects-in-relation carry as a 'life-line' the earlier into the later, it should not be surprising that, for the normative subject-in-relation concept formation takes the epistemological form of *recollection* and *expectation*. That is, we recollect *earlier* moments and expect *later*

moments. And, given the genetic differences of the sexes, the normative cultivation of structure, considered genetically, always occurs within the horizon of the structural possibilities of sex within the kingdom in question. Given this irreducible structural and normative interplay, we can truly talk about the irreducible normative relationality of the male and female: each can – given their structure and positivized position – expect and recollect different states of affairs. Given their structure, females can normatively expect different things than a male: we say of a pregnant woman, ‘she is expecting’, which cannot be said of a male.

Beyond the androgyny of a neutered normativity, the structural subjectivity of males and females under the genetic allows for a flourishing conception of what it means to cultivate intraindividual and interindividual male and female relations. And this means we ought to take our different recollections seriously. The historical repression of women by limiting their social expression to pregnancy and nurture has greatly suppressed the expectations of woman. And, the historical repression of men into competitive providers has greatly restrained the expectations of men. Neither sex is found truly engendering their limitless capabilities: men degenerated into a neutral public sphere, women degenerated into a neutered private sphere. The *moment* has come for both women and men, a moment conceptually co-created by the kingdom of humans in which male and female momentum can flourish as *this* and *thus* male or female, an affirmed state of affairs in which statements can pass from one to the other in ever deepening flourishing.¹⁰⁸ Will the kingdom come?

But this much is determinantly true for the recollections and expectations of either sex: each extends what is later as a moment and what is earlier as a moment. Thus, concerning the analytic mode of law, either expectation or recollection is always that conceptual activity where the extendable ‘what’, which is always an earlier or later ‘what’, is made conceptually “passive” (Isagooge § 162A & 166A).^{cxviii}

Now, since each determination is a different determination of concept formation, it should not be surprising that different logics emerge for each determinantly different determination of analytical lawfulness. Vollenhoven’s ontology, I think, locates each branch of logic (S-P logic, the logic of relations and modal logic) into its proper determination, each charted by the triunity that graphs the interrelativity of the cosmos.

^{cxviii} Het schema actief-passief gaat ook hier op: het herinneren is actief-, het herinnerde passief-analytisch (Isagooge § 162A). Ook hier is het schema actief-passief bruikbaar: het verwachten is actief, het verwachte is passief-analytisch (Isagooge § 166A).

This determination provides a place and task for each logic, such that one logic cannot determine (create terms for) determinations to which it does not belong. This seems to be the case, at least tentatively.

Modal logic, it seems to me, is an excellent example of subjective analytic lawfulness in the genetic determination, for the conceptual question by which one extends the primary state of affairs in expectation or recollection is generally one concerning *possibility* or *necessity*, which has largely to do with past or upcoming *moments*. The subjects that this concept extends are not contemporaneous, instead, they are generally subjects of certain possible (\diamond) or necessary (\square) *moments*.¹⁰⁹ These moments are expressed as ‘times’¹¹⁰, ie., “ $\square x$ at t^1 ” or “ $\diamond x$ at t^2 ”, etc.. The very question of possibility and necessity is given frame in Vollenhoven’s own genetic determination, for what is possible for a thing is based on the antecedent *moments* of the past, and what is necessary for a thing is based on the delimitation of kingdom and sex. Each kingdom delimits different lawful modes of momentum to its subject. This *momentum* sets both the *inherence* of subject functions for a subject and thus also its possible contemporaneous *interrelations*. Thus, each possible moment of a normative subject in its relation to structure is always already necessarily *momentous* by the necessarily structural moments or momentum of a structural subject (in its relation to its normativity).

A moment, t^1 , t^2 , that genetically extends a subject ‘made passive’ is always a *conceived* moment in its necessity or possibility, that is, it is an active moment, a moment that either *collects* or *recollects* an extension of applicable and hence discernible subjects according to its conceptual expectation or recollection. A conceptual moment collects or recollects a knowable state of affairs that is not contemporarily present-to-hand, a state of affairs that is either coming ahead or already behind the subject.¹¹¹ The genetic knowable isn’t a present-to-hand space in which the expectable or recollectable subject is found, the knowable is the momentous futurity that actively expects new positivizations – even new primary states of affairs – in its lawful relationship [walk] with God. Moreover, it is the momentous preservation of the past in the active re-collection of the now momentously re-positivized, the re-affirmed second party.

Thus, a moment does not involve a contemporaneous ‘what’ in its extension nor is a moment the extension of a concept, a moment *is* the concept that extends a state of affairs, it is the intensional conception of ‘what’ it will extend, the means by which each

what will be discerned. A moment is [normatively] epistemological; it is an active conceiving *of* a genetic state of affairs. A moment is the conceptual question (always answerable) that conceives 'what' is either recollect-*able* or expect-*able*, 'whats' that are always made passive as *extensions* of this conceptual moment, that 'live in the moment', as it were, and can be re-lived – always non-identically – in the moment of recollection. A moment is neither 'what' one recollects or expects but the very *momentum* in which recollectable or expectable 'whats' are conceptually extended as moments.

Now, 'what' is recollectable is always different from 'what' is expectable, they are, in fact, *different genetic states of affairs under different commands of law*. Thus, the *momentum* that recollects is different from the momentum that expects, it carries a different *momentum*. In recollection one extends a genetic state of affairs of 'what' came earlier, and, in expectation a genetic state of affairs of 'what' is later.¹¹² 'What' lies ahead later is always the untransferred and unaffirmed, unpositivized second party. This knowable 'what' – an 'x' – is in an expect-able [genetic] primary state of affairs, a primary state of affairs that is not yet here, not yet known. It is unrecollectable and therefore untransferred, but is nonetheless expectable and therefore know-able – *momentous*.¹¹³ And this is the openness of expectation. One must, says Vollenhoven, remain "filled with expectation, attuned to new surprises" (Isagooge § 15).^{cxix} Expectation, therefore, is always the already answerable question that extends 'what' is able to be expected (expect-able) in its conceptual approach without ever having already transferring the second – it is always ever ready for surprise, a presence not yet present, the very present (gift) of the later, the often unexpected. The moment the second party has been approached and named – transferred either in love or in shame – is the moment the second party is no longer expected, it is a different determination of event, it is the event of presence, of contemporaneity (or it is a moment, the event of a recollectable moment). Expectation is the always-unsatiated approach that approaches the unnamed 'x' without ever having named it. 'X' marks an ungraspable spot, an ungraspable site. Expectation is ever an extension of the untransferred second party – the very extension of oneself as oneself-in-relation through time, through the momentous approach of an expected conceptual extension. And, the extension of oneself as a life line is always through the extension of another.

^{cxix} see endnote 41 for Dutch.

Conversely, 'what' is recollectable is always the transferred and affirmed second party, the knowable 'what' in a recollect-able [genetic] secondary state of affairs. It is unexpected and therefore already known.¹¹⁴ It's 'knowness' is its very know-ability within the secondary state of affairs, the fact that it's knowness can be known, that is, it can be pacified and thus re-transferred into the extension of a re-collected conceptual 'moment'. Now, 'what' is re-transferred in a recollectable moment is the second party, but it is the second party as already affirmed – transferred into the known knowable – which, in being re-transferred is also re-affirmed, one affirms the already affirmed. The secondary state of affairs is always one's own yet one's own in-also-being-shared, for the secondary state of affairs is always the gift from or to the second party, thus 'what' is already known as knowable (and knowable as known) is what is already affirmed in one's interrelation with the second party.¹¹⁵ Hence recollection, in knowing the knowable that is known – the secondary state of affairs – *approaches* these recollectable 'whats' with a certain *momentum*, a question or answer that extends 'what' is able to be recollectable (recollect-able). Recollection is the conceptual extension that extends the earlier, that extends into moments what is already known and therefore knowable about oneself-in-relation-to-the-second party¹¹⁶, it is the momentum that re-extends one's own extension in time – one's retentive line in life – a momentary re-collection of 'what' has earlier been collected.

Thus, recollection and expectation, expectation the very act of collecting, always occurs in a collective, a lawfully regulated community with the second party, for the second party is always the extendable 'what'. Community with the second party is the vast knowable known secondary state of affairs, the second-hand knowledge that is affirmed in the geographical locality of expectation or the spirit of one's age. But community with the second party is also the vast expanse of unknown flourishing, the unexpected 'surprises' of the second party (oneself even) that one must keep attuned to. 'What' one recollects, is always the transferred and affirmed knowledge whose affirmation requires interrelation with the second, the collective [communal] circumspection by which one recollects 'whats' into 'moments' for oneself, the very circumspectively shared momentum of the question through which one extends 'whats' into a moment. Likewise, 'what' one expects either for oneself or for the second party, occurs always in the collective of oneself with the second party. And, while this collective genetically conditions one's expectation it does not determine it, one's moments are always one's own, each has his own struggle, her own expectations of her structure, of

your structure. These then are the structural determinations of the genetic mode of analytic law response in its primary and secondary states of affairs.

If expectation and recollection mark the conceptual-extensional *momentum* of a normative subject to the knowable, then perception and apprehension mark the event of presence only made possible by one's momentum. What was expectable or recollectable is no longer extended as a moment, but is now extended as present-to-hand, as contemporaneous. Vollenhoven, who does not use Tol's language, states this irreducibility as such: "recollection establishes an interrelation between successive correlates: perception, including intra-individual perceiving, does the same between contemporary correlates" (Isagooge § 163).^{cxix} Now, despite the difference in the use of the word "successive", Tol and Vollenhoven are stating the same concept. The successivity of a *this-that* relationship requires that *this* and *that* are correlates "contemporaneous" to each other. But this contemporaneousness nonetheless occurs *successively*, "when the one human suggests something to another, one is suggesting or active, the other is the recipient or passive" (Isagooge § 80).^{cxxi} Each act of contemporaneously 'making passive' marks a successivity. But the correlates of each determination are different as well, the successivity of *this* and *that* always occurs between contemporary "*constituents*" whereas the 'successive correlates' of recollection and expectation are momentous – they always occurs between *earlier* or *later* "moments" (Isagooge § 78).¹¹⁷

Now, if 'what' the earlier or later of expectation and recollection collect or recollect are *moments*, then this *moment* sets the concrete context, the *momentum* (as per its genetic state of affairs) for the *de facto* interrelations between contemporary constituents in either the successivity of perception or apprehension. Thus, the structure of a genetic concept extends a recollect-able 'what' or an expect-able 'what', but neither of these 'whats' are contemporaneous to the subject in genesis. They are, however, contemporaneous to the structure of a concept in the *this-that* state of affairs. As recollection is a collective with the transferred and affirmed second party and expectation the collective with the untransferred and as-of-yet-unknown second party, the primary and secondary state of affairs determine their own discrete structures-for-concept-formation as perception and apprehension in the *this-that* determinant.

^{cxix} De herinnering sticht een samenhang tussen successieve correlata, de waarneming, ook de intra-individuele, tussen contemporele (Isagooge § 163).

This has direct ties to the so-called 'logic of relations'. The logic of relations always extends in its concept two contemporary subjects. Thus, if 'P' is our concept, we state the contemporary interrelations of 'x' to 'y' as 'Pxy', and of 'y' to 'x' as 'Pyx'. Now, Vollenhoven, when discussing the nature of statements, divides statements up according to each determination of states of affairs. Whereas statements of inherence are generally a matter of ascribing a predicate to a subject, i.e., Px or Py, as in "bees collect honey", statements involving *interrelation* have the logical form of Pxy, i.e., "**this** child *grows faster* than **that** one" (Isagooge § 183).^{cxxii} Since contemporaneity involves a being present-to-each other, the extensions of a *this-that* concept are *always* a matter of extending at least two subjects given their successive contemporaneity.

Perception, as already mentioned, is that struggle with the *this-that* primary state of affairs, an 'x', an approachable name in its always primarily unnamed otherness. Since perception is one's own struggle in a collective, through one's own primary statement positivized into the collection of the already affirmed, through one's own struggle for flourishing with the second party, perception approaches the primary states of affairs with the *momentum* of open expectation. Yet perception does not extend subjects as expect-able but rather as percept-able; constituents are made passive as *contemporary* extensions of some perceptual question, a question granted its very momentum, its efficacy, by expectation. Perception is an already answerable 'taking notice', a 'taking notice' that requires a momentum, an approach, an approach that guides one's 'taking notice' – one's making 'passive' for the sake of peace (pacification) or war – of *this* perceptible instead of *that* perceptible, "an orator on a platform is perceived by his listeners if they *take notice* of him...the fact that he is perceived ultimately depends on the *activity* of the perceiver" (Isagooge § 158C).^{cxxiii}

It is here, in 'x-ness' or the very otherness of the perceptible – itself primarily called to flourish – that one's approach, one's questions, flourishes or fails; one is here found answerable. It is here that one's always already answerable question meets its chosen subject-of-study, a subject-of-study that is a subject, in the mutual presence of

^{cxxi} Wanneer de ene mens de ander iets suggereert, is de een suggererend, of actief, de ander besuggereerd of passief (Isagooge § 80).

^{cxxii} Dit kind groeit harder dan dat (Isagooge § 183).

^{cxxiii} Dus is het niet uitgesloten, dat het waargenomene zeer actief is, zelfs in hogere mate dan de waarnemer. Zo wordt een redenaar op een verhoging waargenomen door zijn hoorders indien ze op hem letten. Hij beklom de hoogte om voor velen waarneembaar te zijn en articuleert zijn klanken met hetzelfde doel. En heel zijn staan en spreken is één activiteit. Toch hangt het feit, dat

successive contemporaneity. It is here where 'what' is expected is met, where the 'making passive' of an expect-able is now 'made passive' as percept-able, as a *this* or a *that*. It is here one can meet resistance in the very contemporaneous and unnamed otherness of an 'x'. It is here that one can herself be violently transferred, whose 'making passive' is unpacified – not at peace – whose 'making passive' is less active than the violence of the actor whose own 'making passive' subjects subjects to the violence of his expectation and the tearing fault lines of his perception.¹¹⁸

If the 'x' now perceptible is not what one expected this is also due to the *durating inherence* of the 'x' now contemporaneously perceived. The *this-that* determination, despite being itself a relationship of two subjects-in-relation-unto-God is also, as mentioned, in an irreducible relation to the *thus-so* determination. A grandmother, for instance, may expect to see her grandsons, already named 'a' and 'b', after three long years. She expects 'a' to be taller, for instance, than 'b', this is the *moment* she has expected. The moment the moment arrives as perceptible, that is, the event in which 'a' and 'b' are contemporary it turns out that she perceives 'b' as taller than 'a'. Both 'a' and 'b', already named, have surprised the grandmother with their unnamed 'x' and 'y' otherness. But while '*taller than*' requires contemporary constituents such that one can say '*this is taller than that*', the lawfully co-related spatial functioning of 'tallness' is *inherent* as a different structural law response in each 'a' and 'b', such that one can say '*a is tall t₁ thus and b is tall t₂ so*' – after all, one is inherently taller than the other. Thus, there must be something inherent and *durating* to each 'a' and 'b' such that 'a' and 'b' can be conceptually interrelated in successive contemporaneity. Here is one example of the relation of *this-that* to *thus-so*. However, we are not yet finished with the *this-that* determination, for we have only considered perception and the state of affairs that it perceives.

If expectation provides the *momentum* for perception, it is recollection that provides *momentum* for apprehension. 'What' is apprehendable is also 'what' is recollectable; as seen, symbols, whether spoken or written are themselves the already affirmed and transferred state of affairs for the moment of recollection and the contemporaneity of apprehension. Symbols refer to a *thought*, for it is not the symbols that one 'takes notice' of, for this would be only perceptive, but rather symbols are the "thought the words refer to" (Isagooge § 158A). Now the secondary state of affairs is

hij waargenomen wordt in laatster instantie af van de activiteit der waarnemenden (Isagooge § 158C).

always that state of affairs shared between the second party and oneself, it is, in fact, the very affirmed transference of oneself and the second party unto each other. Thus, the secondary state of affairs as apprehendable is the very passing along of what is transferred or affirmed about the second party from the second party to oneself or vice-versa. Now, the very act of giving what is transferred or affirmed about the second party to the second party requires a momentary re-collection of what one has already affirmed – what one has already *arranged* about the second party (which, as we shall see, is a matter of *inherence*). This momentum is different for every contemporaneous event. Thus, one can recall the same past event as a different conceptually re-collected moment for each contemporaneous event.

The very contemporaneous act of writing is an act of momentous re-collection; re-collection of grammatical rules, re-collection of ideas, a re-collection of one's intended audience. 'What' is recollected, as we shall see, is 'what' is already conceptually *arranged*, thus the momentum of recollection in contemporaneity is that re-collected moment of re-collecting the already arranged in a contemporaneous event of writing or reading. The very act of writing, moreover, is the transference of one's *perceptual* discernments into the positivized statements of a speech, a text, a blueprint, or anything symbolified. It is the very making knowable of one's own knowing, both to oneself and the second party; it is the very re-collection and hence contemporaneous positing of one's conceptual arrangement. The second party, then, in apprehending one's own text or speech (or anything symbolified) apprehends the already transferred (which is always an Other) with an *abstractive* concept, a concept that extends one's own symbolified thoughts (concepts) in a certain apprehendable contemporaneity according to the momentum of the second party's own re-collections.

Since what is given in a text or speech is ultimately about a primary state of affairs – the second party as 'x' – the apprehension of 'what' is transferred (the second party) depends largely on each subject's struggle with the second party in the primary state of affairs, that is, the conceptual *moments* the one can re-collect for oneself in one's own struggle with the second party as 'x'. Thus, a speech or text is always apprehended differently according to the momentum of each distinct subject, it is always conceptually extended as apprehendable according to one's own re-collectable momentum – what one has already transferred in a conceptual *arrangement* about the second party. Therefore, it is through the momentum of recollection that one contemporaneously extends what is transferred (which is always the second party) and

thus is able to respond in contemporaneousness. It is here that one can affirm the second party as already affirmed, in dialogue with the second party, or disagree with the second party who is transferring and affirming oneself as 'a'. It is here that one can confess one's own re-collectable and arranged transference of the second party according to one's own struggle with the second party in its primary state of affairs. It is here that the second party is already contemporaneously approached in apprehension (as already transferred or affirmed) all the while exchanging 'what' is transferred in speech or in text. I can apprehend or transfer Vollenhoven as "a terrible writer", for instance, all the while apprehending what he has stated or transferred about the primary state of affairs.

This can, but need not be violent. What is given to the second party can be the very transferring of that second party – a 'name calling', an accusation, a stereotype – the very transference of the second party as 'x' into the second party as named. This apprehension of the second party can be disaffirmed or resisted by the second party in his or her contemporaneous otherness as 'x'.¹¹⁹ This resistance prompts, or should prompt a new positivization, a primary statement based on a *re-perception* and thus conceptual rediscernment. Thus, it is in contemporaneity that the abstractively transferred second party can be re-perceived, or, conversely, re-transferred as it has already been affirmed and transferred in secondary statements. In such a case, one's *momentum* of re-collection is faced with 'what' it cannot re-collect as a moment, 'what' has not already been arranged. This makes the continued re-collection of the second party as it has already been apprehended a reprehensible state of affairs, an *apprehensible* state of affairs, to state it negatively.

Let us move on to inherence.

As seen, a genetic concept extends a momentary expectable or recollectable 'what', and a contemporary interrelative concept extends a contemporaneous perceptual or apprehensible 'what' – each a 'what' in its primary or secondary state of affairs. Now, a concept in the *thus-so* state of affairs extends a subject as either a *durating subject* or an *object*, and this again has to do with a 'what' in either its primary or secondary state of affairs. Any named or transferred subject, 'a', though remaining a subject as 'x' in the primary state of affairs, *durates* in the secondary state of affairs as a shared (transferred and affirmed) *object* of thought. But objects of thought do not *durate* only as statements, the statement can be the platform for further positivization. Thus, the debate that results in the positivization of a law is different from the positivization of this law's enforcement.

The statements that bring about the positivization of a blueprint are different from the positivization of the building that results. Each are the arrangement of several subjects 'x' into an object 'a', such that the object 'a' can be further positivized into the object 'A', and so on. The statement is the language behind all positivizations, the language of architecture, the language of laws, etc..

Thus, a postivized object – like an airplane¹²⁰ – does not durate as a primary subject in the primary state of affairs, there is no airplane 'x' in the primary state of affairs. Such positivized objects durate as an *arrangement* of primary subjects organized into a transferred object based, in the first place, upon a conceptual arrangement and its already discerned statement unto the second party, a blueprint, a proposal, a committee.¹²¹ The second party who has no momentary re-collection of an airplane is also one who has no apprehension of its arranged postivized function (positivized law response) unless its function is contemporarily *stated* by another – unless it is transferred and affirmed in interchange with the second party. But objectification is not solely a matter of extending those subjects with lesser vertical inherence under structural law, subjects like humans can also extend other humans as durational objects according to a concept. This is all too common; slavery is a shared concept of race, the repression of women is the shared concept of a 'weaker sex'. But this is not always violent, we always arrange the other, sometimes for the sake of violence, sometimes for the sake of flourishing. What is arranged can always *inherently* resist its objectification into the secondary state of affair, airplanes fall from the sky, houses fall down, successful scientific experiments fail outside of the laboratory, states collapse, families sever, the environment protests its suffocation, the lines of fault are clear, they have made their sign and they signal disaster.

The analytic activity of the *thus-so* determination is that of *arranging*. One conceptually *arranges* – or transfers a subject in the primary state of affairs 'x' – based on an inherent conceptual arrangement that one already has always already *inherited* from the second party; from birth – one's very momentous conception into the conceptual. The conceptual extension of subjects according to *inherence* arranges further subjects 'x' according to the extensions of 'what' one has already conceived – they have what we might call a 'conceptual inherence' with one's already transferred conceptual arrangement. That is, they *cohere*, they are non-contradictory (a concept, after all, cannot extend both 's' and 'not s' as subjects) they are inherently *complementary*.

Now, this is not unlike the traditional logic of inherence, Aristotle's subject-predicate logic. The extensions of one concept, i.e., 'animal' can be further extended the more specifications of 'animal' one *discerns* according to this concept, 'birds', 'cats', etc.. These specified animals, in turn, have their own further extensional specifications. Nonetheless, each extension is still *intensionally* an 'animal', that is, an 'animal' with a *specific difference*. Thus, the extension of a concept is always extended by another concept whose extensions are greater.¹²² The concept with the most increased extension is traditionally the concept that extends all further concepts and the specific differences they extend. For Vollenhoven, this most increased extensional concept always delineates 'what' cosmically is subject or not subject to God.¹²³ It is not, as it is in so many conceptions, 'being'. It is, at base, one's deepest confessional *circumspection*, the confessional arrangement that arranges all further arrangements, the answerability already implicit in each question asked of the knowable. It is not 'being', as so many other ontologies of inherence, it is 'being subject', a relation-unto-God.

Now, this relation of arranging occurs through what is already transferred and affirmed and this secondary state of affairs is itself always *about* the primary state of affairs. Thus, 'what' is conceptually extended in the secondary state of affairs as inherent is not the subject *per-se* but the subject as abstracted, *objectified* and arranged conceptually as the extension of some concept.¹²⁴ Since this transferred arrangement has neither named every possible discernment made possible by the concepts extension, nor has it extended further concepts based on one's inherent conceptual antecedents, a concept's extension provides grounds for the ever-deepening discernment and conceptual extension of the cosmos. Thus, one's transferred arrangement is always itself *inherently* open to new discernments and concepts in one's struggle with what is always primarily an 'x'. A concept is never closed, each positivized answer – given in a certain spirit, holding structure and normativity in a certain spirit – only leads to more questions. It is here, in these positivizations, that we find the Spirit bound in faithfulness to the creation as already positivized, leading Her creation either in accusation or approval to a new spirit of positivization – to the great culmination.

Now, subjectivity in its *thus-so* determination also relates to subjectivity in its *this-that* determination via the (triune) relationship of subjectivity in the genetic determination. Earlier it was mentioned that 'what' can be *expected*, for instance, of a subject 'made passive' in perception is due largely to the [conceptually] 'passive' subject's *inherent* characteristics, *inherent* characteristics that are always, in turn, genetically *inherited*.¹²⁵

Thus, one perceptually *interrelates* with either subjects or objects in the primary and secondary state of affairs. These are 'subjects' or 'objects' due to their *inherence*.

Since the act of arranging extends untransferred conceptually 'passive' subjects on the basis of a conceptual arrangement of objectified subjects, genetic expectation is largely based on this already present arrangement and its further conceptual extendability, "the principle according to which concepts are *ordered* then is no longer that of the *genetic order* in which they came to the knower at the time" (Isagooge § 180).^{cxxiv} Concepts are not arranged or ordered according to the moments of expectation or recollection, they are arranged according to their inherent objectified extensions and the overall 'coherence' of each concept and its extensions within the extension of the whole conception, this arrangement *durates* throughout one's *moments* and *interrelations*. In fact, 'what' one *expects* relies on the 'untapped' further extensions and discernments already inherent to one's conceptual arrangement. In the same way 'what' one recollects depends on 'what' has already been transferred as already arranged.

Now, though the contemporaneous successivity of perception or apprehension is limited in its conceptual extension by the *inherence* of the objectified subject extended, it is also the case that the further extension and discernability inherent to one's conceptual arrangement is limited by the contemporaneous successive interrelations of perception or apprehension. One who inherently denies 'rationality' as inherent to women in his conceptual arrangement, for instance, will have a difficult time accounting for what is perceptually not unlike one's own conceptual extension of inherent 'rationality' in one's contemporary interrelation with women. This is not to say one's inherent conception of 'rationality' could not easily extend 'women' as an open possibility. The extension of 'women' as 'rational' could remain a durational or inherent possibility within one's arrangement despite the fact that one closes it to expectation in further perception. Not acknowledging it means that through either expectation and/or recollection, one refuses all perceptual evidence that shows otherwise, one only 'takes notice' of what one wants to expect¹²⁶ (and is certainly not 'attuned' to surprises).

This is a violent and violated world. We remain apprehensive – unsure – about what can be further perceived, we often cannot see past the arrangement we are in, and recollections are often too hateful to even bear. Apprehension is so great that many

^{cxxiv} Het principe waarnaar de begrippen worden geordend is dus thans niet meer dat der genetische orde in welke de kennende ze intertijd opdeed (Isagooge § 180).

expect nothing, they remain fatefully reconciled with their arrangement, closed to its almost infinite openings.

What has been apprehended is apprehensive towards what can be further perceived, for what perception or apprehension makes passive is rarely pacific, at peace, at rest, at least in this world. We have reason to recollect fear in a cosmos where fear remains always expectable.

Apprehension is always threatened by change in its arrangement despite the hope of its expectation. Expectation carries it further with the momentum of hope despite the recollection of danger, despite the recollection that there is little other than war, despite the recollection that the great pacification (kingdom) has not come, that one's perceptual pacification and one's conceptual arrangement is violent and violated. Is it any wonder that one feels apprehensive, that one chooses only the world of apprehension? What is apprehendable is apprehensible: nauseating, banal, terrifying, and absurd. Yet expectation pushes us farther along – extends us – and our arrangement extends itself into deeper arrangements. Meanwhile, perception is never limited by the extent of one's apprehension despite the extent of one's apprehensiveness; perception always ruptures and re-arranges the already arranged.

There is much charity to be given to those who are transferred and affirmed in violence such that they can never face themselves first hand – primarily. There is much charity to be given to those whose expectations are genetically-culturally *determined* to point only to those terms for living that terminate, who have not been pointed to and appointed, who do not positivize unto the second party with the same charity granted by the Spirit who is Charity. It is not easy to look beyond one's arrangement, to perceive new gifts of love, to expect in hope. All things, in their great extent may rest in God, but all things are without rest, unarrested, unrestored, unrestrained, unrestituted.

⊕ 10. historiographical humility: the serpentine spirals of shame

Now religion touches that relationship of man to God. And this relationship has been disrupted since the Fall. As a result, man is no longer without guilt, nor without an awareness of guilt, whether this is repressed or not. If we want to understand paganism, we do well not to neglect this religious shame (Vollenhoven: BSHP, 2).^{CXXV}

^{CXXV} Nu raakt de religie de verhouding van den mensche tot God. En deze verhouding is sinds den zondeval niet in orde. Daardoor is de mensch niet zonder schuld en niet zonder, al of niet verdrongen, schuldbesef (BSHP, 2).

In a long conversation with Jacob Klapwijk, Henk Geertsma criticizes Klapwijk for his understanding of a worldview, stating that it is too relativistic, that it does not take into account the *choice* that separates a Christian from a non-Christian.

This *choice* has a certain character. Geertsma accepts Dooyeweerd's notion that there is some transcendental continuity in the *ideas* of Christians throughout the ages, what Dooyeweerd calls a 'transcendent ground idea' [quote]. For both Dooyeweerd and Geertsma, this historically continuous idea is threefold, and is based always on "ones basic religious choice" (Geertsma: CPTIR, 150). This choice is based on a certain motivation, what Dooyeweerd calls the Christian groundmotive, which is one's recognition of oneself as created, fallen and redeemed. This motive renders a 'transcendental ground idea', an idea that always, throughout the ages, concerns (1) the Origin of all reality; (2) an idea concerning the irreducible aspects of lawful functioning; and, (3) an idea concerning the unity of this law (Geertsma: CPTIR, 150).

Now, the context of Geertsma's criticism of Klapwijk has to do with the problem of shared statements, that is, it is a problem of positivization. Klapwijk is interested in the transformation of statements from the secular world to the Christian world and vice-versa, particularly in how the statements of the non-Christian are transferred and affirmed in an integrally Christian manner, transforming the pagan concept into something integrally Christian. Geertsma is concerned about the Christian integrality of such an act, whether or not an idea birthed in a pagan motive can be so accepted in its detail and cleansed of its original corrupted motive. The problem in any case comes down to a matter of *fault*. Is the pagan at fault for the nurture that led him or her into a circumspection that is alienated from a rest truly restful? And, if not, how are we to find fault between what is Christian and what is not? Where is fault found?

The problem is this: in the shared space of the Christian and the secular, is each discourse irreducible or not, the one faulted and the other redeemed? And what would make each discourse irreducible? The motivated *choice* of the Christian or the pagan or the genetic-historical situationality of each person? Does the notion of choice make the discourses so irreducible that there is no shared space where each positivization occurs? And, does the notion of historical situationality not meld the shared space of the Christian and the pagan into one, meaning that one is never at fault for the historically generated (either Christian or not) circumspection one brings to the world?

But do we truly *choose*? And how can we choose that which is not available to us? This is Klapwijk's concern.

Vollenhoven, it seems, avoids the thorniness of such a problem. By understanding the detailed genesis of a shared space and the circumspect answerability of its subjects, he is able to positively and consistently point out the detailed interworkings of subjects that on one hand needed so badly to bring about cosmic flourishing and, on the other hand, negatively point out the detailed interworkings of those who wished only to further exploit the shame of their own error. This is the point, I think, of Vollenhovian historiography. It is the basis for either a statement of affirmation or denial, one can consistently understand the detailed moves of each philosopher to be driven by a circumspection that either craved flourishing or violence despite the always unhelpful structure of pagan circumspection. That is, the classificatory method of historiography is not simply a matter of making negative secondary statements, but also *positive* secondary statements.

Now, at the end of the day, a conception that is not scripturally informed will not, for Vollenhoven, clearly satisfy one's own circumspect desire for flourishing, thus, each pagan philosophy – despite its best intentions – *consistently* fails in both the structure of its circumspection and thus in the detail that results. This is due to the fact that all pagan conceptions lack the self-revelation of God-in-Scripture and thus seek out God's revelations through the revelations of their own thought. And this is to immediately confuse the irreducibility of the relations of God to cosmos and cosmos to God. In revealing Himself in Scripture God reveals his irreducible relation to the cosmos whereas without this divine revelation one must speak of God's relation to the cosmos aided only by one's reason. This is, to bring us back to an earlier chapter, the very problem of speculation. Reason remains a cosmic and irreducible relation to God – it cannot see the irreducibility of God's relation to the cosmos. Hence, a non-scriptural conception is one that denies the very irreducibility of God's relation to the cosmos by the act of speculating on the nature of this relation.

But the Christian and the pagan *do* share each other's statements. Once a primary state of affairs is transferred it is the property of whomever wishes to affirm its matter of detail, whether Christian or not. There are, thank God, no libraries that are only Christian and that only the Christians visit.

The difference is always one of circumspection, but correct circumspection does not at all entail a lack of error in the details. This goes both ways. An incorrect

circumspection can clearly render the correct details for creation's flourishing. This is the very publicity of the secondary state of affairs. Moreover, one is certainly not always consistent in one's circumspection, despite one's best efforts. Thus, if there is some exclusive Christian discourse antithetically opposed to the discourse of the pagan it is not at all the case that this Christian discourse is correct in detail or circumspection. Our hearts are not yet at rest, and neither, for that matter, is the pagan's. Before God, ourselves and the Other, the signs of shame, of the curse, are clear.

This discussion certainly still involves the element of choice. The Christian, whose 'transcendental idea' may be correct in *detail* may not at all flourish in his or her *circumspect* answerability to God and neighbour. At the *heart* of any transcendental proposition is a proposal that is either faulted in motivation or not. These *motives* are a matter of choice. Having the right idea does not, as shown often in Christian history, mean that flourishing will result. The pagan, whose circumspect answerability may be deeply erroneous in structure may nonetheless be motivated in this circumspection to live out his or her life in a flourishing detail that contradicts the very circumspection from which it was birthed. These details are a matter of choice. At the end of the day, at the end of time, it is only ever God's faithfulness that saves (and God have mercy).

And so, one's circumspection by no means deals out an exclusive discourse in terms of its detail. Likewise, the shared details of all discourses by no means relativize the circumspection by and in which they were conceived. At the end of the day, one can deny pagan circumspection yet affirm the detailed struggle to live a life of cosmic flourishing. Likewise, one can affirm the truth that all things are subject to God yet disaffirm the violence committed in God's name under such confessed circumspection. Those who are redeemed in circumspection are to live their lives in detailed gratefulness, and this also means thanking one's neighbour – one's pagan neighbour – for the richness of detail that he or she brings to life.

In any case, fault is not to be found in a choice –the fault lines run through each heart. One does not *choose* one's genetic situationality, one does not choose to find oneself nurtured in a non-Christian home in an other-than-Christian country. Where correct circumspection is lacking, one can only seek out flourishing in the details. Likewise, one can confess the Christian idea in its transcendental detail yet deny its redemptive motive and circumspective power. Fault is more primordial. *That* one's circumspect answerability is faulted does not at all imply that one's intentions are immediately maligned – the details may show positive results. *That* one's circumspect

answerability is correct in confession does not at all imply that one's detailed working out of this confession will at all bring flourishing to this world. Fault is genetic in its primordially: written into the very genetics of the structurally sexed body, the genesis of engendering from the shame of Adam and Eve and on, the genesis of expectation and recollection. Normativity seeks its final judgement, its purgation; the body groans for its resurrection in groans too deep for words.

Fault, fault-lines, for Vollenhoven, is rooted in something he calls "religious shame" [*schuldbesef*] (Vollenhoven: BSHP, 2). Religious shame is the symptom of a creation rife with faultlines. Religious shame is the unrestfulness of a fallen creation – of each subject – and these fault-lines move intergenerationally like fate in the serpentine lifeline of shameful disconnection between the male and the female, between Adam and Eve, and all they cultivate. This is the truth: the spirit in which one lives already disallows flourishing connection with the other, beyond the destiny of an always open future, the past has sealed its fate in the genetic inheritance of disease and dis-ease – it is as certain as death. What is now committed in right spirit is consumed and twisted by the spirit of an age, perverted and now the agent for destruction, even the destruction of the giver. I give you this gift. You crucify me – and then you crucify the gift.

As an intergenerationally positivized spirit against Spirit, the closed destiny of this shamed creation lies antithetically opposed to the open-wide destination that is creation's final culmination – a creation where connections ever deepen without end. This is the fateful effect of disconnection: a positivized shame that holds structure and normativity as the very nature of the curse, where shame begets shame in its shamefulness, where creation is further nihilated and annihilated, where disconnection breeds and generates even deeper violent and maligned expressions of shameful disconnection. We know our disconnection as shame: choice is found immobilized and numbed, the body twists in its nausea and the spirit is crushed by the burden of the inevitable and fateful perpetuation of sin – whether intended or not.

This is the lifeline of sin: creation is erroneously positivized and thus held up as shame, objectified in shame and apprehendable as shame – preserved in the shame of recollection's lifeline, one is made up of moments of shame [and glory]. Looking upon a shameful cosmic history, one expects little more than a lifeline of shame. This is the state our spirit, relating body and soul – reduced to fate, reduced to death.

It is in shame that shame is committed, it is in shame that grace is refused. Born into shame, one is shamed in circumspection and shamed in one's details – shamed in

spirit. It is in the shame of a shameful circumspection that one finds flourishing in the details. It is in the shame of shameful details that one seeks renewed circumspection. Birthed and nurtured into shame, one has, as Vollenhoven clearly states, no choice in this matter.¹²⁷ The Spirit works with what it has been positivized; *this is the faithfulness of the Spirit*. But only a miracle will save us now.

Clouded in one's nurture, the genetic subject – who carries the potential for the structures of society as a male or female body – maligns this structure and thus maligns the very social potentiality of the body. And so, violence occurs between subjects, between males and females. One ruptures connections in being disconnected to God, self and neighbour, and this circumspection, like one's own sex, is genetically *inherited*, reproduced and conceived, one is conceived into an already circumspected concept; one is birthed into shame.

The trauma of creation is inherited in the body. It relates to normativity as normativity continues its traumatizations. The signs are present, they are easy to apprehend, they are already arranged, they lurk in recollection. And though preferring the safety of the already apprehended, within the apprehendable lies the reprehensible, the disgusting, the traumatized. Likewise, within the already arranged lies the already deranged. And, within recollection lies the recoiled reaction of the traumatized body memory, of nausea – the inherited sins of the past, built as malignation into the already engendered body.

Yet, re-storied in the restitution of scripture, the self is situated as a life-line in the life-line of salvation history. Created male and female, the moment of sin is a malignation of this irreducible genetic subjectivity – the moment of sin is an act of disruptive engendering. This is the concrete context of sin, sin carried through seed, the conceptualizing that occurs already at conception, the family the battleground of the sexes¹²⁸ – engendered as the oldest broken family of all, Adam and Eve.

One's own restitution is situated in the ongoing drama of salvation. As it is seen in Scripture, one sees the signs of the curse, of the covenant in the body positivized. Connected to God in the very love of self and neighbour, the self has much to expect, and a framework with which to recollect, to re-member the traumatized self, to uncover one's own unique capabilities for expressive co-creation in an engendered connection with all that lives. Yet the cosmos remains unsafe, and thus each act of positivization is not done without a certain measure of fear and trembling. The body unresurrected remains traumatized, nothing is forgotten that can again be repeated. In the momentum

of guaranteed safety, one has no need to recollect *what* nonetheless remains recollectable, one has no need to make for oneself a moment of horror when upon the new earth. The continued recollection of trauma is understood in a world where fear can still be expected, this the death that kills us, the death that we fear to death.

And so, let this be remembered. A secondary concept is not only critical, it is also thetical. A survey of the history of philosophy is not only a critical endeavor. In showing the consistent connections between each thinker one affirms that each thinker struggles with determination in the same determinants of subjectivity, and that conceptions change because they do not bring flourishing but violence or stagnation. One views, at a moment, where a negative primary statement is made, where the philosopher threw up his or her hands and said 'no' to their inheritance and searched out structure for something new, a new positive primary statement. The historian of philosophy can thus consistently view how each conception attempted to bring flourishing against the inheritance of problems in which they were birthed.

There is much to be said 'yes' to in this, there are many details that still have an important contribution to our own determinant struggles today. And, while the circumspection of these philosophers may be given its 'no' at the end of the day for the sake of some greater 'yes', one only becomes too aware of one's own place in this serpentine history: constituted by so much shame, each person must deepen one's circumspective 'yes' in the 'no' of detailed critical self examination. This is the humility of historiography, one examines the life line of not just the pagan, but the shared space or line of life where all discourse meets: the secondary state of affairs, the life line that constitutes each subject's own persistent and seemingly irreconcilable shame: the life line of all blessing and curse, the life line of salvation history (and thus: hardly just a Christian life line of discourse). And then there is one more humility to historiography: it is always, if it is to lead us anywhere, a provisional result.

And so we arrive at an epistemological survey of Vollenhoven's historiography. As a primary statement becomes transferred and then affirmed in a secondary statement, this statement becomes the property of recollection and hence of historiography. Yet, as primary statements are made in the openness of expectation it is also the case that these statements are only made within the context of past moments. Thus, all systematic expectation has a direct link to the historiographical life-line of recollections in which all circumspection is engendered. Likewise, it is equally the case that historiography is only ever made up of the now affirmed body of shared statements

that were always at one point primary statements. While both systematics and historiography as results both make up the secondary state of affairs, one constitutes a closer link to the investigation of the primary state of affairs while the other seeks out a normative evaluation of these primary statements. Thus, epistemology, which is also as a result a secondary state of affairs, relates both of these relations since it is the only conceptual means of explaining the difference between systematics and historiography. That is, in explaining the difference between primary and secondary concepts, epistemology – which is the study of conceptuality – places systematics as a body of primary statements and historiography as a body of normatively *evaluative* secondary statements. Neither discipline could live without the other; but epistemology is always their relationship. And this relationship is only efficacious inasmuch as epistemology is always and without exception an irreducible relation of cosmic law response unto the God it is subject to.

⊕ 11. historiography & the law – the faulted

Since it is the call-for-love of the philosopher to *positivize* his or her own wrestling with oneself or another as structural instead of merely non-identically recapitulating or critiquing the results of another's struggle, it is only after one has legitimately struggled with this primary state of affairs and given one's creed that one has credence to offer¹²⁹ criticism of another's struggle: "every critical activity implies that one takes a thetical position' (Isagoooge § 3).^{cxxvi} To offer criticism of another's result, or even one's own earlier result, is to offer critique of 'what' (oneself or the other) is already knowable as the secondary state of affairs, thus it is to make a statement about a statement. Now, despite criticism against the realism of classes, Vollenhoven's entire historiography is one of classes, yet given his statement that classes involve nothing other than secondary statements, this would only seem consistent; his classes are statements that conceptually extend the primary statements of a philosopher, ways of *discernibly* grouping these already transferred statements through a secondary concept which, as an answerable *approach* (question) to the knowable, extends these statements according to Vollenhoven's own conceptual circumspection, that is, his resting place.

^{cxxvi} Het thetische en critische in de methode staan niet los naast elkaar. Vandaar, dat hier nog een enkel woord dient gezegd over beider verhouding. Ze is m.i. deze: Elke critische werkzaamheid sluit in, dat men een stelling inneemt (Isagoooge § 3).

There are two things one must ask when approaching the results of another philosopher – the secondary states of affairs – says Vollenhoven, “did they sufficiently appreciate the difficulties and did they pose the problem correctly?” (Isagooge § 3).^{cxxvii} This examination alone leads to “two kinds of results”, which involve one’s own affirmative or critical conceptual extension of what has already been stated: “the solution being examined can be satisfactory or not, either because it answers wrongly a correctly formulated question, or because it proceeded from a wrong formulation of the problem” (Isagooge § 3).^{cxxviii} This examination of a *problem* should be illuminating for Vollenhoven’s own “problem-historical” method. Since historiography is the reading and classification of the already transferred, that is, the resultant struggle of others with the primary state of affairs in which they found themselves, we ought to take this quote very seriously. If this is the question through which Vollenhoven himself approached a text, then this question is the very problem-historical *activity* that undergirds Vollenhoven’s historiographical *results*.

Now, a question, as correct as it may be in its given detailed answer, always proceeds from a certain formulation of the problem that is *in question*. That is, it always approaches a state of affairs from an already formulated question. The question, as already seen, is the *approach* through which one moves toward the knowable ‘x’ in each irreducible determination, and a question can be *answered* either correctly or incorrectly. Now the answer, as seen before, is a matter of *detail*. On the other hand, the *formulation* of the problem one approaches is always circumspectively answerable, and thus can be wrong, unflourishing. This is a matter involving one’s conception of the ‘main issues’, a matter of where the formulation of the question *rests*. Now, a question and an answer, like an activity and a result, are irreducible. As seen, despite one’s unflourishing circumspection, one can nonetheless be correct in matters of detail, that is, one can *correctly* answer a wrongly formulated question. As we saw with Calvin, one can be *correct* in matters of circumspection but *incorrect* in matters of detail. The issue is always one of flourishing: one whose circumspection is fundamentally unflourishing can still produce excellent distinctions which *help* (as we saw with Frege’s distinction of what makes a distinction), and one can be committed to flourishing and still, through either

^{cxxvii} “Zagen ze de moeilijkheden voldoende en stelden ze het probleem wel juist?” (Isagooge § 3).

^{cxxviii} De nieuwe overweging van oude antwoorden en vragen zal kunnen voeren tot tweërlei resultaat: de bestudeerde oplossing voldoet of ze voldoet niet, hetzij omdat zij verkeerd antwoordt op een juist-gestelde vraag, hetzij ook wijl ze uitging van een verkeerde probleemstelling (Isagooge § 3).

exhaustion or temptation (or whatever) produce distinctions which in *detail* cause harm, as we saw with Calvin.

Now, the circumspection of the ‘main issues’ in which circumspection *rests* is also the ‘main issue’ in which all subsequent concept formation of each state of affairs and henceforth each determination rests. One’s circumspection is not exclusive to one conceptual state of affairs but is the ‘colour’ or the ‘shade’ in which these states of affairs are conceived – it is a matter of *religion*. But those concepts that are shaded are either shady in one of two senses: it is the cool shade of rest or it has a certain shiftiness, an anxiety, an unrest, a shady character. So, we must begin where we started – not surprisingly, with the love command. “Once one has lost the sovereign God in one’s thinking”, says Vollenhoven, “there is no longer any room for a love command which constitutes the boundary between God and cosmos” (Vollenhoven: BSHP, 2).^{cxxix}

Now, “religion”, says Vollenhoven, “touches the relationship of man to God”, which is the *boundary*, the enbindment in love, “and this relationship has been disrupted since the Fall” (Vollenhoven: BSHP, 2).^{cxxx}

As a result of this forbidden deed Adam and Eve now no longer stand in a relationship of trust to God: they now fear his wrath. But also the reciprocal relationship suffers the consequences: since they first imagine, in their delusion of *sovereignty*, that they will become God, they are now alienated from each other: he who denies that he is subjected to the laws imposed by God will also fail to see the interrelationship [between subjects], for this stands subject to the laws (Isagooge § 120).^{cxxxi}

No longer bound to God in love as subject, but desiring the very sovereignty of God, desiring the very irreducible relation of God to cosmos as one’s own irreducible relation of subjectivity, one no longer stands in right relation to God or the subjects God has subjected to Himself in sovereign love. Conceived in sin, one’s conceptions will likewise be conceived in shame.

And this is the case, for “practicing the task of neighbourly love is not identical with religion, but it is directly determined by religion” (Isagooge § 112).^{cxxxii} The secondary

^{cxxix} Maar wanneer men eenmaal den souverainen God in zijn gedachten kwijt is, rest er ook geen plaats meer voor een liefdegebod, dat de grens vormt tussen God en kosmos (BSHP, 2).

^{cxxx} Nu raakt de religie is verhouding van den mensch tot God. En deze verhouding is sinds den zondeval niet in orde (BSHP: 2).

^{cxxxi} Tengevolge van de verboden daad staan Adam en Eva nu niet meer vertouwend tegenover God: zij vrezen thans Diens toorn. Maar ook de wederzijdse samenhang ondervindt de gevolgen: waar zij eerst in soeveriniteitswaan menen God te worden, staan zij aan de wetten door God gesteld, ziet ook de samenhang, die immers onder de wetten staat, over het hoofd (Isagooge § 120).

^{cxxxii} Derhalve is de betrachting van de taak der naastenliefde niet met de religie ident, maar wordt ze wel rechtstreeks door deze bepaald (Isagooge § 112).

state of affairs, one's *doing good*, one's positive positivizations derives from a normative position that is either right-with-God or not. It is here that one posits unto the second party for sake of the second party, it is here the 'interrelations' under law flourish or fail in 'right relation to God or the subjects God has made'. It is here that the already transferred can close down or open up the primary state of affairs, where the second party in a primary state of affairs can rupture its transference and the passing-along-of-its-affirmed-self from one to another party. It is here that one meets the second party, where one transfers the second party, and where the second party gives to one the already 'known', already affirmed results. It is here that the transferred second party resists its transference, the same transferred second party who passes on to another those results concerning another that must themselves be resisted, for we are all sinners – we have all affirmed that which firmly resists. When our normative position is faulted in its answerability, "the positive law comes to hang in the air...For when there is no awareness of the love command, we can hardly speak of positive law in the sense that it *bridges the gap between the love command and life in all its fullness*...All we have left, therefore, is a cosmos and its structural law" (Vollenhoven: BSHP, 2).^{cxxxiii}

If the law, in its threeness, is no longer conceived as the relationship between God and cosmos, then the subjects that relate under each command of law – of which there must be at least two – do not conceive their relation unto each other in such a way that the lawful relationship that binds them is willfully understood as also a relationship unto God. That is, a relationship in which every subject to subject relation is always also a response unto God (the very meaning of the relation being-subject), and a relationship that God Himself is bound to in a relation of faithfulness (the relation of being-sovereign). Since one's normativity is no longer seen as subject to God it now becomes, impossibly, a relation of 'sovereign-subjectivity', that is, a being-subject that is not subject but sovereign – a being like God.

When this occurs, the whole of the love command in all of its lawful modalities is abandoned. After all, the love command is always that relationship between God and the willful *heart* of a human subject. Likewise, the *bridge*, the relationship of positive law that relates the irreducible relations of structurally correlated subjectivity and normatively

^{cxxxiii} Maar wanneer men eenmaal den souverienen God in zijn gedachten kwijt is, rest er ook geen plaats meer voor een liefdegebod, dat de grens vormt tussen God en kosmos. En komt natuurlijk ook de positieve wet in de lucht te hangen. Want, als er geen oog meer is voor het liefzin, dat zij een brug slaat tussen dat liefdegebod en het level zoals het reilt en zeilt. Wat we overhouden is dus alleen een kosmos en een structurele wet (BSHP: 2).

correlated subjectivity is no longer seen as the flourishing culmination of God's spiritual leadership. When this occurs, all that remains is the structural law. But, if the heart is not seen as relating to structure in the pluriform modality of the love command, then this normative interrelation must be seen through all that remains left to be seen: the structural law. Hence, the structural law is not seen as a command of law in which two subjects are lawfully related in their functioning unto God, it becomes instead the field where a shamefully conceived normativity (for though the subject does not recognize normative law, it remains under it) conceives and all that is subject to its shamefully conceived 'subjective sovereignty'.

As the subject is a tri-unity of structural, normative, and positivized response to each respective command of law, apostate thought must immediately become a matter of anthropological re-conception. Since what is subject to all modal laws of the love command is the human heart, this heart must be immediately reconceived, and since this heart has shamefully turned away from its normative relationship unto God, this heart can only be reconceived according to the lawful subject functions under the creation command. Here then is the fault-line inserted into creation, for something in the structural must now account for the human heart, sovereign over all, and something in the structural must account for what is structurally subjected to this heart. Normativity is no longer seen as subject to all modes of law in the love command and all modes of law in the creation command, instead what is structural is split up, faulted, into a reconceived normativity and structure. This reconception of the heart changes the very meaning of the heart, which always remains subject to God in a normative relationship of flourishing love. If "all we have left" is "cosmos and structural law", says Vollenhoven,

then...the cosmos too does not remain unscathed. For the crown of the cosmos is man. And man is distinct from all creatures in that he possesses a heart – a heart that is capable of love and hate, not only towards his neighbor but also towards God, a heart to which the love command is directly addressed. Now then, if the sovereign God and his love command are lost from sight, then the heart has lost its meaning too. Consequently, we will see that the heart has disappeared in all the anthropologies of paganism" (Vollenhoven: BSHP, 2).^{cxxxiv}

^{cxxxiv} Want de kroon van de kosmos is de mensche. En de mensch is verscheiden van alle andere schepselen, daardoor, dat hij hart bezit. Een hart, waartoe het liefdegebod rechtstreeks is gericht. Welnu, als de souvereine God en Zijn liefdegebod uitvallen, dan heeft ook het hart geen zin meer. Het zal ons dan ook opvallen dat in alle anthropologieen van het paganisme het hart verdwenen is (BSHP: 2).

Now, this violent re-structuring of that which is subject to structural law certainly implies a faulted *expectation/recollection*, *perception/apprehension*, and *arranging/re-arranging* that will insert determinant fault-lines into creation in its conceptual approach, but the time is not yet right to speak of this. After all, all of the epistemic approaches mentioned above are shaded by a certain *circumspection*, that is, an answerable [normative] starting point through which one approaches the primary state of affairs, what Tol calls a “normative strategy” (Tol: VPECA, 117).

Now, despite one’s rejection of God, one remains subject to God. Thus, in the relation of knowing to the primary state of affairs, one remains under normative law. Likewise, the structure of the primary state of affairs still relates to normativity structurally, and bridging these two is the relationship of positive law. Thus, one’s normative strategy will carry with it a misconceived malignation of the relation of knower to the primary state of affairs.

Since the normative strategy of a shamed heart abandons these three laws of God, it remains nonetheless subject to these laws in its approach. Thus, it implicitly relies on these laws as it is subject to them in order to formulate its *own* law for its own ‘sovereign’ subjective approach – a fundamental misconception, out of line, faulted. Given this, there are three possible misconceptions or normative strategies, the first is *objectivism*, a malignation of the *structural* relation of the primary state of affairs to the knower; the second is *subjectivism*, a malignation of the *normative* relation of knowing to the primary state of affairs, and the third is *realism*, a malignation of the *positivized* relationship that bridges the knower and known.

Recollect, for a moment, the nature of one’s normative relation to the one’s structure. On one hand, the concepts of this normative relation are determined by the structural relation to knowing (the concepts being determined from the side of that which is known). On the other hand this normative relation extends the primary state of affairs according to some normatively correct or erroneous concept (structure determined from the side of the knower). Mediating both relations is the secondary state of affairs, the already positivized upholding of structure that relates knowing to the primary state of affairs and the primary state of affairs to knowing. This positivized result of structure is always *normed*, “...the result is also normed...that is why we speak of contradictory and noncontradictory concepts” (Isagooge § 174).^{cxxxv}

^{cxxxv} Niet slechts de activiteit maar ook het resultaat is genormeerd: we spreken daarom van contradictoire en niet-contradictoire begrippen (Isagooge § 174).

Now, given that knowledge is always a relation, a concept can only ever conceive subjects in primary or secondary state of affairs, and this is only because there *is* a primary state of affairs subject and a secondary state of affairs that upholds structure in its objectification. Likewise, from the side of the knowable a concept must also always extend that which is knowable, and thus the knowable determines to a large degree the *structure* of this extension: “that the extension of the concept ‘man’ is broader than that of the concept ‘woman’ is rooted in the [actual] number of women to the number of men” (Isagooge § 176, 280).^{cxxxvi/130} Now, where this structural relation of the knowable upon knowing is considered the law for concept formation, the normative strategy is in this case called *objectivism*.

From the side of the knower, there are either perceptual or abstracted concepts, which we have already explored, simple or composite concepts, which have to do with a concept’s *thus* or *so* arrangement, and the momentous concepts of recollection and expectation. Now, whereas objectivism takes very seriously the relation of the primary states of affairs to the extension of a normative concept, the reverse is true for a normative strategy that takes for law the *normative* conceptuality of the approach extending the primary state of affairs, what Vollenhoven calls *subjectivism*. While objectivism is not unaware that a concept objectifies or determines its object, it is nonetheless understood that this object – as its own subject – determines this concept in and through its own irreducible relation. Subjectivism lacks this additional sophistication, for, as Runner states:

The objectivists...immediately proceed to identify their newly discovered object with the Law for the subject. You see at once: the objectivist conception of the creation order is *analytically richer*; it has seen in some fashion the difference there really is between subject and object; it has ‘probed’ deeper into the rich diversity of God’s creation (Runner: BRL, 57).

A problem of relations persists, however, with both the subjectivist and objectivist normative strategies. While subjectivism cannot account for the presence of a structural relation to normativity, objectivism cannot properly account for the irreducibility of each relation unto the other. That is, if each relation is equally irreducible, the question must once again be asked: how do two completely irreducible relations – if they are to be truly irreducible – at all meet each other in a *relationship*?

^{cxxxvi} ...dat de omvang van het begrip mens breder is dan die van het begrip vrouw, wortelt in de verhouding van het aantal vrouwen tot het aantal mensen (Isagooge § 174).

The *realist* recognizes the need for some subsistent relationship that is, in its thirdness, exterior to both subject and object and an equal party to these irreducible relations that it relates. But this extra-cosmic relationship, if it is construed in speculation, is always, *qua* speculation, a case of the cosmos reified into something extra-cosmic. Thus, in the case of reified class concepts, the irreducible relations of structure to knowing and knowing to structure are held in relationship by extra-cosmic universals that already have, as seen, the uncanny character of shared human noetic results. Hence, this realism, despite its claims, is always a mediation of the *already stated*, that is, it reifies what is conceptually discerned and positivized as the law for both the relations of thought and structure. It is not difficult to see why the positivized states of affairs should be so easily reified, this *relationship* is, after all, neither strictly found in the subject who thinks nor the subject that is thought, it is instead a subjective (and therefore *cosmic*) thirdness that relates the cosmos into a unity.

Now, a normative strategy carries with it a circumspective *concept*, one's knowledge of the main issues. The fall into either subjectivism, objectivism and realism is a falling prompted by the shameful re-circumscription and re-conceptualization of the subject being-subject into the subject as sovereign. Thus each normative strategy is a different circumscription that includes some cosmically construed concept of sovereignty. That is, a concept of sovereignty is *circumscribable* according to three possible normative strategies each of which maligns the threefold commands of law. This is a deepened meaning of a circumspective concept, although it might be more useful to call it a *circumscribed concept* – implying different circumscriptions or approaches to a concept of subjective sovereignty. Thus, we must speak of both the normative strategy of the circumscription and the concept of sovereignty that is circumscribed according to this concept.

But first let us ask: how does this concept and its normative strategy, that is, a circumscriptive concept reveal itself in the results of human statements? After all, each normative strategy must be *apprehendable* if there is to be a historiography of philosophy at all. One must remember that a circumscriptive concept – which always includes a normative strategy – is a “lawful” *approach* to the knowable, and that the transferred *results* of this approach – one's *detailed* struggle with and account of a state of affairs – will betray (in the details) the circumspective concept through which that struggle was articulated.

Now, as previously alluded to in this chapter, this normative struggle with the knowable requires that one have some conception of structural law. Despite the circumscriptive malignation of laws other than that of structural law, the pagan thinker has only structure to organize into the cosmic playground of normativity and structure. Thus, the normative strategy of the rebellious heart is one that subjects *structure* unto itself through some normative strategy, but it does this only through a structurally construed concept of the normative heart.

Thus, if all one has left the cosmos and its structural law, and this structural law is no longer conceived as the relationship between God and cosmos, then structural law is, as already mentioned, that playing ground in which the heart and all that is subject to the heart is conceived. This adds a further dimension to the pagan circumscriptive concept, for while such a concept is at heart a denial of God that normatively approaches structure in a circumspected way, it approaches structure with a *certain modally conceived concept of what structure is* and a *certain modally conceived concept of what the normative subject is*. That is, the *concept* of a ‘circumscriptive concept’ is a concept that fundamentally and in shame denies its subjectivity to God by re-conceiving itself as a sovereign subject – a concept that requires a faulted reconception of the human heart. Hence, since one is breaking the law, one can *lawfully* deny God through *several different modally conceived concepts* of just what that heart is conceived to be and what is subject to this heart (history preserves many an attempt at construing the heart as analytical and all of structure as sub-analytical). This concept (of which there can be many under each law) is then functionally *circumscribed* through one of three normative strategies or approaches which ‘shades’ this same concept to great circumscriptive divergence. This, then, is the very nature of a “circumscriptive concept”.

⊕ 12. historiography & the determinations – fault lines

Now, in the same way one requires some strategy of normative circumspection to carry forth one’s circumspective concept, so also one must have some concept of structure that carries forth one’s conceptual extension of ‘what’ is knowable in each determination. Vollenhoven calls this concept of structure one’s “theory of categories”

(Isagooge § 183)^{cxxxvii}, and elsewhere “principles” (see Vollenhoven: N&LN, 56). We shall call them ‘principles’.

For example, Vollenhoven’s discussion of principles in his article N&LN revolves around the logical mode of law. “The past”, says Vollenhoven, “preserves more than one attempt of logical thinking to formulate the law that holds for it... These efforts result in what are called ‘principles’ (Vollenhoven: N&LN, 57).^{cxxxviii} Now, principles are not only logical, for “something similar is also present in the supra-analytic law spheres... There too people are looking for principles, *for somewhere to begin*” (Vollenhoven: N&LN, 57).^{cxxxix} These principles, says Vollenhoven “are in no way scientific in nature... that is why the principles play an important role in life, for the principles people accept as *holding for their thinking* indeed matter” (Vollenhoven: N&LN, 57).^{cxl}

A principle holds for one’s activity because it is an attempt to formulate the *structural law* for one’s activity. Now, in the case of logic, principles “are none other than the very law for logic, to the extent that human thinking was successful in putting these laws into words” (Vollenhoven: N&LN, 57).^{cxli} This does not mean that the law of logic is identical to its *stated* and therefore *transferred* formulation, “we do well always to distinguish these kinds of principles from the law... At best, a human *formula* includes no more than what someone has grasped of God’s law” (Vollenhoven: N&LN, 57).^{cxlii/131}

One’s detailed *formulation* of structure into principles, principles that can be “altogether false” (See Vollenhoven: N&LN, 57, is, as mentioned, where one *begins*. However, what do we mean by ‘begins’? ‘Begins’ in what sense? For surely one’s detailed *formulation* of structure is preceded by a certain formulation of a *problem-in-question* (a problem that is a question). But these two formulations are not dissimilar, for as mentioned already, a rebellious normative strategy lawfully circumscribes, and

^{cxxxvii} In verband met de ontische orde door een conceptie aangenomen deelt haar categorieënleer de oordelen in (Isagooge § 183).

^{cxxxviii} Het verleden gewaagt dan ook van meer dan één pogen, waarbij dit denken trachtte de voor zichzelf geldende wet te formuleeren (N&LN: 57).

^{cxxxix} Iets dergelijks nu vindt men ook in de boven-analytische wetskringen. Ook daar vraagt men naar principia, dat wil zeggen naar beginselen (N&LN: 57).

^{cxl} Deze principes nu mogen door de mannen van wetenschap geformuleerd zijn, zij dragen desniettemin allerminst een wetenschappelijk karakter... Vandaar, dat de principia in het leven een belangrijke rol spelen en het allerminst onverschillig is welke principia men voor z’n denken als geldend aanvaardt (N&LN: 57).

^{cxli} Veeleer zijn zij niet anders dan de wet zelf voor het logische, voorzoover het menselijke denken erin slaagde, deze wetten onder woorden te brengen (N&LN: 57).

^{cxlii} Nu zal men er goed aan doen zulke principia steeds van de wet te blijven onderscheiden: een menselijk formule omvat op haar best niet meer dan wat een mensch van de wet Gods heeft gevat (N&LN: 57).

therefore holds-in-question structure as some conceived aspect of one's normative strategy. That is, structure in all of its detail is subject unto the 'sovereign subject' via the concept of one's circumscriptive concept. Thus, principles function according to one's normative strategy – that is, they give detail to the lawful structure of the cosmos either subjectivistically, objectivistically or realistically. Yet, unlike the normative strategy which involves the lawful interaction of the heart and structure, a principle involves the detailed formulation of structure according to the lawfulness of one's normative strategy.¹³² Thus, one gives detail to the structure of the cosmos based on one's own conceived normativity and the nature of the subjectivistic, objectivistic or realistic relation one sees oneself having with that which is structural. One's principles are one's 'way in' to structure, they are a set of expansive 'entry points' that provide categories of detail and the platform for further detail.¹³³ Hence, we might say that principles give the *law* for structure; but this is true only inasmuch as these laws already lawfully operate in a subjectivistic, objectivistic, or realistic manner between what is construed as normative and what is construed as structural.¹³⁴

If 'principles' are ways into the structure of the knowable then principles will shape one's conceptual extension of the knowable in each subjective determination of normativity. This is also true for Vollenhoven. His 'principles' are the *conceived* [15] modal determinations of law, 'principles' which are an extension of his own circumspective concept, that of being subject, and a 'way in' to the conceptual extension of each determination in either expectation, perception, etc.¹³⁵ The principles, like the law they seek to delineate, *precede*, in some sense, each determination. That is, the same principles (like the law) are always already present in each irreducible determination, although these same principles are *determinantly* different per determination as irreducible temporal eventualities. Now, the analogy breaks down at some point: the law upholds each state of affairs and each determination as an extra-cosmic reality, whereas principles remain a cosmic and positivized state of affairs.

Each detailed discernment is conceived and thus extended according to the conceived 'lawfulness' of each 'principle'; that is, how irreducible and expansive each principle is conceived to be. Thus, Foucault approaches all reality through the principle of 'power' and Aristotle through his ten categories. In the same way, Vollenhoven's conception of modal law gives detail to his circumspective concept that all is subject to God. Given the expansiveness of a principle, a 'beginning point' is provided, an expansive conceptual extension that extends, on principle, all further conceptual

extensions. This is hardly an innocent state of affairs. “Statements are ordered by a conceptions theory of categories in conjunction with the ontic order it accepts”, says Vollenhoven, “that is why this part of philosophy is certainly not neutral” (Isagooge § 183).^{cxliii} All detail always remains answerable according to the circumspection in which detail is discerned.

So here then is the formula: one’s circumspective concept is circumscribed by one of three normative strategies (unless one is working theoretically as a Christian), this concept of circumscription gives detail to the world via a number of expansive beginning points, or principles. These ‘principles’ always function according to the normative strategy exercised and the concomitant concept of this circumscription, i.e., how the heart and body are lawfully conceived. Finally, these principles, already extended in one’s circumscriptive concept, allow one to ask detailed questions that concern the structure of each determination that one inevitably approaches as a subject-in-relation to other subjects.¹³⁶

Now, the struggle with each determination in its structure finds the knower in irreducibly different determinations or *eventualities* of conceptual extension. These determinations of conceptual extension are always determined by the subjective temporality or eventuality that remains exclusive to each determination. Thus, as seen, expectation extends subjects that are structurally not-yet-present in contemporaneity, perception extends subjects that are present in contemporaneity, and one’s conceptual arrangement extends subjects that conceptually durate as either *thus* or *so* given their structurally inherent characteristics. These are all normative relations to structure that are determinantly different in law-response from determination to determination.

In each determination one brings both one’s circumscribed concept and one’s principles to bear. Thus, expectation, perception, and arranging, for instance, are always already characterized by the normative strategy and the principles which one conceives as categorical (“lawful”) for all further conceptual approaches in either – for instance – expectation, perception, or arranging. Hence, whatever is, for example, expectable is already circumscribed subjectivistically, objectivistically, or realistically by one’s [modally conceived] concept of being-a-subject, thus, *what* can be expected is already, *in principle*, categorically extended.

So, in the same way one misconstrues each command of law in either subjectivism, objectivism, or realism by subjecting the cosmos not to God but to the

^{cxliii} Vandaar dat ook dit onderdeel der wijsbegeerte allerminst neutraal is (Isagooge § 183).

normative subject, it is likewise the case that each determination can be further misconstrued by result of this circumspection. Like subjectivism, objectivism and realism, this erroneous response to God can be typed in its *unlawfulness*. All signs already point to such a situation. After all, the very nature of *time* for Vollenhoven is constituted by the relations of subjects-in-relation in eventual response to God. Thus, the subjective successive, durational, and genetic responses to God as time (which is the very meaning of 'cosmos') will from the start be misconstrued if one does not circumspectively see one's subjectivity as subject to God.

Whereas the subject-in-relation unto God in Vollenhoven's conception is a pre-functional heart commanded in love, the pagan conception of the heart is, as mentioned, conceptually circumscribed as one's shameful denial of God, for it is the very conceptual genetic life-line of the subject as sovereign. Conversely, because there are three irreducible determinations of timed law-response for Vollenhoven, and hence subjects-in-relation found in different determinations of modal law response, Vollenhoven can hold to all three irreducible determinations of timed-law-response without letting one dominate. This, again, is because each eventual-law-response is the very being-subject (in-relation) of a subject under law unto God. Pagan thought, with its already circumscribed concept of what is normative and what is structural, with its fault-line running through the structural state of affairs, cannot, however maintain such a tri-unity, for this subjective tri-unity only holds according to its triune correlation by law¹³⁷ and law is always the 'tri-unifying' relationship between God and cosmos. Thus, in the same way pagan thought genetically 'decides'¹³⁸ as a normative strategy one malignation of law, pagan thought also must decide for itself, in its conceptual extension of structure, the overall *time-like* nature of this structure. Pagan thought, however, can only 'decide upon' *one* determination of time, for to choose all three requires assent to the tri-unity of determinant temporality, and this subjective triunity only holds via a further triunity, that being the lawful relationship of all subjects in their relationship unto God – something pagan thought implicitly refuses. This 'decision', as we shall see, has to do with the structure of *expectation*.

If time is no longer conceived as the law-responses subject to God, who by the Spirit leads all things into a flourishing culmination, one must subject 'time' according to one's own sovereign *expectations*. One cannot understand time as the irreducible determinations of *eventual* law response if one is pagan, for *eventual* law responses are always a matter of being lawfully subject unto God. Now, expectation has to do with the

genetic determination, a conceptual extension of 'what' is structurally expect-able as a later moment. Since pagan thought is always nonetheless subject to God, the malignation of the genetic determination is due, then, to the normative *expectations* of pagan thought – in shame or in hope. The malignation of the genetic determination in *principle* therefore concerns the very nature of structure as something *timed* in terms of 'what' the sovereign subject can expect from structure. The structure of eventuality is thus conceived in one of three ways:

(I) *mythologizing thought*, in which genesis dominates and structure is secondary and relative; (II) *purely structural thought*, in which structure dominates and genesis or development is subsidiary to structure; and (III) *cosmogono-cosmological* thought, in which genesis is structured or structure is revealed in genesis" (Tol: VPECA, 119).

Now, Bril is correct when he says that these types have to do with one's own normatively conceived *salvation* (Bril: OHP, 133). This tracks well with what we have said about expectation, for if expectation conceptually extends the structural state of affairs to the 'sovereign subject' instead of the leading of the Spirit under positive law, expectation delineates the only salvation conceived by the 'sovereign subject' for itself. Bril thus deepens the above types as follows:

(1) Mythologizing thought: salvation through esoteric knowledge; (2) Cosmological thinking [purely structural thought]: salvation through intellectually gaining metaphysical knowledge of the transcendental; (3) Cosmogonic thought [cosmogono-cosmological thought]: salvation through evolution (Bril: OHP, 133).

Now, since genesis is the relationship relating the relations of the *this-that* and the *thus-so* determinations through the structure of the *kingdoms* or *kinds*, it should not be surprising that one's conceptual extension of what is expectable – one's sovereign salvation – should provide *momentum* for the other determinations such that it relates as relationship the other determinations into a "*kind* of philosophy" (Tol, VPECA, 121 n.21). Indeed, one's conception of 'what' is expectable in structure for the sake of one's sovereignty will influence any further interaction with structure in one's *perceptual* and conceptual *arrangement* – since expectation provides the *momentum* for both determinations. This is consistent with Vollenhoven's own historiographical charting, the genetic types operate as an overarching class in his charts that extend further typological classes beneath it as further extensions of that *kind*. The genetic types, like the genetic determination, hold in relationship the other determinations, whether in history or the present.

Thus, in the first place one's circumspected concept is either circumscribed according to a subjectivistic, objectivistic, or realistic normative strategy, which in turn

normatively extends structure according to the normative strategy of this circumspective concept. Thus, one's conceived structure of the genetic determination is a structure whose structure is co-opted into one's normative strategy. Hence it is possible for the normative approaches of subjectivism, objectivism or realism to further conceive structure as either *mythologized*, *purely structural* or *cosmogono-cosmological* according to the place of the law in one's normative strategy.¹³⁹

So how is one's genetic response revealed in a text? This again has to do with the *concept* of one's circumspective concept, that is, the modally conceived concept by which the normativity of the heart is rebelliously and shamefully conceived as sovereign. Likewise, the structure of that which is subject to the heart will be extended by a number of 'structural principles', and this structure will only be extended through the normative strategy which is always the *circumspection* of one's circumspective concept. This extension, in turn allows for the *discernment* of 'what' is expect-able. This is then stated as a result as a secondary state of affairs. These in turn are re-affirmed as classes by the historiographer who conceptually extends the already stated results in a secondary statement.

Now, whereas the *genetic* state of affairs finds the thinker, via expectation, determining the temporal nature of all structure as either flow, pure structure or a bit of both, the *arrangement* of this chosen structure occurs as a *thus-so* state of affairs. But this does not mean the pagan thinker is aware that conceptual arrangement is a durational event with its own determination subject to God. The thinker in question has already, for instance, conceived time as pure flow, thus, the consequent conceptual arranging, while nonetheless occurring as a *thus-so* determination, has no room for the reality of actual durating inherence, for durating inherence is now held in relationship by the expectable flux one maintains in one's mythologized thought. Since this determination concerns the vertical interconnections of all subject functions of subjects-in-relation unto God under law, the *arrangement* of this state of affairs is probably the most revealing, Tol calls it the "typological theme that elicits the greatest variety of response" (Tol: VPECA, 121).

Now, it was already mentioned that in conceptually circumscribing oneself as a sovereign subject one bifurcates structural modal functioning into that which is normatively and structurally subject [to this normativity].¹⁴⁰ Now, this bifurcation is in the first place circumscribed by one's normative strategy, that is, one 'functionally' reconceives one's pre-functional heart in either a subjectivistic, objectivistic, or realistic

approach to the knowable. Moreover, since this knowable is subject only to the sovereign subject, one's structural principles again function according to this normative strategy. However, this principled bifurcation needs to be *arranged* and can only be arranged if the genetically conceived structure of this bifurcation is extended according to one of two arrangeable possibilities. Either this bifurcation is conceived as primordial as in *dualism*, or the bifurcation is conceived as really part of an original unity, as in the case of *monism*. These possibilities, in turn, allow for further conceptual arrangements of vertical structure according to the extensions of one's circumscribed principles and what can be expected according to one's concept of genetic structure. Thus, the conceptual extensions of the monist always arrange the duality of the bifurcation in such a way as to account for its singularity in time while the conceptual extensions of the dualist attempt to reconcile the duality into some reconciliation in time.

As seen, in the contemporary interrelations between two individual subjects in the *this-that* state of affairs the law responses of these subjects form response-relationships that exhibit a certain *universality*. Now, this is true for the other determinations as well, similar law responses in functional anticipations or retrocitations exhibit a similarity in law response since each are held in relationship by the same law. Likewise, similar law responses in the genetic determination allow us to speak of a certain universality of *kingdoms* or *kinds*; again, this has to do with the number of subject functions granted to similar or different subjects under law. But, the universality of contemporary interrelation is quite a different determination than the other determinations already mentioned. For it is only in the *this-that* state of affairs that a subject is met – contemporaneously – in its *individuality*. Universality in this state of affairs is a *successive* universality, a universality that *emerges* into successive *coherences*, as Tol states. But, this is not a case of moment to moment succession, this is the universality of a coherence in a succession that is not momentary (as in genesis), but *contemporary*.

Now, if one does not see the law that holds in a relationship the relations of at least two subjects that respond through this law unto God, the very universality that creatures exhibit in response to this law remain the only substitute for this law. Thus, the universality that contemporaneous individual subjects-in-relation exhibit under law response to law can be reconceived – *on principle* – as the very structure that relates them. On the other hand, one can altogether deny that the universality that individual subjects exhibit in their contemporaneous law response has any actual universal character at all. For a realist, this means that one can come very close to Vollenhoven's

own position, there is a law outside of the cosmos that relates into relationships individual subjects-in-relation such that their contemporaneous response to this law are not *universals* per-se, but instead exhibit a *responsive universality* to these principles. Mind you, it is equally possible that a realist will conflate the universality of individual-subjects into the universal principles that occupy a place outside of the cosmos. This is an easy temptation, for the principles of one's realism are always *perceived* in the first place *from* and *in* the universal responses of individual subjects in relation.

Now, one who, in a circumspected *subjectivism*, *objectivism*, or *realism*, denies that universality is on *principle* a matter of universals is an *individualist*. On the other hand, one who on *principle* affirms this universality as a case of actual universals, whether *subjectively*, *objectively*, or *realistically*, is a *universalist*. Now, whereas an individualist *principally* places the individual subject before its responsive universality, a universalist *principally* structures this universality into principled universals that come before the individual subject. There is another option as well, that of *partial universalism*, where neither universality nor individuality are structurally considered first, but are on *principle* both considered structural entities.¹⁴¹ The conceptual extension of individuals in this determination through contemporaneous perception is thus *principally* structured according to one's fundamentally perspectival *individualism* or *universalism*.

Combined with one's monistic or dualistic arrangement, this allows for some odd possibilities. One who subjectivistically arranges the normative subject as a monistic world soul that is broken off into a diverse number of subjects can understand the universality of these individual subjects to be a case of the very universality of a world subject itself. This is a universalism where the structure of all individual things is at one and the same time the very normative subjectivity of all things.¹⁴² One can also subjectivistically conceive a monism individualistically, consider the case of solipsism where the individual extends all reality as though from one's mind.

These are just several examples of the efficacy of Vollenhoven's historiography. Since this paper is largely an exploration of the relation of Vollenhoven's epistemology and systematics to his historiography, an actual reading of the history of philosophy, would be too large an addition to the task at hand. Nonetheless, another interesting point can be made, one that I cannot resist.

Vollenhoven himself could be considered a monist, but of a different sort. For Vollenhoven reality is constituted by the *interrelations* of God, Law and Cosmos.¹⁴³ This interrelative unity is hardly primordial, for God precedes the reality he posits as a

primordial REALITY, but as an interrelative unity it is nonetheless one. Whereas a subjectivistically conceived monism may require concepts like a 'world soul', Vollenhoven's monism is more of a *realist* sort without being a realism *per-se*, which greatly alters the monism at hand. A realism *per-se* circumspectively declares all reality as subject to the normative strategy of the sovereign subject, including God. But for Vollenhoven, God precedes the *reality* of the law that He posits. Thus, reality is *one* in a duality of irreducible relations between God and cosmos that are related in relationship through the tri-unifying *reality* of law.

Let us conclude.

Now, it must always be remembered that Vollenhoven's historiography is a *critical* movement based on his *thetical* positivizations. The entire system of historiographical classification is based on what he conceives to be a malignation of his own conception of states of affairs and determinations. As for his own conception of structure, it must be further recalled that this either stands or falls according to the flourishing that it allows. Vollenhoven is thus open and ready for any further reformation. Hence, any 'pigeonholing' of past thinkers that operates as if Vollenhoven's historiographical classes were some sort of systatic universals forgets that the entire system is a *classificatory* system, that is, a series of *secondary statements* based on what others have transferred concerning the primary states of affairs. These secondary statements are only allowed, on Vollenhoven's own terms, by right of one's own struggle with the primary state of affairs and thus one's own gift to the second party.

Thus, in using Vollenhoven's historiography one is at least obligated to understand his systematics and the epistemology that provides foundation for it. Systematics, after all is the enterprise that positivizes the primary state of affairs and epistemology is the enterprise that self reflexively positivizes, based on one's systematics, the epistemic approach of one's positivizations in all thetical and critical endeavours. Since historiography is the study of the transferred, and the transferred is always a matter of statements, an understanding of Vollenhoven's epistemology is absolutely fundamental if one is to at all apprehend the way Vollenhoven conceives the way past thinkers have structurally arranged, perceived, and expected different states of affairs.

The system is far more fragile than it seems. Disagreement still revolves around whether or not the law is in the cosmos or whether it is outside the cosmos. Likewise, the various tri-unities, despite Vollenhoven's own fear of speculation, still garner such

accusations. One might question whether or not Vollenhoven's different state of affairs are indeed as he conceives or whether the three commands of law do justice to creaturely subjectivity, for there is great debate concerning the nature of both 'time' and the 'heart' in reformational circles. Furthermore, one might doubt the nature of logicity as Vollenhoven has understood it, for there is great debate still in our circle whether a concept is an extensional approach to the knowable or whether the extension of a concept is identical to its intension in a conceptual "grasp". Furthermore, there is still debate on how many modal determinations of law there are, and what order they ought to be presented. Vollenhoven himself is well aware of these difficulties, in his report on the divergences in his reformational thought to the Board of the Foundation for Special Chairs in Calvinian Philosophy, he writes:

It should come as no surprise that differences like these occur in this group too. It can easily happen that not everyone sees a specific difficulty, or possibility, at the same time. Even when they do, they will very likely, given the different path each has covered to date and the different task with which each one is entrusted, not always follow the same method in resolving the issue. Besides, these divergences can only produce objections when people lose sight of the *tentative character of, or individual stamp on, the results booked so far* (Vollenhoven: Divergences, 111-12).^{cxliv}

Of course, Vollenhoven's own circumspection as systematically formulated allows him to say this. The issue concerning 'specific difficulties' is one of a matter of *detail*, detail having to do with each determination. The 'method' that each takes in approaching this matter of detail, on the other hand, is one regarding the normative strategy, for in the same way the term "Christian philosophy" has been understood by honest-to-God Christians as a syncretism of pagan and Christian hope, one's 'method' can still have traces of subjectivism, objectivism, or realism. Yet, Vollenhoven is not ready to *object* to his fellow Christian colleagues as though it is only he who has seen the light. Vollenhoven is well aware of the 'individual stamp' of his own thought, that his own subjectivity unto God is not only a struggle with the primary state of affairs, but is always at one and the same time a state of affairs analyzed for the sake of a *result* that in its very approach knowingly (except in exhaustion) contradicts God's command to love or not. This is, despite its systematic vastness, a *tentative system*.

^{cxliv} Dat dergelijke verschillen ook in dezen kring voorkomen kan niet verbazen: een bepaalde moeilijkheid, resp. mogelijkheid wordt niet licht door allen tegelijk gezien en zelfs wanneer dit geval zich wèl voordoet, is, gegeven het verschil zoowel in den vroeger afgelegden weg als in de toevertrouwde taak, de kans groot, dat men bij de oplossing niet steeds dezelfde methode volgt. Bezwaren opleveren kunnen deze divergenties bovendien slechts wanneer men hetzij het voorloopig karakter hetzij het individueel bepaalde der gewonnen resultaaten uit het oog verliest (Divergences: 111-12).

⊕ 13. the image of God

If the rebellious heart no longer conceives itself as subject to God by the law that holds for it, it must find its subjectivity elsewhere, that is, one commands oneself to 'hold oneself together'. This is the essential difference between the thought of Vollenhoven and those whom he classes historiographically. This also makes Vollenhoven's thought remarkably difficult to penetrate and recount. But this is how I shall close the essay – by making things more difficult – for the issue at hand in Vollenhoven's systematics, epistemology and historiography is fundamentally one of anthropology, whether one is held together by one's subjection to God or whether one holds oneself together, whether one confesses oneself as made in God's image – a difficult matter, for matter is always difficult to account for – or whether one is one's own self conceived idol.

The human subject, for Vollenhoven, is threefold in three ways. Subject to three different commands of law, the subject is always found in relation to other subjects unto God in three determinations. While each determination marks the *as-time* law responses of subjects in relation, the states of affairs that intersect each determination relate into relationships the uniquely timed subjects in relation as either structural, positivized or normative. Thus, two normative subjects in relation are at one and the same time each tri-unified under law as structural, normative and positivized subjects, yet each relate side by side as subjects in relation structurally, positively and normatively in all three determinations of states of affairs.

Perception of the other, for instance, requires the intra-individual relation of structural subjectivity to normative subjectivity in the structure of perception, and likewise a relation of normativity to one's structure in what one 'takes notice' of. These two relations are related into a relationship by what is already cultivated under the law of the Spirit, thus the relation of structural subjectivity to normative subjectivity can be repressed by what is already transferred concerning what perception can in fact perceive – the structure of perception cannot break through its transferred and affirmed positivization. Likewise, one's normative relation to structure in perception always depends on its previously affirmed apprehensions. Yet, despite all of these intra-individual relations none of these intra-individual relations would be the case unless one was interindividually side by side another subject in a state of affairs. That is, the intra-

individual relation of heart and body always occurs in an inter-individual relation to another subject in all states of affairs and determinations.

Now this takes on a different character, for the side by side relation of subjects-in-relation is *inter-individually* structural, normative and positivized. Thus, the very act of speaking, which is intra-individually already a relation of structural subjectivity to normative subjectivity and vice versa, is likewise structurally inter-individual by nature of the structural linguality *inherent* to each subject. Likewise, the already positivized provides the grammatically affirmed rules of grammar, nuance, and other affirmed lingual phenomena between the two subjects while the normative call to love relates these two subjects as speakers called to love their neighbor under lingual norms. Thus, two intra-individually related subjects can be found inter-individually relating heart to heart, but only if body to body, and only if each is already a named second party unto the other, and each name always has its own spirit.

This is, of course, all very complex. For the case of two subjects in relation is not only a case of the subject's own intra-individual relations of structure, normativity and positivization, but also a case of inter-individual connection via the different modal laws in each state of affairs. However, the states of affairs are also connected in different determinations. As seen already, the contemporaneous act of speaking to another normative subject requires the interindividual connection of *inherence* of structural linguality lawfully holding for each subject. These states of affairs of subjects-in-relation are related into a relationship by the genetic determination which is a further determination of subjects in relation.

Thus, the subject in relation intra-individually relates under its different laws if and only if it is interindividually related to another subject. But one is inter-individually related to another subject in three determinations of states of affairs. As the lawful intra-individuality of the subject is held together in a lawful tri-unity, so the inter-individual relations of subjects are held in lawful tri-unity. Since subjection to law either intra-individually or inter-individually is always a matter of being subject to God in a *relationship* to which each party is bound, one in sovereignty and one in subjection, the very nature of one's cosmic as-timed subjectivity is at base *interrelative*, one is held together under a tri-unity of law in relationship to God as a subject-in-relation in a tri-une determination of states of affairs.

Humans, concludes Vollenhoven “are the concrete correlate of the Triune God” (Isagooge §115).^{cxlv} This does not mean that God and cosmos are correlate, for only the law and cosmos are correlate, which is to say, the correlation of law and cosmos are a reality that come after the REALITY of God, a reality that God Himself becomes an interrelating member of the moment He interrelatively posits this correlation. Being in the ‘image of God’ means for Vollenhoven’s one’s irreducible *relation* to God – which is a triunity.

The formulation ‘being (created) in the image of God’ *indicating a relational state* is to be preferred over ‘the image of God’, since the latter is an abstraction, a usage that has proved historically to have its dangers. This danger became particularly acute when people who laid the emphasis on ‘image’ then also lost sight of its being related to God, subsequently began to ask what that image might be and sometimes ended up identifying it with a specific group of functions, or even with a supposedly innate understanding (Isagooge § 115).^{cxlvi}

Now, one’s relation to God is through the law, and the law has the character of “holding for”, yet the law always ‘holds for’ at least two creatures, that is, it connects and makes possible the irreducible relations or connections of at least two creatures in a relationship. Hence, law ‘holds’ two co-related subjects into a relationship, this is the very meaning of the correlation of law and cosmos, law is the relationship that co-relates the relations or connections of at least two subjects. But the correlation of two subjects under law is the way God relates to subjects-in-relation through the relationship of law and the manner by which subjects-in-relation relate to God in their manifold subjective relations. Now, the relational state that images the tri-une God is three cases of being subject to God under law, the being-subject-in-relation under the structural, normative and positive law. This is the unity of the subject, the triunity of life, “the real unity of life can only be had where we hold to the triune law of the Triune God” (Vollenhoven: UoL, 128).^{cxlvii}

^{cxlv} Bovendien was hij van meet af naar het beeld Gods geschapen, zodat zijn natuur goed was, en hij, wjl door God gecreëerd, aangesproken en tot het goed gericht, in het verbond als het concrete correlaat van de Drieëenige Diens heerlijkheid op aarde kon weerspiegelen (vgl. 2 Cor. 3:18) en in oorspronkelijke gerechtigheid aan de eis Zijner wet kon voldoen (Isagooge § 115).

^{cxlvi} Men spreke van “(het) naar het beeld Gods (geschapen) zijn”, wat een relationele toestand aanduidt, en niet van het beeld Gods, daar dit een abstractie is, welk gebruik in de geschiedenis niet ongevaarlijk bleek. Vooral wanneer men dan nog, het accent op het “beeld” leggend, het op God betrokken zijn daarvan uit het oog verloor, vervolgens ging vragen, wat dit beeld wel mocht zijn en het tenslotte somtijds zocht in de bepaalde groep functies of zelfs in een vermeend aangeboren begripen (Isagooge § 115).

^{cxlvii} Dat echte levens-eenheid alleen kan worden bereikt daar, waar de mens zich houdt aan die drieëenige wet van de Drieëenige God (UoL: 128).

Is this speculative? Vollenhoven thinks not. He even warns against it. His way out of speculation is precisely by remembering that one is *subject* to God meaning that God, Law and Cosmos are irreducibly distinct. These three may form a *tri-unity*, but because God is the TRINITY named in this tri-unity, to think that this tri-unity bears ontological similarity to the TRINITY which itself relates within this tri-unity is to ignore the very ontological irreducibility of each tri-unity, the tri-unity of the TRINITY and the tri-unity of reality. One participates in a tri-unity, yes, but one does not participate in the TRINITY, the TRINITY precedes all tri-unities that it posits and participates with-in (that it *withs* with). Being subject to God means being subject to these three laws which unify the subject as a subjected-to-law tri-unity.

Watch your step with these trinitarian traces. There has always been a great deal of speculation. Caution is required. The greatest dangers are avoided by remembering that such a threefold unity in our human lives is possible only *under law*, precisely in connection with the threefold character of law. God sets the law. The world is not God's correlate nor an emission of his being. It is created by him and put under the law he gave. The world is not correlate with God but with the law (Vollenhoven: UoL, 128-9).^{cxlviii}

The human as a 'concrete correlate of the Triune God' is thus the tri-une subjectivity of one's interrelation to God via the threefold relationship of law which is expressed in each of the tri-une determinations of states of affairs. Humans are a 'held up' tri-unity, so long as God remains faithful to the correlation of law and cosmos, reality continues to exist as an *interrelative* tri-unity. The reality of the correlation of law and cosmos and God's own relation in this is an *interrelative* reality, for the REALITY before all reality is the Tri-unity of God.¹⁴⁴

Again, those who deny rest in God, who ignore the arresting relation of God in His continual attempts in the Spirit to turn hearts around are those anguished and anxious hearts who hold themselves up as sovereign, who assume their very subjectivity as not that of being-subject, which is one's relation unto God, but assume – as if it were possible – God's relation to the subject. Thus (a bifurcation of) the world becomes subject to the sovereign subject and what was once the law relating the relations of God and cosmos into a tri-unified relationship becomes circumspectively placed either in the subject, object or outside each as one's normative strategy of subjective sovereignty.

^{cxlviii} Maar past u een beetje op met die vestigia Trinitatis. Daar is al veel over gespeculeerd; weest er voorzichtig mee. De ergste gevaren kunt ge afweren door vast te houden, dat een dergelijke drieëenheid in het mensenleven allen mogelijk is onder de wet, juist in verband met die drievoudigheid in de wet. God stelt de wet; en de wereld is niet correlaat met God en ook niet en uitvloeisel van Zijn Wezen, maar ze is door Hem geschapen en gesteld onder de door Hem gegeven wet. De wereld is niet correlaat met God, maar correlaat met de wet (UoL: 128-9).

What is expected is one's own conceived salvation or demise, what is arranged is one's own conceived origins or one's complete lack, what is perceived is one's own mastery or one's own failure. However, beyond the optimism or failure of sovereign-subjectivity – an idiosyncrasy always doomed to fail – is “the gospel of grace, which promises deliverance from this predicament” (Vollenhoven: UoL, 122).^{cxlix}

We all begin, says Vollenhoven, with one question: “how can I arrive at a merciful God?” (Vollenhoven: UoL, 122).^{cl} This is not an easy question and its answer is no less easy, yet it is the very shape of our answerability. Yet, as uneasy as one may be in the face of such violent anguish, moments so full of terror that recollection is immobilized, “one can neither know ourselves nor our fellow man if we do not see the relation in which those others as well as we ourselves stand over against God's law” (Vollenhoven: UoL, 122).^{cli} It may be our answerability that has murdered so many, yes, but it is also through this law that God Himself is answerable, for He must relate on His own terms, this is the very discourse of religion, this is the very *walking* in 'walking with God'. Our answerability deepens only because the covenant deepens, if God is answerable, if God answers, then we have arrived at a merciful God.¹⁴⁵

One's terminology, if set upon one's own terms and not the Christian hope for the future – which is one's walk with God via the lawful terms he has posited – underwrite and thus determine their own termination. The terminal illness of this world requires new terms based on terms that allow flourishing and hope. This is the work of the Spirit, the Spirit who posits the relationship for positive positivizations, who intrudes a structure called to flourish upon one's normative circumspection and who leads one's normative circumspection to the greater flourishing of structure. And this is the great culmination: forever restored in rest, the subject as subject brings flourishing love to itself and its neighbor in forever deepened expectation, forever deepened arrangement and forever deepened perception in its walk and talk with God in a forever deepened cosmos, world without end.

^{cxlix} En juist omdat Paulus deze situatie zo diep peilt en zo hartgrondig ernstig neemt, kan hij óók ernst maken met de prediking van de genade, die weet van verlossing uit deze nood (UoL: 122).

^{cl} hoe kom ik toch aan een genadig God? (UoL: 122).

^{cli} We kunnen noch ons zelf, noch onze medemensen kennen, indien we niet óók de relatie zien, waarin zowel die anderen als wij zelf staan tegenover de wet Gods (UoL: 122).

⊕ 14. Postlude: final provisionalities

The systematician, says Vollenhoven “forms concepts for himself...[that] primarily regard the non-conceptual states-of affairs” (Vollenhoven: CPHM, 9).^{cii} Indeed, for as we have seen above, the primary state of affairs concerns “*what* in that which is knowable [that] is itself not knowledge or error” (Isagooge § 171). Likewise, “the historian of philosophy, at least in his attempts to understand the conclusions of previous thinkers, forms concepts about states-of-affairs which are themselves conceptual in character” (Vollenhoven: CPHM, 9).^{ciii} This too is a relation of a knower to a knowable, the knowable in this case being the already transferred and affirmed, the known that is already knowable. Vollenhoven concludes with a statement that has confused: “philosophical systematics deals with *primary concepts* whereas study of the history of philosophy is largely concerned with *secondary concepts*” (Vollenhoven: CPHM, 9).^{civ}

Now, when Vollenhoven, in his Isagooge distinguishes between primary and secondary concepts he is not talking about the character of one’s analytical activity upon the knowable, but instead about concepts “being determined from the side of that which is known” (Isagooge § 174).^{civ} We have already mentioned this earlier. A primary concept is a concept one forms about the primary state of affairs only because there is a primary state of affairs that relates to knowing such that one can conceive, and this is also the case for secondary concepts. But neither of these knowable state of affairs themselves determine the analytically active nature of, say, *perception* or *apprehension* which is one determination in which the knowable is conceptually approached. Thus, the systematician does not deal with primary concepts inasmuch as she deals with the primary state of affairs in a conceptual manner that is itself determined by the primary state of affairs – a primary concept. This also applies to secondary concepts.

^{cii} De eerste vormt zich, zolang hij niet over kentheorie en logica handhelt, begrippen, die in eerster instantie betrekking hebben op het niet-begripmatige in de werkelijkheid (CPHM: 9).

^{ciii} ...daarentegen wil de historicus der wijsbegeerte, althans bij zijn pogen de resultaten van vroegere denkers te verstaan, zich een begrip vormen omtrent zaken, die zelf een begripmatig karakter dragen (CPHM: 9).

^{civ} Korter gezegd: de systematiek der wijsbegeerte is het om primaire begrippen te doen, de bestudering van haar geschiedenis echter goeddeels om secundaire (CPHM: 9).

^{civ} Het bepaalde zijn naar de zijde van het gekende (Isagooge § 174).

But it is here that several mistakes have been made. Wolters, for instance, states that because historiography is a case “of the logical coming into synthesis with (= forming a concept of) something which is itself also logical” that “the ‘problem-historische method applies to conceptions (as results of philosophizing) while the extra-logical factors in the history of philosophy are restricted to the activity of philosophizing” (Wolters: EIPG, 27). Wolters, as I shall point out later, takes this activity to be *primary*. But this is surely mistaken. The secondary states of affairs are, in all of their modal determinations a *result*, results that are *lingual, social, historical*, and yes, also logical – that is, they are passed on to the second party as *positivized* in *lingual* statements that have a distinct concept and a discerned extension as result of one’s own struggle with the primary state of affairs. Likewise, the *activity* of struggling with the primary state of affairs is always *normative* and never *structural* (which Wolters suggests), that is, it is one’s own *personal* unpositivized perceptions and apprehensions which, as a result, are not always that type of results that we call *statements*.

But to assume a person’s *activity* as ‘extra-logical’ or perhaps better, non-conceptual, is very strange. As seen, the approach of expectation or recollection, perception or apprehension, and the already arrangeable and the can-be arranged, are all cases of a *distinct* concept extending a *this* or *that*, *thus* or *so*, or a *genetic* subject each in their irreducible determinations. The so-called ‘extra-logical factors in the history of philosophy’, if they are *stated*, i.e., the social conditions of Greece in the third century BCE, are immediately made *distinct* to the second party, and thus this too becomes part of the secondary states of affairs and is equally analyzable by *normative activity* as are past philosophical results. Inasmuch as they are know-able they are recollect-able, apprehend-able and arrange-able. One must remember that the secondary state of affairs includes **all** that is *positivized*, whether scientific or non-scientific, as that which is always transferred and affirmed to the second party.

This distinction is important for it is not only the theoretically seconded whose results are knowable, but every other of what Wolters calls ‘extra-logical’ results that may not be solely theoretical. Now, the historiography of philosophy is a theoretical enterprise, for it is at base a conceptually *critical enterprise*, it is the theoretical re-positivization of that which is already theoretically positivized. It’s aim, therefore, is not analysis of the *genetic* determination that brought to the second party all that has already been positivized – that is, the cultural development up to that time – but it’s analysis of what has already been *theoretically* positivized *about* the genetic state of

affairs certainly helps bring to light in a very lucid way the knowable cultural ‘*moment*’ this or that philosopher was in, and the *momentum* it allowed under the culminating work of the Spirit.

The difference between science and non-science, not surprisingly, has to do with *time*. Theory makes things “noetically passive”, which “in no way restricts the *eventual* nonnoetic activity of the functions being investigated” (Isagooge § 199).^{clvi} That is, the activity which is always *changing* in its eventual response to law, producing what we call ‘time,’ is “noetically passive in...propositions” (Isagooge § 199). Thus, “the *method* of the special science is always binary, that is to say, *synthetic*” (Isagooge § 199).^{clvii} This synthesis isolates an *analyzable* “field”, that is, a modal determination of law, and proceeds to analyze it in light of its determination of *states of affairs*, “after a field has been isolated, it is possible to introduce a second isolation, either in a vertical connection or in a horizontal direction¹⁴⁶” (Isagooge § 199).^{clviii} However, this synthesis does not mean the result is purely analytical, for analyticity is a function that allows one to say something distinct *about* a distinct something, but this hardly implies the content of this ‘*about*’ to be content *about* analyticity. “The result consists of scientific statements (propositions) whose *content* is neither only analytic nor only nonanalytic” (Isagooge § 201).^{clix} Wolters conclusion that on “Vollenhoven's own account...the history of philosophy” deals “exclusively in its logical or analytical aspect” is thus mistaken (Wolters: EIPG, 33).

By this conception of logicity, Wolters misreads – at least in my re-conception – Vollenhoven’s historiographical activity and result. This mis-conception becomes especially clear with Wolter’s formulation of primary and secondary concepts and their relation to systematics and historiography. Wolters appears to have missed the idea that Vollenhoven’s “primary concepts” are an epistemological way to speak about concepts as determined from the side of that which is known – in this case the primary state of affairs, which also goes for secondary concepts.

^{clvi}Het onderzochte is ten opzichte van de verbinding-zoekende analytische activiteit niet actief; indien men wil, zelfs gnotisch passief. Deze passiviteit sluit echter geen ogenblik de eventuele niet-gnotische activiteit der onderzochte functies uit: zo is b.v. het energetische wel degelijk actief, al is het bij het onderzoek door energeticus of fysicus gnotisch passief (Isagooge § 199).

^{clvii} De methode der vakwetenschap is steeds twee-enig, d.w.z. synthetisch (Isagooge § 199).

^{clviii} Brengt men zo (alleen secundair geoorloofde) isolering in verticale richting aan, ook een in horizontale richting mogelijke wetenschappelijk onderzoek kan zich speciaal richten op de ante- of retrocipatie(s) in een kring (Isagooge § 199).

^{clix} Het resultaat bestaat in wetenschappelijk oordelen, stellingen, wier inhoud noch enkel analytisch, noch enkel niet-analytisch is (Isagooge § 201).

Hence, Wolters goes on to discuss the difference in *method* and the “ontic difference in Gegenstand in which the methodological difference is rooted” (Wolters, EIPG, 29). He develops the following chart (see Wolters: EIPG, 30) and makes this error explicit, at least given our own conception:

| | Systematics | Historiography |
|-----------|---|------------------------------|
| Primary | The structure of things and their genesis | (?) |
| Secondary | Logic/epistemology | (a portion of) human culture |

Given our own re-conceptions of Vollenhoven’s results, this chart runs contrary to what has been discovered. First off, epistemology is the study of analyticity in both the *primary* and *secondary* states of affairs, as well as the *normative* states of affairs (like the principle of non-contradiction, which is not structural, but a ‘thou-shalt’) which are here not at all represented. Logic *must* analyze the analytical in the primary state of affairs (which it does not do on the chart), for otherwise the very distinction that allows distinctions can never be made normatively distinct. Wolters appears to think that “the method of logic and epistemology is geared towards the conceptual as structure” (Wolters: EIPG, 32)¹⁴⁷ which is surely true at least on one level, but *structure* always concerns that [in this case analytical] law responding subject under structural law in the primary state of affairs. Thus, logic is not a species of systematics since systematics only ever analyzes the primary state of affairs, and systematics has nothing to do *per-se* with logic. Likewise, to assume that historiography has anything to do with the primary state of affairs is not quite right, for though any positivization is always *about* the primary state of affairs, it is nonetheless under its own irreducible law, and it is this range of positivizations that historiography studies.

Wolters is convinced that there is something ‘extra-logical’ or perhaps better, non-conceptual about the secondary states of affairs. This is why he assumes that there must be something *primary* about them, although, given my claims it is instead the converse: it is always itself *about* something primary. “The historian of philosophy” he says, “forms concepts of what is already conceptual... That is why his concept formation

is 'goeddeels' [*largely*] secondary" (Wolters: EIPG, 30). But "apparently", he says, "there is a *small* part of his concept-formation which does *not* deal with what is itself conceptual (i.e., what is non-conceptual), and is therefore primary" (Wolters: EIPG, 30). Here Wolters makes his mistake. He does not realize that primary concepts are the concepts one conceives because there is a primary state of affairs and secondary concepts are conceived because there is a secondary state of affairs. Moreover, speaking of sizes, one's systematics play the *largest* role in one's historiography, they are the thetical position from which one can criticize in the first place.

Wolters places the non-conceptual, what he calls the *activity* in the empty box, as though activity were always non-logical and results always logical, as though activity was part of the positivized and not the *act* of positivization which is itself normed, as though *concepts* do not include *conception* which is always a conceptual approach, an extension of the knowable and its consequential discernment. Now, Vollenhoven is infamous for being unclear despite his promise in the beginning of his *Isagooge* that his "intention of the following is accordingly only to denote in words as clearly as possible the most important determinations and distinctions that I have discerned in the cosmos in order that others may see them as well" (*Isagooge* § 18).^{clx} One is often left wondering *what* has been positivized about the primary state of affairs, what he is all *about*. But it is not clear, at least to me, that Wolters, like most Vollenhovian scholars, consulted Vollenhoven's epistemology for his essay, an approach I have found most useful despite its mind-boggling sparsity. A case in point:

The method of a historian dealing with this *Gegenstand* [a conceptual historical result] must thus be geared to his forming concepts of a conceptual reality...This method, it would appear, is restricted to the results of philosophy in the past. The uncertainty touching this *activity* is thus resolved *in favour of its non-conceptual character*...The following picture now emerges: the historical *Gegenstand* is constituted by two elements: activity (non-conceptual) and result (conceptual) (Wolters: EIPG, 31).

Any approach to the knowable, whether in perception, apprehension, recollection, expectation, rearrangement or arrangeability is *always* a matter of extending the knowable according to a concept, which is either theoretical or not, which is *about* analyticity or not, this is made very clear in Vollenhoven's epistemology at the end of his *Isagooge*.

^{clx} Volledigheid is, als gezegd, niet te berieken. De bedoeling van het volgende is dan ook slechts de voornaamste bepaaldheden en verscheidenheden die ik in de kosmos ontwaarde met woorden zo helder mogelijk aan te duiden, opdat ook anderen ze mogen zien (*Isagooge* § 18).

Whether this criticism stands remains to be seen. Criticism, as Vollenhoven knew all too well, is also provisional as a result.



endnotes

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- ¹ An apology to all of the Vollenhovians who may not recognize their Vollenhoven in this text.
- ² Incidentally, this is how Augustine reads Scripture: the obfuscated passages are made clear through reference to other related passages. These relations can be key words, topical discussions, symbolic references, etc. (See *On Christian Doctrine*, Books II and III).
- ³ "The analytic does not coincide with the logical" (Isagooge §31). Logic is "the **result** of analytic **activity** and...includes a good deal that is not analytic" (Isagooge §31). "*Het 'analytische' valt niet samen met het logische, althans voorzover men dit laatste opvat als een verzamelnaam onder welke enerzijdes niet al het analytische maar slechts het resultaat van analytische activiteit, valt en anderzijds vrij veel ressorteert dat niet analytisch is*" (Isagooge §13). Activity and result are absolutely irreducible for Vollenhoven. In fact, the ability of a subject to posit results concerning his or her analytic activity means that "logical thinking can distinguish itself from the law that holds for it" "*Vaandaar dat het logische denken ook zichzelf van de daarvoor geldende wet onderscheiden kan*" (N&LN, 105). This self-reflexivity marks the ability of a human (and not animal) subject who can analytically distinguish his or her normativity apart from his or her structural subjectivity. This becomes increasingly important, for, the pagan attempt to formulate this subjectivity fissures the cosmos in order to positivize this real subjective difference. Thus, "the past holds more than one attempt of logical thinking to formulate the [analytic] law that holds for it" "*Het verleden gewaagt dan ook van meer dan één pogen, waarbij dit denken trachtte de voor zichzelf geldende wet te formuleeren*" (N&LN, 105).
- ⁴ While Vollenhoven is known far more for his historiography than his logic his commitment to a Christian logic underlies, I think, his entire historiographical effort. His commitment to a logic of relations is a through-line from his early to later thought, though it becomes less solipsistic in terms of its systematic account of the cosmos.
- ⁵ I wish only for the flourishing of both sexes, which is hardly an exclusively feminine desire.
- ⁶ The nature of the positivized will be explored in chapter 3 and on.
- ⁷ This is Russell's own proof that a relationship must be a third thing that relates – at least sententially – two things together.
- ⁸ A 'marriage', for instance, is the positivized relationship that relates two relata together, but in no way does a marriage have its own efficacy outside of the two relata relating, rather, it is a positivized structure upheld *within* the subjectivity of each relatum. That is, a marriage is not a third relatum, but the positivized structure upheld (in question) by at least two relata within their own subjectivity.
- ⁹ This will be discussed in far greater detail later.
- ¹⁰ Might this be the germ of Vollenhoven's project of a 'Christian logic?'
- ¹¹ "Every critical activity implies that one takes a thetical position" "*Handhavend het houdbare van eigen positie, kritisch onderzoekend het resultaat niet alleen door anderen, maar ook door eigen denken vroeger bereikt, consequenties aandurvend – zo komt men al worstelend verder, en behaalt een dubbele winst: 'n versterkte positie en een beslister afwijzing can vat daarmee strijdt*" (Isagooge §3).
- ¹² That's a lesson to all of those disembodied philosophers studying the body! Only flesh can hold a pen!

¹³ Literally 'out of line with'. As shall be shown, Vollenhoven conceives the law as the *line* between God and cosmos, and the law relates the relations of at least two cosmic subjects into a relationship. Thus, breaking the law is to literally be 'out of line with', to malign one's relation with oneself and the other (for whom the law exists).

¹⁴ Leonard Cohen comes to mind: "You asked for signs, the signs were sent, the birth betrayed, the marriage spent, the widowhood of every government, signs for all to see" (Cohen: *The Future: "Anthem"*). Betrayal, exhaustion, and widowhood, all signs of structure depleted yet screaming for renewal.

¹⁵ So far, very Augustinian!!

¹⁶ This offers rich possibilities for the philosophy of the sexes, for the life line of human history is now sexed, which means sin and redemption themselves are sexed.

¹⁷ The Isagooge ends, after all, with a long discussion on the connection between Heaven and Earth, which is largely a discussion concerning the dangers of speculation in Christian thought. It is dangerous, for instance, to conflate the law with something created (as heaven), as it is dangerous to think of things in terms of essences.

¹⁸ Or so I am told by my mentor Robert Sweetman.

¹⁹ This is a logical term and was introduced by Frege as that meta-function that lays below all logical functioning such that the *values* (x) of the functions $x^2 - 4^x$ and $x(x - 4)$ cannot help but always be equal to each other such that each function (namely, $x^2 - 4^x$ and $x(x - 4)$) must also be equal to each other (Frege: F&C, 26). Each function, inasmuch as the values are always equal, possess the exact same *graph* despite their functional irreducibility, that is, they share an equal subfunctional lawfulness. Frege calls this lawfulness 'logical', (Frege: F&C, 26) but both the early and later Vollenhoven would disagree: there are many laws, and all things subject to law *function* under these irreducible laws according to a single *graph*. That is, all functioning (including the logical) is *graphed* by some metafunctional graph of interrelativity, which we shall simply call the 'graph'. This graph, I shall argue, is metafunctionally and interrelationally a triunity, referring to the interrelative triunity of God, Law and Cosmos and the interrelative triunity of at least two irreducible cosmic subjects and the law that holds for them. God is not graphed, however in His own *intra*-relative Triunity, for the Tri-unity of God does not precede and therefore does not graph God's being (this is why the eternal generation and eternal spiration within the Trinity are important: God's triunity is always eternally triunifying, if you will, given God's perfect self love).

²⁰ This is not to suggest that the logic of relations cannot be ontologized, for this was certainly done in the case of the early Bertrand Russell, as we shall see later.

²¹ As we shall see later, this is the very nature of a distinction, i.e., what always remains *distinct* in the act of distinction-making, hence giving rise to the *possibility* of distinction making.

²² And to some degree this is the case. God must always be identical with his predicates lest the predicates conceptually extend God such that God is ontologically subject to some preoriginary nature that is before God. This is certainly a subversion of subject-predicate logic but it only teaches us that subject-predicate logic cannot contain God. To transfer this lesson about the *reality* of God's own nature into the discussion regarding the *reality* of the relationship between God and cosmos is, however, a large mistake. For, if the 'being' of the *reality* of God and cosmos is nothing more than God, since God is always the self-identical predicate, then explaining the line of specific difference between God and cosmos becomes quite difficult. We must affirm that the reality of God Himself is very different from the reality of God and cosmos relating together. I choose to say it this way: the first is an *intrarerelative* reality, where all that relates is itself self-identical and the second an *interrelative* reality, where different 'realms' of reality are extended outside of God by God's own will and are transcended by God yet have a relation unto God that is irreducible to God's relation unto the cosmos. Confessionally, we say it another way: God's self love is so excessive that He wished not only to love Himself but also something outside of Himself.

²³ So much so that the later Vollenhoven's re-working of subject-predicate logic as the so-called 'logic of inherence' is an extension of the so-called 'logic of relations', since all logics are graphed by the same subfunctional (and thus non-logical) reality.

²⁴ This relationship is not '8' (at least not in its cardinality), for it is not '8' that relates 4^2 and 2^4 together, but rather '='. The number '8' does not extend 4^2 and 2^4 as though it were a concept, '8' is as much an extension as 4^2 and 2^4 such that one can say " $4^2 = 8 = 2^4$ ", where '=' relates all three subjects into a relationship. *Equality*, not '8', is the conceptual relationship that extends each subject. The number '8', even in its ordinality, is the numerical value of the *extension* a set or a class, but does not extend a clause.

²⁵ Russell calls this a "relating relation" (Russell: TOK, 80), which is quite nice, for it gives a certain efficacy to the relationship and not just the terms involved in the sentence.

²⁶ Sequentiality was the deepest relationship of all for Russell, what he calls a "bare abstract relation", for it is that that underlies the different relational senses such as propositions like "x is before y" and "y is after x". The sense of each relation is different, but the relationship is the same, that is, they express the same *sequence* (see Russell: TOK, 88).

²⁷ Levinas contends that this denotes an asymmetry from the Other to one, but this is not at all the case. Asymmetry is hardly the only reliable indicator of Otherness. In symmetrical relationships of similarity like "the friendship of A and B" it is undeniable that one's relation of friendship is always different than the other's relation of friendship, despite each being given the term 'friend of'. This asymmetry, moreover, does not employ a logic of relations. Levinas comes close to a logic of relations without ever reaching it. The asymmetry of the Other is a "transcendence", where selfhood itself is subsumed in the relation of the Other's call. It is only in responding to this call that one becomes irreducible to the Other, yet the response is always violent, one always subsumes the Other in the very act of response. See especially: Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 215 – 216.

²⁸ This, after all, is the root of evil. To want nothing more for oneself than the relation of God to cosmos is to deny one's own irreducible relation to God. It is to deny the reality of the line we call the Law; it is to mis-align, to malign. Thus, while we are created in the image of God, this only means *that we relate* to God, but in a manner that is irreducible to God's relation to us. To pretend otherwise is to sinfully malign God's image on earth.

²⁹ "Every individual thing is defined in its being by God's idea for that kind of thing. A thing's individuality – its being this *x* – is rooted in the particular way in which God brought the general idea *x* to realization at some particular time and in some particular place... These divine ideas are thoughts in the mind of God. He knows each one of them completely; everything with its infinity of relations. Both as a general idea and particularized substance these thoughts of God *hold as law for that which is created* [italics mind] (Kok: VHED, 67-8). Constituted by these ideas in a relation of God to cosmos, the cosmos wishes to know these ideas for itself: "this world, the (subjective) realm of change and becoming would be impossible without another objective realm of ideas or laws that define the nature of things, of ideals or goals *which creatures are to strive* [italics mine]" (Kok: VHED, 68).

³⁰ "Q: What do you believe when you say: 'I believe in God the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth'? A: That the eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who out of nothing created heaven and earth and everything in them, who still upholds them and rules them by his eternal *counsel* and providence, is my God and Father because of Jesus Christ his Son. (HC: LD9, Q26). This counsel is understood not as fate but rather as the destiny prearranged by God "all things, in fact, come to us not by chance, but from his fatherly hand" (HC: LD9, Q27). And again: "This doctrine gives us unspeakable comfort since it teaches us that nothing can happen to us by chance but only by the arrangement of our gracious heavenly Father" (Belgic Confession: Article 13).

³¹ The Father only creates through the Son: "We believe that the Father created heaven and earth and all other creatures from nothing, when it seemed good to him, by his Word, that is to say, his Son" (Belgic Confession: Article 12).

³² God's will is traditionally assigned to the Spirit: "We believe that this good God, after he created all things, did not abandon them to chance or fortune, but leads and governs them according to his holy will" (Belgic Confession: Article 13). This will is the same as the "eternal power and might" which is attributed to the Spirit in Belgic Confession Article 8.

³³ "Substance is the unextended, active, unitary essence of a thing defined by a law or 'idea' (Kok: VHED, 225). See also endnote 29.

³⁴ This broke down the solipsism of the early Vollenhoven, for his early philosophy was centered around the horizontal intraindividual relationship of body and soul in the act of knowing. Body was under the Ideas of God (the Father), Soul under the Norms of God (the Son) and the relationship between them under the Ideals of God (the Spirit). The later Vollenhoven still posited three vertical relationships, but under each vertical relationship it was understood that at least two things were horizontally related *interindividually* through this Law.

³⁵ Or, as we shall see later, it *concerns* neither the primary nor the secondary state of affairs.

³⁶ "Like every norm, this law has a double character, it promises blessing to the obedient and threatens the disobedient with the vengeance of the covenant", "*Deze wet nu draagt evenals iedere norm een tweezijdig karakter: de gehozamen belooft zij de zegen en de ongehoorzamen bedreigt zij met de wraak des verbond*" (Isagooge § 123).

³⁷ Which is, no doubt, autobiographical. Vollenhoven collapsed from a nervous breakdown early in his career. Error is not a matter of 'justified true beliefs', but a matter of committing either intentional or unintentional violence, including violence to oneself. I believe much of Vollenhoven's later work can be read, in part, as a therapy of connection after the devastation of his solipsistic and intellectualistic disconnection. Disconnection is, on Vollenhoven's own terms, violent.

³⁸ Vollenhoven's entire theory of knowledge from sections §139 and beyond can be seen as an extension of sections §5-18 where Vollenhoven briefly introduces the "place of philosophy in the cosmos and its task", "*De plaats van de wijsbegeerte in de kosmos en haar taak*" (Isagooge § 5). This is already a matter of epistemology. Because Vollenhoven cannot *systematically* give an account of the theory of knowledge unless he first goes into *detail*, that is, systematically reflecting on the structure of the cosmos itself, of which the structure of knowing is a part, he nonetheless feels it necessary to at least account for different circumspections of knowing, their difference, and the fact that whatever the structure of knowing may be, it is always structurally *subject-to* God. Thus, when Vollenhoven, in §145 states that his following theory of knowledge "takes stock of the results previously summarized" ("*de resultaten nagaat die in het voorgaande werden samengevat*") and that all the previous distinctions "also continue in the case of knowing" he is certainly referring back to some unfinished business already introduced. With his systematics behind him, he continues with what started in Isagooge § 5-18 as an epistemological trajectory. In section §11 Vollenhoven talks about knowing as *belief* and that "knowing (or erring) believing belongs to the nonscientific life", "*Dit godsdienstig geloven nu bevat – gelijk de onderzoekers daarvan tegenwoordig weer algemeen toegeven – een element van kennen (of dwalen*" (Isagooge § 11). Believing itself is either a matter of knowing or error, that is, it is knowing (at the very least) "that a favorable or unfavorable judgement of God on this life can be known", "*dat een ongunstig of gunstig oordeel Gods over z'n leven kenbaar is*" (Isagooge § 11). Here then is the very circumspect answerability that guides each persons approach to what is knowable. The term '*correct*' knowledge is thus not a new term from §139 on, it is already introduced in the beginnings of the Isagooge as *rest* in God.

³⁹ The early Vollenhoven was also committed to this. Although the goal of human knowing was to (nonidentically) possess God's Ideas, which he understood as the law for structure (they later become God's irreducible *relation* under the creation command, not the relationship binding the relations of God's and cosmos), these Ideas could never be possessed. In working out the 'stuff' of Law as more consistent with his commitment to the idea of relationships, Vollenhoven later understood that Law could not consistently be God's Ideas – which would be the structures *of* things (and thus belonging either to the mind of God or a structural part of creation itself, but not to some third realm) – but instead the relational structures that hold *for* things. Thus, one never

gains complete access to the primary states of affairs simply because the primary states of affairs are necessarily incomplete, they require the interrelation of normative co-creation for their thus ever deepened and flourishing structural responses.

⁴⁰ 'Principles' is a term of art for Vollenhoven, and is important for his historiography, as we shall see in chapter twelve.

⁴¹ "Everywhere for Calvin, in his *Institutes* and church-order, in polemics and commentaries, in sermons and correspondences, the appeal to Holy Scripture put an end to all dispute", "*In Institutie en Kerkenorde, in poleniek en commentaren, in preeken en correspondentie, overal is 't beroep op de Heilige Schrift voor Calvin het eind van alle tegenspraak*" (Vollenhoven: CRP, 20).

⁴² There does not seem to be any indication that Vollenhoven believes Calvin to have been at all inconsistent in his circumspection. But the two, circumspection and detail-work, are correlative. In learning from one's own conceptual mistakes one's circumspective force is more vigilant, likewise, errors in detail may arise out of a vigilant circumspection, which, when corrected, deepen one's conceptual understanding of life's deep subjective connection to God. This is certainly true for Vollenhoven's own life, for despite inconsistencies in his own circumspective concept, his circumspection remained vigilant to the claim that all is subject to God. Thus, a circumspective concept is a *qualified relation*, a circumspective relation qualified by a certain conceptual understanding of the relationship of God and cosmos (a confession).

⁴³ When it does not, Vollenhoven states (wonderfully) that this is due over and over again to a lack of childlike faith (Vollenhoven: CRP, 48). The dynamism of circumspective rest in God is indeed a faith always open to new surprises. As Vollenhoven says in his *Isagooge*, one is "always attuned to new surprises that will no doubt complement that *main conception that agrees with belief*", "*Integendeel: z'n resultaat, hoewel systematisch verkregen, is steeds een voorlopig, want hij blijft vol verwachting ingesteld op nieuwe verrassingen, die zich wel in de met het geloof strokende hoofdconceptie zullen voegen, doch het vroeger gewonnene telkens zullen aanvullen en meestal ook wel wijzigen*" (Vollenhoven: *Isagooge* § 15). A conception, as I have already nuanced, is different from a concept which is a matter of detail, and the main conception of the Christian is circumspective in nature, rest in God is constant expectation, *childlike* expectation.

⁴⁴ This is an excellent argument against Plantinga's notion of "transworld depravity." Plantinga states that, no matter what, Adam and Eve would have at some point fallen into sin due to some error. But what kind of error? Error of circumspection or error of detail? Error of detail need not plunge the world into sin, for error of detail does not by definition disconnect one either from God or neighbour as its effect. Error of circumspection, however, does disconnect one from God and neighbour. Thus, one can rightly say that while mistakes are always inevitable, sinfulness was not inevitable. One does not *accidentally* deny God. See Plantinga, *The Free Will Defence*, 131-2)

⁴⁵ See, for instance, Numbers 14:13-25, where Moses suggests a more suitable way of relating to the cosmos given the terms circumscribed in God's own covenant. Thus, even God Himself can relate through his own law in ways that are questionable to His creatures. This does not mean that God forsakes the Law in so doing, but rather that the Law, as relationship, has a manifold number of possible relations for both God and Cosmos to enact, which is why they are the *terms* for both relations.

⁴⁶ That is, subject to all terms of law. Thus, sexual intercourse is a way of knowing inasmuch as building cities is a way of knowing. The eucharist is a way of knowing as is eating bread and wine in more mundane circumstances.

⁴⁷ As we shall see, the primary state of affairs and the state of affairs we have called 'knowing' are only each 'vertically' irreducible responses to God *if and only if* they are horizontally interrelated. Thus, one can never talk of the primary state of affairs as if it were truly an isolatable state of affairs, the very act of talking about the primary state of affairs is a normative relation to the primary state of affairs, a relation that requires, in turn, all the irreducible structural relations of 'talking' in order to perform this normative act.

⁴⁸ Who is actually a sexed Other in Vollenhoven, which is Irigaray's lament against Levinas (see ILTY, 61). I shall show this later.

⁴⁹ This is not unlike Levinas. Language is born in love for the second party (the Other), but this language becomes sedimented and violent inasmuch as this original act of positivization goes beyond its event and names the other in events following. This is one act of positivization. Yet positivization occurs on another level as well, and this is the level where one's love for the second party is split between one's love for the third party. One cannot love each equally. Here one makes a 'law' for the administration of love, an increase in language. This law, too, can be violent. While Levinas laments the inevitable violence of language, it might be asked whether all acts of naming stand corrected, or whether some acts of naming are merely provisional and pedagogical inasmuch as they lead to even deeper encounters where language is again born.

⁵⁰ He later calls it the "Law of the Spirit" "*Ten slotte: daar is nog een derde wet: de wet des Geestes*" (UoL: 151). This is important to note for later discussions.

⁵¹ Perception is not the only primary concept. As we shall see, there are two other determinations of knowing such that the nature of a primary concept is threefold. This is also the case for secondary concepts of which apprehension is only a part.

⁵² "So, analytic functioning is also able to note the diversity of law and function; not only when it comes to other law spheres, but also in the case of the analytic itself. That is why the analytic function can distinguish itself from the law that holds for it. Where this is possible we call the law 'norm'" (FNSS, 74). *Daardoor is het analytische in staat ook de verscheidenheid van wet en functie op te merken. En dit niet slechts bij andere wetssferen maar ook bij de analytische. Derhalve kan de analytische functie zichzelf van de voor haar geldende wet onderscheiden* (FNSS: 73).

⁵³ This is proved, albeit rather obtusely, in N&LN.

⁵⁴ Vollenhoven writes:

3. *Being determined by the side of the knower.* We distinguish here:

- a. Perceptual and abstracted concepts
- b. Simple and composite concepts

Het bepaald-zijn naar de zijde van de kennende, ten deze onderscheidt men:

- a. *Waarnemings- en geabstraheerde begrippen.*
- b. *Niet- en wel- samengestelde begrippen.*

(Isagooge § 174).

Simple and composite concepts have to do with one's *arrangement* of the primary state of affairs or secondary state of affairs (respectively), as I shall show later. Perceptual and abstract concepts have to do with one's approach to the primary or secondary state of affairs (respectively), as I shall show later.

⁵⁵ Making statements is surely not the sum of the lingual aspect of subject functioning, what is apprehended is the *symbolified*, not necessarily the *stated*. Art, for instance, is apprehended.

⁵⁶ "A concept (as I understand the word), is predicative. On the other hand, the name of a *object*, a proper name, is quite incapable of being used as a grammatical predicate" (Frege: C&O, 43). In a statement, the object is made clear by the following rule, it must always be preceded by the definite article: "the singular definite article always indicates an object, whereas the indefinite article accompanies a concept-word" (C&O, 45).

⁵⁷ "Surely one can just as well assert of a thing that it is Alexander the Great, or is the number four, or is the planet Venus, as that it is green or is a mammal? If anybody thinks this, he is not distinguishing the uses of the word 'is'. In the last two examples it serves as a copula, as mere verbal sign of predication. We are saying here that something falls under a concept, and the grammatical predicate means this concept [logical predicate]. In the first three examples, on the other hand, 'is' is used like the 'equals' sign in arithmetic, to express an equation. In the sentence 'The morning star is Venus', we have *two proper names*, 'morning star' and 'Venus', for the same object... In the sentence 'the morning star is Venus' 'is' is obviously not the mere copula; its content is an essential part of the predicate, so that the word 'Venus' does not constitute the whole of the predicate" (Frege: C&O, 44). A sentence with two objects, i.e., 'x is y' is not a case of x being the extension of the concept 'is y', for y is not a concept, but an object. The copula 'is' is a

relation in such a case, a special kind of concept extending *at least two objects*. The relation of equality is thus an example of the 'logic of relations'. When a statement "assigns a quality to a thing it has only two constituents, the thing and the quality. When it consists of a relation between two things it has three constituents, the things and the relation" (Russell: KEW, 60-1). A sentential relation is *reversible* (although not with a one-one correspondence) whereas a concept is *irreversible*, for a single object falling under a concept is not such that the object and concept can be interchanged (Frege: C&O, 44). By trick of language, however, what is an object can become a concept if the copula is changed. From a relation of equality, the statement 'x is y' can be re-stated as 'x is no other than y', where 'is no other than' no longer expresses a relation of equality. Thus, the statement, 'the morning star is no other than Venus' is different than 'the morning star is Venus' (Frege: C&O, 44).

⁵⁸ Lingually, not all speech acts express truth-values, as Frege already knew. It is also possible to lingually state a concept, i.e., "all men are mortal", which does not extend any logical object ('men' is hardly a proper name). This stating is thus not a statement *per se* (it is not discernment of an extension), that is, it lacks extensional *truth-value* or 'judgement. In fact, to lingually state "x is a man" is not a statement either, for 'x' is not a 'what', it is an unsaturated or *empty extension*, unless one is saying 'x is a man is a concept' in which case 'x is a man' is *graphed* (see Frege: C&O) by a concept. Thus, 'Fx', or 'x is a man' in this case is written $\beta(Fx)$, where 'Fx' is itself extended by a concept β . The 'graphs' of concepts only occur in meta-logical discussion, where the functions of concepts are themselves expressed. The graph of any secondary statement (or composite concept), i.e., 'eric is a man is true' is *always* case of $\beta(Fx)$.

⁵⁹ A 'state of affairs' also requires eventual definition. As will be shown later, it is that lawful relationship that graphs into a triunity at least two irreducibly relating subjects. Thus, a concept extends and thus discerns these subjects according to a certain conceptual context, which is a conceptual extension of what can be discerned. What is positivized as a secondary state of affairs – always conceptual – extends at least two subjects in a state of affairs that is thus *conceptual* as positivized. But a state of affairs is not always conceptual. The primary state of affairs, as mentioned, is not a matter of human knowledge or error, here subjects are subject to law in a non-conceptual state of affairs.

⁶⁰ Those 'disappointed' and 'anguished' interlocutors of Vollenhoven whose extension of Christian philosophy conceptually intended (erroneously) an inclusion of thought that on one hand started from the circumspection that all is subject to God and on the other hand a denial of God's sovereignty is an example of a too-broad extension. So we can see how this causes anguish: each circumspection is at odds with the other, and by conceptually extending each circumspection under one concept is to find oneself circumspectively at war with oneself – not flourishing at all, hardly at rest.

⁶¹ Vollenhoven would disagree with Dooyeweerd, for instance, that the law is subject to God, since the law is not a subject. Not all that is not God is a subject or for that matter a creature. The law, says Vollenhoven, *depends* on God (Vollenhoven: BSHP, 2). Thus, to extend all *dependence* (for surely subjects are also dependent, *as subjects*) as a dependent *subject* is too broad if the law is considered a subject.

⁶² Vollenhoven's philosophy could be seen as a very detailed purgation, of sorts.

⁶³ A concept is never a logical subject, as seen. Yet, a saturated concept, which is a statement and no longer a concept, can be the subject of another statement. That is, a concept about another statement can saturate its extension with that statement which this concept is about. For a discussion on 'quality' and 'relation' in simple and composite statements, see Isagooge § 187.

⁶⁴ An example: "Physical things, plants and animals possess an object function in the economic by *virtue of their structure, independent of all human activity*. They become economic goods. Were this not the case, there could be no talk of price. *Yet the price of these goods is something other than the goods themselves*. The price is determined by the need of the human subjects, who can intentionally raise and lower it. "Nu bezitten fysische dingen, planten en dieren in het economische krachtens hun structuur, dus onafhankelijk van alle menselijke activiteit, een objectfunctie – ze zijn economische goederen – ware dit niet het geval, er zou van prijs dan de

goedeeren zelf: de "prijs" wordt door de behoefte der menselijke subjecten bepaald, die hem zelfs opzettelijk kunnen opjagen en drukken (Isagooge § 109)." Possessing an object function allows a non-economic being to be conceptually *objectified* in the secondary state of affairs as, say, economic. Thus, the animal now functions *structurally* in its being *objectified*. This objectification can even deepen the structure of the animal, in the economic occupation of cross-breeding one positivizes new structural entities. That is, given the endless range of possible structural law responses, one positivizes entities that nonetheless remain irreducibly structural in their law response. If a new structural entity does not flourish this implies a certain malignation of structural law response in one's positivized law response.

⁶⁵ "Therefore, the curse does not consist in *man's connection to the earth*, but in the connection of the *earth to man*." "*De vloek bestaat dus, wat dit onderdeel betreft, niet in het gebonden zijn van de mens aan de aarde, maar in het verbonden zijn van de aarde aan de mens.*" (Isagooge § 120).

⁶⁶ But despite this irreducible and cursed relation of structure to normativity structure remains under law. Those who speculate on the existence of a primary state of affairs yet have no confidence in a faithful God become, as in the case of Sartre, terrified of that which lies behind all social constructions. The primary state of affairs is the nausea behind all, "Frightened, I looked at these unstable beings which, in an hour, in a minute, were perhaps going to crumble... I suppose it is out of laziness that the world is the same day after day. Today it seemed to want to change. And then, *anything, anything* could happen" (Sartre: Nausea, 77). This nausea is the root of solitude, the absolute disruption of all social connections for the nausea that lies beneath, "What if something were to happen? What if something suddenly started throbbing? Then they would notice it was there and they would think their hearts were going to burst. Then what good would their dykes, bulwarks, power houses, furnaces and pile drivers be to them. It can happen any time, perhaps right now: the omens are present" (Sartre: Nausea, 158-9). The omens, the signs of the curse are present indeed, but we are surely not – God willing – this cursed.

⁶⁷ Thus the body itself is positivized: one can "*cultivate a slim figure*" "*het cultiveren van 'de slanke lijn' door de betroken zelf*" (Isagooge § 64). The normativity, the body, and the positivization, while horizontally interrelated remain vertically subject to a different command.

⁶⁸ "When God instructs Adam to take note of the animals and to give them names on the basis of his findings, then God looks on, interested in the results. For whatever Adam would call the animals, that would be their name" "*Als God Adam opdraagt eens te letten op de dieren, en op grond van dat onderzoek hun namen te komt. Want zoals Adam de dieren noemen zou, zó zouden ze heten*" (UoL: 124). Even God does not know what will be positivized, although all positivizations are 'predestined' in that their destiny only occurs under God's law, "Predestination has reference to all development" "*De predestinatie, die op alle ontwikkeling betrekking heeft...*" (Isagooge § 127). This first act of naming is the first act of positivization, of cultivation, creation deepens in such naming: Adam calls and the animal answers.

⁶⁹ This is the *quality* of the relation of a statement in its being negative or positive. In the case of a primary statement one can say, for instance, 'S is P' or 'S is not P'. In the case of a secondary statement the primary statement 'S is P' is the subject of another statement. Thus, one states "'S is P' is the case" or "'S is P' is not the case" (See Isagooge § 187).

⁷⁰ This explains the nature of certain 'schools' of thought, each 'school' affirms the primary statements of another philosopher such that a bulk of their own statements are positive or negative appraisals of that mentor.

⁷¹ So much of Vollenhoven's talk of the secondary state of affairs – under the Law of the Spirit or Postive Law – is against revolution, in fact, the Spirit binds Herself to Her law in the act of leading people away from revolution (UoL: 127) . Vollenhoven understands the positivization of Law to be fundamentally *pedagogical* in that it leads people and states into confrontation with their problems (UoL: 128). Vollenhoven's historiography could be read as a genetic typology of problem confrontation and solution within a circumspective concept that, despite seeking flourishing, does so in a fundamentally non-flourishing view of the whole. The very provisionality of all results demonstrates that each positivization does not hold for all times, but is a further leading into even

more leading, that is, each result *leads* to further results. This leading is precisely the work of the Spirit. Inasmuch as this provisionality is true, each result is *pedagogical*.

⁷² That is, the agreed upon manner of relating with the second party that allows for the relation with the second party. Thus, if relations are to occur at all, we must affirm that which is knowable in the secondary state of affairs as relevant for these intersubjective relations, i.e., we must affirm the already present secondary states of affairs as knowable and relevant to the relations of oneself and the second party. Not affirming the secondhand knowledge in one's relations with the second party does not mean the end of this affirmed structure that mediates oneself to a second party, for the secondary states of affairs are *always* about a primary state of affairs. Hence, it only means that a new restructuring has occurred through struggle with the primary issues, as is the case of Calvin and the church.

⁷³ One is thus also pointed in a certain direction in one's point of view, "it is the Spirit of God that turns our lives about, redirecting the arrow of life" "*Wanneer de ómwending van het leven door den Geest Gods de richtlijn van het menselijk leven ten goede richt*" Vollenhoven: CRP, 44). One's arrow, which always points (and is circumspectively pointed) is always an appointed arrow. The Spirit, as we shall later see, is that Person in the Godhead that for Vollenhoven relates to subjects-in-relation via positive law.

⁷⁴ From conception: as 'a fetus', as 'a loved fetus', as 'a male' or 'female fetus', as 'a mistake', as a 'great financial worry', etc..

⁷⁵ Again, irreducible because each state of affairs is subject to God under an irreducibly different law.

⁷⁶ Although Wolters goes no farther in seeing how this Trinitarian thinking affects every dimension of Vollenhoven's work, in historiography, epistemology, and systematics.

⁷⁷ A distinctness that is not present in other circumspective starting points, e.g., the Islamic.

⁷⁸ Predestination is seen as a structural relation *and* a process: "Predestination and election are worked out in time, a process in which the God of the Covenant adheres to the structure of his own work of creation" "*De predestinatie en electie worden in de tijd uitgewerkt, waarbij de God des Verbonds Zich, naar we op allerlei wijze nog zien zullen, aan de structuur van eigen scheppingswerk houdt*" (Isagooge § 122). Predestination is thus different from election, which concerns one's own choice for the good, which is a normative relation (Isagooge § 124, 248). Predestination concerns "either the choice for good as well as the choice to evil" "*de eerste [election] is slechts ten goede, de tweede [predestination] zowel ten goede als ten kwade*" (Isagooge § 124). This bears reference not to one specific choice, but rather *that* one chooses, implying the structural range of lawful possibility or problematics – all under God – *that* binds each decision.

⁷⁹ See also: "the whole of man is religious, and his life is a walk before the face of God in obedience or disobedience" (FNSS: 73).

⁸⁰ God, for instance, does not know *what* Adam will name the animals, "when God instructs Adam to take note of the animals and to give them names on the basis of his findings, then God looks on, interested in the results" (UoL: 124). Translation: see note 68.

⁸¹ This also helps understand Vollenhoven's claim that God rules "indirectly" through what is positivized (SU&P, 105). This does not mean that *what* is positivized *is* God's law, albeit indirectly. The law of Spirit *qua* law is always *per definition* distinct from that which it holds for. Instead, *that* there are leaders in all areas of life is the 'indirectness' that Vollenhoven is referring to here (he immediately cites Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 104 "for through them God chooses to lead us"). Again: "The Holy Spirit does not recognize any geniuses. It does recognize people who receive special protection from the Spirit, people who are given *special gifts* by the Spirit. These include the builders of the temple as well as rulers" "*De Heilige Schrift kent geen genieën; De Heilige Schrift kent wèl mensen die door den Geest bijzonder worden bewaakt, die worden beëftigd met den Geest, met een specialen geest. Daar zijn de bouwers van de tempel*" (UoL: 127). Hence, each person is blessed with some leadership in their thetical task. Now, this does not at all imply that one's leadership is at all *correct*: "The positive law, through which office

bearers, given their office in modally qualified and regionally defined societal connection, positivize God's law, *correctly or not*, primarily for human life" "*de postieve wet, door welke de ambtsdragers, krachten hun ambt, in hun modaal gequalificeerd en regionaal begrensd samenlevingsverband de wet Gods primair voor het menselijke leven op al of niet juist wijze positieveeren*" (Divergences, 113). The Spiritual command for any leader, be it a governmental leader or a scientific leader is precisely this: to *lead*. Thus, their leadership is certainly *lawful* in that they are *subject to* the law of the Spirit, but their leadership or the results of their leadership is by no means the law. The law of the Spirit, after all, is not that the Spirit gives a law, but instead that the Spirit *leads* according to the law that She Herself is faithful to. Finally, given Vollenhoven's commitment to the provisionality of results, it would be unfair to accuse him of thinking that all results have the status of God's law (although it can certainly find God's approval) results are by nature something that is held in question.

⁸² After a long chain of extensions we can arrive at one thing, as Scotus realized, but this one thing is hardly identical to the conceptual extension that sees it to be one thing according to the concept. We can even name it '*one thing*', but the thing remains less than one (not numerically less), which is only to say that it is so much more than the name '*one thing*'. Even in the most decreased of all extensions, and even in the richness of attributable intensions to this one thing, the thing in itself remains beyond. This, Scotus called "haecceity". This recognition led to the further development of *suppositio*, a logical language that sought to make connections or explore the connections of things beyond their being named in logical discourse. See Scotus [Six Questions on Individuation](#), especially Question Six, § 166.

⁸³ This explains the often naïve enthusiasm of the correspondence theory of truth. So much is the primary state of affairs affirmed that it loses its character as that which is always already the not named. This state of affairs is what Wittgenstein (and Russell) famously remained quiet about. There is a primary state of affairs, says Vollenhoven, but we must still remember that a concept and its extension remain distinct, thus normativity cannot claim in its irreducible relation the irreducible relation of structure to normativity. "For that reason, contrary to what the copy theory claims, the connection between what is knowable and the result is not direct. In between what is knowable and the related result is always the analysis of the person thinking, who analyzes what is knowable correctly or not, and in turn, comes to knowledge or error concerning what is knowable" "*Juist daarom is het verband tussen het kenbare en het resultaat niet, zoals de afdrukentheorie meent, een directe: tussen het kenbare en het betrekken resultaat staat steeds de analyse van de kennende, welke het kenbare, juiste of onjuist, analyseert en zo tot kennis of dwaling omtrent het kenbare komt*" (Isagoge § 172). It seems that we have the continentalists to thank for their investigation of the secondary state of affairs and the analytics for their investigation of the primary state of affairs.

⁸⁴ "For instance, if I say 'the function $2.x^3 + x$,' x must not be considered as belonging to the function; this letter only serves to indicate the kind of *supplementation* that is needed; it enables one to recognize the places where the sign for the argument must go" (Frege: F&C, 25). A function, x , does not *belong* to the statement ' $2.x^3 + x$ ', for each x of this statement awaits the completion of the statement as *saturated* or *arguable*, which is the 'supplementation that is needed'. This supplementation is not unlike Derrida's. An ' x ', primarily un-named, when named is *supplemented*, that is ' a ' fills the place of ' x ' although ' x ' remains pre-originary to the naming ' a '.

⁸⁵ "A predicate is obviously akin to a Platonic idea", says the early Russell (Russell: TOK, 92). But the logical difference between a subject and a predicate is also an *ontological* one, "subjects and predicates belong to different logical divisions, and cannot be properly be said to be either alike or unlike, because that would give them them similar '*positions*' in one complex [sentence]" (Russell: TOK, 92). These '*positions*' are important. Because a universal predicate in this realism is not identical to the actual object it (universally) extends it cannot be the archetype of this object since there is nothing archetypically object-like in a universal predicate. This is an ontologization of the irreducible distinction between a concept and its object (something Vollenhoven does too, for an ' x ' is primary and ' x ' as named, ' a ', is secondary, they also occupy different positions). Thus an object is not a collection of predicates, nor is a predicate the archetype of the object, they are *distinct*. These universal predicates precede human predication and the world of objects;

“thoughts and feelings, minds and physical objects *exist*. But universals do not exist in this sense; we shall say they *subsist* or *have being*, where ‘being’ is opposed to ‘existence’ as being *timeless*. The world of universals, therefore, may also be described as the world of being. The world of being is unchangeable, rigid, exact.” (Russell: PoP, 100).

⁸⁶ See Russell: KEW, 59.

⁸⁷ As it is for Langer, “a class may be described as a collection of all those and only those terms to which a certain *concept* applies” (Langer: Symbolic Logic, 116). Here a class and a concept are distinct; a class is another name for the *extension* of a concept, whereas the early Russell defined a class *intensionally*, as a concept (he defined it extensionally as well). For Langer, “a class is the extension of a concept, whatever that extension may comprise. The relation ϵ , of membership in a class, is the relation of falling under a concept. The class is not a fixed collection; it is defined by a propositional form, not by its specific members... Since concepts are *abstractions*, and classes *are based on concepts*, we may regard a class as a *logical construction, a purely conceptual entity*” (Langer: Symbolic Logic, 116-7). Whereas Russell dared speak of subjects-in-relation like our primary states of affairs and thus also in concepts, Langer’s logic, while it recognizes that things are always extensionally related as classes in *concepts*, does not say whether or not subjects are concomitantly related similarly in the primary state of affairs. Although more logically correct by its sentential restrictions, this logic nonetheless represents the great fear of ontology in analytic philosophy today. At least when Russell abandoned his Platonic universals, he admitted that there nonetheless might be something else that mediates objects, however, to explore this was a ‘mysticism’ for him, which he avoided (see Russell: KEW, 59). So while acknowledging the ‘x-ness’ of the primary states of affairs, he went no further in exploring the conditions of possibility for them. Instead, he opted to explore the distinctness (the *empirical atomism*) of each entity ‘x’ without phenomenologically exploring that *state of affairs* ‘ β ’ that makes each entity distinct. He gives this state of affairs a nod, but no more.

⁸⁸ This is the problem with Dooyeweerd’s individuality structures, which is why so many reformational types tend to conflate structure and normativity. Thus, if homosexuality is indeed a malignation it is not a matter of it being ‘anti-normative’, but instead anti-structural. Whether or not it is anti-structural remains, however, *like all else*, to be seen. Structure is far too open in its nature to so clearly positivize its inherent limits, especially if these limits do not perceptibly produce violence.

⁸⁹ Which the early Vollenhoven was certainly guilty of. Mind you, one can still maintain the notion of “God’s ideas” in this re-conception, but something has changed. Instead of giving these ideas the place of the law, which leads Vollenhoven to a realism of classes (or ‘individuality structures’) one can instead read ‘God’s ideas’ as God’s irreducible relation of sovereignty to the subject via the *structural law* – which are God’s own terms but not God’s ideas. Each creature can be seen as a unique idea that is structurally maintained as such by God’s sovereignty on God’s own lawful terms, terms that disallow God – again on his own terms – from suddenly making what is male female, or adding strange limbs, or round squares, etc. etc. (see the comment on Sartre, note 66) . These ideas can even be challenged. One can refuse God’s ideas *on His own terms* (think of Moses or Abraham bargaining with God) as much as one can normatively suggest one’s own ideas to God (as in the case of Adam), again on *God’s own terms*. Since God’s ideas are no longer the terms, but instead His irreducible relation of sovereignty via the relationship of His terms (which He is faithful to), this is an interrelation that allows for *structural* change in the cosmos via one’s normative law responses. Incidentally, this is a fine argument for cloning or genetic engineering. If one remains on *good terms* with God in such work, that is, if this work respects the irreducible terms of God’s law in its *positive* positivizations, one needn’t think that one is necessarily challenging the ‘way God meant things to be’, for God’s terms are not systatic classes that hold for each thing, but boundaries that allow for boundless expressions of flourishing. Even if ‘God meant something to be’, this *idea*, so long as it occurs on God’s own terms, can be challenged. If God meant us, for instance, to be heterosexual, one can find oneself flourishing against this idea, yet on God’s own terms. Even God might have to change his mind.

⁹⁰ This is not a case of the side of the knowable structurally determining concept formation, for the three determinants of the primary states of affairs are the same three determinants in normative and secondary states of affairs. That is, each determinant represents a *determination* of states of affairs. If we call the determinants under a state of affairs a *determination* of each state of affairs, then this determination cuts through each state of affairs to create three separate determinations of each state of affairs. Each determination includes, therefore, one determinant of the primary, secondary, and normative states of affairs, such that there are three determinants within each state of affairs. Determinations of a states of affairs, in other words, are not a structural matter, they determine structure in a determinate way, as well as the normative and the secondary state of affairs. This will be further explained in the following section.

⁹¹ By 'almost always' does Vollenhoven mean that there can be unusual cases where law does not hold for a manifest of creatures but holds only for one creature? This seems difficult to imagine without recognizing a creature as some sort of *ding an sich*. Or by 'almost always' does Vollenhoven mean that *the validity* of a law 'almost always' holds for an always present manifold of creatures? In such a case we would at least recognize a manifold of creatures from the start. Thus, 'almost always' refers to special cases in which one manifold of (one kind of) creatures is not held under the validity of any other laws. An example of such a case might be numbers, which Vollenhoven calls 'figures' and not a 'thing'. In the case of a number, the validity of other laws than the numerical would not be valid for the manifold of numbers. – this is because numbers are only valid under numerical law. A thing is always subject to the validity of all laws since it can operate subjectively and as an object under all law. This is because a 'thing', per definition is at least numerical and spatial whereas a number is strictly numerical. However, it remains the case that either a 'figure' or a 'thing' are manifold under law. There is no figure that is not in relation to another figure, nor a thing that is not in relation to another thing.

⁹² Vollenhoven states that the law is not subject to God (for this is the exclusive relation of the cosmic subject), but it is dependent on God (Isagooge § 13).

⁹³ Which is what Vollenhoven means by the 'laws holding for', the law holds relations of at least two subjects into a relationship that is in the first place a relationship for love.

⁹⁴ God can change Himself in his *interrelation* to the cosmos, thus changing his own relational *knowability*. This does not, however, change God's relational knowability unto himself, which is the perfect love of His tri-une *intrarelation*.

⁹⁵ Since subjects commanded under the love command are also still structural subjects mediated through their affirmed and transferred subjectivity under positive law, any knowing that flourishes is a knowing that immediately effects the structural responses of one's own life. If the call to love is *normed* it is thus possible to make ab-norm-al what is itself unnormed under structure, "we speak of normal and abnormal in the psychic and biotic as well" "*Vandaar dat tegen de onderscheiding van de wetting in normeerende en niet-normeerende geen enkel bezwaar valt in te brengen: zelfs blijkt zij een uitstekend middel om het boven-pyschische leven van het beneden-analytische te onderscheiden*" (Vollenhoven: N&LN, 58). Since subjects under the love command are commanded to explore the primary states of affairs (including themselves first and foremost) for the sake of flourishing, any positive change, that is, anything *positivized* always allows an opening for the relation of one's structural subjectivity to one's normative subjectivity. Again, *exhaustion* is an excellent example, one's exhaustion relates the structural affairs to one's normative life in negative ways, even if, ironically, what is making one exhausted is some truly positive positivization. Moreover, flourishing can be deepened even further in the structural state of affairs by positivizing something that is structurally *missing*, as Adam did (at least in Vollenhoven's read) when he realized, by interactive consultation with the structural knowable, that he was companionless. By presenting this now knowable knowledge to God God creates a new knowable in the primary state of affairs, a knowable that knows herself and knows her husband (and not just in the biblical sense!). For this rather astonishing exegesis see Vollenhoven: UoL: 125 and Isagooge § 119. God does not change His law in so doing, but rather deepens the expressions of subjectivity under this law. The law does not systatically fix things into place (as with Dooyeweerd's individuality structures, where nothing is an individual unless it

satisfies the structure), but is rather the terms by which always deepened expressions of flourishing take place.

⁹⁶ Tol makes a mistake here, I think. His interpretation of *thus-so* or *zus-zo* is that each subject function is a *thus-so* of a subject or subjects (see Tol: TCV, 113). But Vollenhoven is not talking about subjects in their similar *thus* or *so* modal inherence, he is talking about one subject as *thus* and another subject as *so* *given their modal inherence*. ‘*Thus*’ or ‘*so*’ is a name for a subject that reveals itself as *thus* or *so* *given its modal inherence*. Modes do not exist apart from subjects and cannot be considered apart from subjects. That I function analytically as *thus* is never replicated in the way you function analytically as *so*. Vollenhoven is not especially clear in this regard. Yet, since the discussion of *thus* and *so* follows a discussion of *this* and *that*, where *this* and *that* are subjects and not *this* or *that* modal function, it seems consistent that we are talking about subjects and not modal functions, since modal functions only belong to discrete and unique subjects. As Vollenhoven states, “psychic being does not exclude being earthly created [a subject] but *presupposes* it. It is a matter of: *being earthly created in a determinate way* [being created *thus* or *so*]. Put differently: the word ‘psychic’ denotes something that is created earthly *with a further determination*” “*Wie ‘psychisch’ zegt, duidt daarmee niet iets aan, dat niet aards geschapen zou zijn. Psychisch-zijn sluit aards-geschapen-zijn niet uit, doch onderstelt het, want het is: op en bepaalde wijze aards-geschapen-zijn. Anders gezegd: het woord ‘psychisch’ duidt iets aan, dat aards geschapen is met een nadere bepaaldheid*” (Isagooge § 30).. The ‘something created earthly’ is that un-named *thus* or *so* subject of this determination (this correlation of subjects under law). The modal functions are not therefore *thus* or *so*, but instead they are the determinantly lawful state of affairs in which we find a subject as *thus* or *so*. Tol suggests that the *thus-so* determination is not about the connection of subjects but about the “togetherness of being” where ‘being’ seems to be the modalities of subjects (Tol: TCV, 112). To be *thus* or *so* is *thus* to already compare *at least two* subjects, each of which durate in their law responses differently yet nonetheless relate under the same structural mode of law. Since *thus* or *so* appear to be the modal functions for Tol the focus is not on at least *two* subjects in a state of affairs, but rather the “being of a [i.e., just *one*] thing” (Tol: TCV, 112). The logic of relations that Tol recognized in the *this-that* determination suddenly seems gone. Since inherence historically is largely worked out in the class system of subject-predicate logic, which *only names one thing* (as particular or universal) as its subject in a statement, this is no reason to assume that this determination is only about one *thus* or one *so*, as if its *thus* or *so-ness* were modal functions of a single subject. We find the early Russell, a believer in universal classes, asking whether or not universal predicate classes are actually relations beyond their sentential function, that is, whether or not predicate classes, despite the fact that they sententially name only one thing in a concept (*S is P*), are actually a relationship in the *knowable* relating *two* things (see Russell: TOK, VIII). Russell leaves the question unanswered (bless him for asking it!) but Vollenhoven, I argue, by calling a subject in this determination a *thus* or a *so*, makes it very clear that the law, *which always functions as a relationship for him*, does not just relate a *thus*, but *lawfully relates – qua law – at least two subjects*, a *thus* and a *so*, into a tri-unity.

⁹⁷ It is only in this determination that Tol recognizes the idea of a relationship that relates, or a ‘relating relation’ (see Tol: TCV, 111). Yet Tol only recognizes the relating relation in *the law responses* of creatures to law but not in the actual law. That relationships like friendship cohere is not because of the systatic efficacy of ‘friendship’ but the efficacy of ethical lawfulness and its correlated and cohering law responses, including one law response we have called ‘friendship’. ‘Friendship’ does not relate two irreducible subjects into a unity, for this could only occur if friendship was systatically underwritten into law as some sort of individuality structure. Instead, friendship is that *coherence* formed by the lawful relations of at least two subjects held in a relationship by relationship of law. Tol’s idea of relating relation, which is consistent with *law response*, does not recognize law as an efficacious relationship (in its tri-unification) of God and cosmos. Tol uses the term ‘relating relation’ in the same sense that Meinong, Frege and Russell did, not as an efficacious term of law relating actual subjects, but only as the efficacy of a *sentence* relating *terms* (subjects as named), which is all Frege and Russell were interested in. For instance, that “loves” in the sentence “Joel loves Mary” connects the two subjects into a

sentential unity does not mean that “loves” is *itself* efficacious in uniting each actual subject as ‘x’, instead ‘loves’ provides efficacy for the *coherence* of the actual sentence, a sentence that Meinong calls a ‘complex’. Joel is not related in love to Mary by the efficacy of “loves”, instead “loves” is a law response that requires for any coherence of “x loves y” an ethically lawful act of loving between actual subjects. Thus the relationship ‘loves’ is only a relationship by being a coherent law response that emerges in a lawfully ethical relationship of two contemporaneous lawfully relating subjects.

⁹⁸ I would argue that the third determination that Vollenhoven actually mentions, the ‘good-evil’ determination is the genetic determination gone wrong. Sin, after all, affects *relationships*, and the relationship that relates the lawfully co-related relationship of each determination is the genetic determination. Since the genetic determination connects and gives momentum to the other determination, the other determinations are constantly held in a sinful *relationship*. The crux of the matter can be found where the two relationships of positive law and the genetic determination of positive law meet. Here all states of affairs and their determinants are held in relationship. It is here that broken and redeemed normativity and broken and redeemed structure meet in some positivized determination. What is this positivized determination? It is *family*, where the genetic normativity and genetic structurality meet in the negative and positive relations of a male and female and are passed on in their good and evil to offspring. Family is especially important for Vollenhoven, it is where one gains the circumspective outlook in the WORD revelation or not, it is where the heart and structure meet in their irreducible relations with the greatest intensity. A family that does not nurture does not flourish. It is here the Spirit does Her most important leading, and this is not unbiblical, for Christ came from the ‘line of David’ to conquer sin, which is always the understood as the sin of generations. Sin is interrelatively present and inherent only because it is inherited.

⁹⁹ Faultlines are discussed in chapter two.

¹⁰⁰ Tol calls it a “general ‘contextual condition’ of concreteness” (Tol: TCV, 115).

¹⁰¹ Sexual difference may not go all the way down, but nonetheless, even at the level of rocks and trees, we can still speak of genesis. Genesis always involves, says Vollenhoven, a “transition from an intraindividual interrelation to an interindividual interrelation” “*Het genetisch verband sluit daarom steeds in: de overgang van één of meer dingen uit een intra-individuele in het inter-individuele samenhang*” (Isagooge §98). Nonetheless, we cannot help but explain these interrelations using sexual terms: “This process makes genetic sense for the emitting stuff, the mother atom, because via this atomic ‘disintegration,’ as daughter atom, it becomes another element” “*Genetische zin heeft dit proces voor de uitstotende stof – het moedertoom – daar zij door dit ‘atoomverval’ als dochteratoom onder een ander element komt te ressorteren*” (Isagooge §99). It could probably be argued that all human objects (all of creation) operates androcentrically for the human-crown as some positivized sexed object function at least to some degree.

¹⁰² If one argues with Elie Wiesel that it was the silent witnesses to genocide who were the most culpable we are given a sense that Adam was fully active in his passivity, for he was with Eve as she ate the forbidden apple.

¹⁰³ Caputo, it would seem, would have a problem with this. He reduces – at least in my read – all structural functioning to ‘flesh’ and calls the ‘body’ all of the positivizations put on the flesh: “the flesh is not a body but is always being organized and up into a body...As long as it sustains and maintains this organization whole, flesh fades into the background of the agent body” (Caputo: AE, 208). Fascinated by the reduction of the body to flesh – either in violence or rest – and the imposition of the positivized ‘body’ upon ‘flesh’, Caputo considers the flesh “transvestic, hermaphroditic, androgynous” (Caputo: AE, 210). Like Aristotle’s ‘substance’, which is the substance of everything, flesh is, says Caputo, the “stuff of sex” (Caputo: AE, 209). This allows Caputo to open a space for the person who does not fit the ‘sexed body’ politic: “flesh serves to make sexual differences communicate and melt into each other...Flesh makes a man as tender as a woman; it makes a woman as swollen as a man” (Caputo: AE, 209). But is this person already structurally sexed in flesh? It would appear not. For Irigaray, and implicit within Vollenhoven, one is not reduced to a hermaphroditic flesh by not fitting into the body politic’s

positivized body, but is sexed in the flesh, and it is by and through this already sexed flesh that the positivization of males and females between males and females can truly and tenderly swell up in the expansive hope of expectation.

¹⁰⁴ The speculative mystic in me cannot hide the fact that we indeed have a cross displayed to us in our chart above (for some reason this proves something to me). And, really, why not? Scripturally, family is both the generationality of sin and redemption, which is why I am convinced the genetic determination is really the good-evil determination for Vollenhoven. Family is indeed the crux of the matter.

¹⁰⁵ This “static connection” is twofold and while Vollenhoven never states that one is a matter of a positivized *this-that* and a positivized *thus-so*, it should be quite clear that this is in fact the case. Remember that each static positivized relationship is just that, a relationship between a structural and normative state of affairs, i.e, a *determination*.

“this [static] *relationship* ought to be one of genuine cooperation. For all of these connections aim at developing different components of human life.

This cooperation includes *two* things:

- (a) fulfilling one’s own task. A state cannot flourish if economic life, organized by trade and industry, does not grow. Family life too, languishes when the pistic connection falls short.
- (b) acknowledging the unique task of the other connections. After all, they owe neither their origin nor their continued existence to the goodwill of another connection.”

Deze samenwerking sluit tweeëlei in:

- (a) *De nakoming van eigen taak. Een staatverband kan niet floreren indien het economische leven, in de bedrijven georganiseerd, niet bloeit; gelijk ook het gezinsleven kwijnen gaat, wanneer het gelijk pistisch verband te kort schiet.*
- (b) *De erkenning van eigen taak der overige verbanden. Deze immers danken noch hun bestaan noch hun voortbestaan aan de gunst van een ander verband. Derhalve heeft geen dezer verbanden aan enig ander toestemming voor zijn eigen optreden of ontplooiing te vragen”*

(Isagooge § 111).

Point (a) is clearly a matter of horizontal successive *interrelative* contemporaneity in a positivized state of affairs, for the act of fulfilling one’s task involves successive and contemporary intersubjective interrelations with the second party as one normatively affirms and transfers the second party. This transference *emerges* or ‘grows’ into coherent positivizations the more one’s task is fulfilled (the more one positivizes). Point (b) is clearly a matter of *inherence*, for the anticipatory and retrociprocal vertical connections of each mode of law is such that law responses are always irreducible and should not be positivized as though one law response owed its ‘origin’ to another. Keep in mind also that though each ‘static’ determinant of the secondary state of affairs is a relationship in a determination, each static determinant of the secondary state of affairs still relates to *each other* via genesis. Thus, family languishes as a relationship relating each determinant of the secondary state of affairs if positivized inherence and interrelations are not kept up to task. Not keeping up one’s task in these determinations is the very failed relation of normativity to structure in each determinant of positive law, for it is the very absence of positivization and thus the very presence of stagnation.

¹⁰⁶ There are nine, as seen in the diagrams earlier: structural *this-that*, structural *thus-so*, structural genetic, positivized *this-that*, positivized *thus-so*, positivized genetic, normative *this-that*, normative *thus-so* and normative genetic. Each determinant is an irreducible case of subjects held in relationship by law. There are 15 modes of this law, as mentioned earlier. Thus, each of the nine determinant is a case of subjects in relationship under one or more of the 15 modal laws.

¹⁰⁷ Thus, there are not just 15 modes of law, but instead, when completely diversified, these 15 irreducible modes of law correlate subjects in 135 modally irreducible ways, since nine determinants multiplied by 15 modes per determinant is 135. If we were numerologists, this would surely mean something.

¹⁰⁸ This is what Irigaray calls the ‘universal’.

¹⁰⁹ This is standard symbolification for modal logic (well, as standard as one gets in modal logic).

¹¹⁰ Or: 'possible worlds', which explains much about the work of Van Inwagen and Plantinga. The place and task of logic can put great limits on their thought, for most modal logic used by Plantinga and Van Inwagen have to do with whether God necessarily exists (in all 'possible worlds'), which places modal logic well beyond the genetic determination and far beyond the creaturely. See Van Inwagen, *Metaphysics*, 75-99.

¹¹¹ Eve, according to Vollenhoven, is such an example of an expectation, she was posited *normatively* by man to God for the sake of the later and given momentarily as a *structural* primary state of affairs irreducible to knowing. Eve was, in the first place, not a primary state of affairs, but a normative expectation. This does not mean that Adam knew exactly what to expect, for he had no recollection of Eve, since Eve did not exist in the primary state of affairs. Interestingly, the only secondary state of affairs Adam had without Eve was the collection of names he gave the animals, which were given to the the animals, but hardly affirmed by these animals in a lingually reciprocated positivized culture. Adam's secondary state of affairs were purely intra-individual, a self-transferred and self-affirmed secondary state of affairs that were untransferrable to another in lingual statements and unaffirmable to another in statements, since this other did not yet exist. The arrival of Eve, then, is the arrival of the secondary state of affairs, and the first naming in this secondary state of affair is that of Adam naming Eve 'bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh'.

¹¹² Indeed, as Vollenhoven states: "The diachronic connection, also present in expecting, is here however different from the case of recollection, the moment expected lies in the future and is therefore the later and the expecting is the earlier" "*Het successive verband, ook in het verwachten aanwezig, is hier echter juist anders dan bij de herinnering: het te verwachte moment ligt in de toekomst en is dus het latere en het verwachten is het eerdere*" (Isagooge § 166B).

¹¹³ This does not mean that one expects what one does not know, for one always expects that which has been affirmed and transferred. One expects a new transference of something already affirmed, perhaps even a reaffirmation of that subject that shakes up all previous transfereces and affirmations. Thus, one expects a named subject that is nonetheless primarily unnamed, full of surprises.

¹¹⁴ Except, as Vollenhoven notes, in the act of *apperception*, which has nothing to do with perception, but is a species of recollection: "in such a case, where recollection *via expectation* codetermines the future perception, we speak of *apperception*" "*In zulk een geval, waarin de herinnering via de verwachting de toekomstige waarneming mede-bepaalt, spreekt een van apperceptie*" (Isagooge §166).

¹¹⁵ Every recollection is structurally intra-individual (Isagooge § 162D), yet 'what' is intra-individually recalled is always some previous inter-individual interrelation with the second party. Even if 'what' is intra-individually recalled is an intra-individual interrelation, i.e., "my biotic reaction to a previous change in climate", this intra-individual reaction nonetheless occurs in the context of some inter-individuality, i.e., 'my interrelation with the change in climate' (See Isagooge § 162E). Thus, not all affirmation is inter-individual for one can indeed have one's own stock of intra-individual recollectables yet this stock of intra-individual recollectables are always already in the context of an interrelation with the second party (which is why we are only focussing on the latter). Thus, both the second party and I can affirm and transfer a shared experience each intra-individually without sharing it with each other, yet the fact *that* we shared it together means that we can share it with each other. Yet, the fact *that* this can be shared requires language, which is the conventional structure by which one can in fact share a shared experience, and for that matter, the very means by which one can intra-individually recollect in the first place. Talking to oneself first requires talk with another, for it is here one learns to talk. One must be already affirmed in order to affirm.

¹¹⁶ Including all that is taught about others-in-relation, i.e., history.

¹¹⁷ Although Vollenhoven calls this "successivity" the earlier and later when talking of the genetic determination in *The Unity of Life*, page 123. Genesis still has to do with constituents, the very act of reproducing requires at least one interrelating subject, whose constituent traits are passed along to the constituent intra-individual interrelativity of the new subject, but that these traits are

passed along requires not only *contemporary* successive interrelations, but the presence of another determinant, a 'trace in time' of a *moment to moment* succession, that is, a succession of earlier and later *moments*, where the "future constituents of the new unit are emitted by the original things" "*Dat geschiedt b.v. wanneer de toekomstige bestanddelen der nieuwe eenheid door de oorspronkelijke dingen worden uitgestoten*" (Isagooge § 103).

¹¹⁸ As Vollenhoven said earlier, "hence, it is possible that what is being perceived is very active, maybe even more than the one perceiving" (Isagooge § 160, 270).

¹¹⁹ This is not only a matter of interhuman relations. Making a house – which is a positivized configuration of subjects of the primary states of affairs – using unsound geometrical principles or unsuitable materials, for instance, results in its collapse. This will require, of course, prompt further perception into the primary state of affairs.

¹²⁰ Or a 'jet fighter', to point out a famous question put to Dooyeweerd concerning his individuality structures. Dooyeweerd thought that, yes, even a jet fighter has an individuality structure, meaning a jet fighter must individually satisfy its systatic structure of jet fighter (see Klapwijk: RPBPf, 112).

¹²¹ An uncanny example can be found in Le Corbusier. "The lesson", says Le Corbusier, "of the airplane lies in the logic which governed the *statement* of the problem and its realization" (Le Corbusier: TNA, 4). An airplane is in the first place a concept, which is why it can be perfected according to new standards, "standards are a matter of logic, analysis and minute study; they are based on a problem which has been well 'stated'" (Le Corbusier: TNA, 4). A well stated problem is always a genetic conceptual expectation which needs to be tested out perceptually, thus "a standard is definitely established by experiment" (Le Corbusier: TNA, 4). The resultant *object* is a durational secondary state of affairs whose states of affairs are being continually *re-arranged* according to improved standards. We shall address the topic of "standards", or "principles", a little later.

¹²² As part of his section on "result", Vollenhoven distinguishes not only perceptual and abstracted concepts, which clearly belong to the *this-that* state of affairs, but also "simple and composite concepts" "*Niet- en wel-samengestelde begrippen*" (Isagooge § 174). I suspect that simple and composite concepts have to do with the arranging that takes place in the thus-so determinant. A simple concept, it seems would have to be an extension of a primary state of affairs, since it is not a concept extending the secondary state of affairs (statements). A simple concept is thus 'Fx', whereas a composite composite is always $\beta(Fx)$, a concept about a statement (which, when stated is either always positive or negative, that is it affirms or denies the statement of which it is about). Incidentally, this could be of great worth to the argument between correspondence and coherentist theories of truth. The correspondence affirms the primary state of affairs while coherentism does not. Coherentism is thus always a matter of secondary statements, of $\beta(Fx)$, whereas the correspondence theory affirms primary statements, of Fx. Thus, while each theory believes it is arguing about logical justification in a single state of affairs, this is not the case. A positive statement (a primary statement) is always asserting its 'x' in Fx as implicitly true. A secondary statement, on the other hand, is always asserting not 'x', but rather 'Fx' as true, β . Thus, the truth of a primary statement is in its conceptual assertion, F, of 'x' whereas the truth of a secondary statement is always its conceptual assertion, β , of 'Fx'.

¹²³ This concept does not extend God for God is another 'being' altogether and God's being is only known in God's sovereign relation to the cosmos, how God *reveals* himself. Thus a term can never rise above God and all of God's posited reality as if to reveal God's own relation. Since one can only speak from the cosmos one cannot cosmically extend God as though God were cosmically extendable, as though God were somehow cosmically *subject*. The fact that God relates to us, however, does imply that 'reality' is this interrelation between God and cosmos via the Law that God faithfully posits in love. However 'reality', as a concept, does not extend God *ontologically*, as though 'reality' precedes and therefore extends God, for 'reality' – this interrelation – is actively extended by God as an interrelation that God Himself precedes.

¹²⁴ Thus, the most decreased extension does not in any way sieze the the being of a thing, it only concieves of this thing in the most conceivable specific manner.

¹²⁵ Incidentally, the relation between *this-that* and *thus-so* is recognized in modern logic, albeit not through the tri-unification of genesis (at least, I don't think so). Thus, the two logics already mentioned, S-P logic and the logic of relations, are intimately tied together, though irreducible. Inherence is expressed as 'Fx' (or 'x is F'), that is, 'there is some x extended by the concept F'. This has been further elaborated by a class concept, i.e., 'x ∈ F', where concepts are *always* instances of classes, that is, 'x is a member of the class F'. Now, classes aside, 'x ∈ F' there is no good reason why we cannot instead read this as 'F is an inherent subject function of 'x'. Now, any statement involving contemporary constituent relations, i.e., 'Rxy', that is, 'x has the relation R to y' requires tacit assent to the fact that each 'x' and 'y' may contemporaneously relate yet are *inherently different yet connected*. Thus, 'Rxy' cannot logically be stated unless the 'x' and 'y' extended by R in 'Rxy' are separably understood each to possess some *inherently* extended common characteristic through which they are also connected. Thus, the statement, '(x ∈ F) ∧ (y ∈ F)' states that both 'x' and 'y' possess the same function F. Now, 'x' and 'y' can still possess different *inherent* functions and nonetheless still relate contemporaneously although the relation will be assuredly different. Here is where we see the *this-that* and *thus-so* in a tangible relation. Thus, where the functions are inherently similar the contemporary relation will be *symmetrical* (Vollenhoven calls it 'co-operation', see Isagooge §77 & §106). That is: (Sxy ∧ Syx) ≡ (x ∈ F ∧ y ∈ F), def: "'x' and 'y' relate as subjects if and only if 'x' and 'y' possess the same function F. On the other hand: (Sxy ∧ Oyx) ≡ (x ∈ F¹ ∧ y ∈ F²), def: "'x' relates to 'y' as a subject and 'y' relates to 'x' as an object if and only if 'x' possesses some advanced function F¹ and 'y' possesses some lower function F², an *asymmetrical* relationship. Again, in either case, where two subjects are related in a state of affairs there must always be some law-relationship that relates their relation or connection, thus R³(R¹xy ∧ R²yx) and F³[(x ∈ F₁)¹ ∧ (y ∈ F₁)²] ('F₁' denotes the same function in each statement, ¹ & ², of irreducible inherence).

¹²⁶ Not to extend this section any further, but this also goes for matters of apprehension. What is already affirmed as conceptually inherent means that one's interrelation with a text or a person is such that one does not 'take notice' of the fact that the person is, in fact, saying something other than one conceives.

¹²⁷ "Paganistic thinking has from antiquity always accepted antinomies. *They had no choice*. They had called themselves into being" "*Want het paganistisch denken heeft van de oudheid af steeds antinomieën aanvaard. Het kon ook niet anders*" (CRP, 29). This is a perpetuated being, as Vollenhoven seeks to point out here, one who calls oneself into being perpetuates this way of being to others, and though the antinomies are clear (religious repression) to the thinker, they are repressed for lack of any clear way out.

¹²⁸ Childhood sexual abuse, which occurs all too often within and between the sexes is but one example of the seething trauma that exists under and through the positivizations of social culture. How much society is positivized in disassociation and the unselfconscious transference that arises from a traumatized and numbed structure? And, how much society is the positivized desire to keep these voices quiet?

¹²⁹ And an offering it is, for one way that further positivizations can occur, as already seen, is through applied *correctives*. Calvin not only positivized his own result, but also *offered* a corrective to those languishing under an unflourishing secondary state of affairs. Not all offerings are corrective either, the positivization of Eve and thus God's subsequent positing of Eve in the primary state of affairs was hardly a corrective, but instead a *deepening* of the cosmos in Adam's walk with God.

¹³⁰ Was this demographical statement true for the time that he wrote this? If it is not true, it is still a perfect example of structure determining to its own extent since the extension is what determines the falsity of the concept.

¹³¹ In any case, the law for logic is only ever a positivized law. Vollenhoven clearly distinguishes between the law for logic and analytical law (see note 3). Logic is the positivized result gained through study of the analytical, the analytical law is that which is positivized into logical laws.

¹³² This is as close as apostate thought gets to positive law. 'Principles' for Vollenhoven belong to positive law; they have to do with what is already transferred and affirmed as positively lawful

such that they allow a flourishing approach to the primary state of affairs. The formulation of principles and the formulation of one's circumspection form a sort of 'bridge' between the normative strategy of the pagan and the structure of that which is knowable. It is only in realism, where norm and structure mediate both the knowable and the knowing that this formulative bridge can at all be said to be made distinct. Since a *correct* circumspective concept, i.e., 'being subject' is one's normative approach to the primary state of affairs, this must always be mediated through what has been already positivized, i.e., the affirmed *principles* that are *about* the primary state of affairs (since the secondary state of affairs is always about the primary state of affairs). One's circumspective formula, under the law of love, is principled in its approach via the relationship of positive law, to the primary state of affairs. Realism, on the other hand, reifies the already affirmed into a structural law according to its circumspective formula, which shares the same *place* as structural law, neither in subject or object, but outside the cosmos. So, while realism comes very close to Vollenhoven's position, it still reifies what is subject to God into something that is subject only unto human knowing and, in some cases, even places God under the law.

¹³³ We might ask here what Vollenhoven means by a 'consistent' problem-historical method. For surely a pagan thinker cannot be consistent in his or her matters of detail for these matters of detail are always faulted which cause perceptible problems. Thus, given these problems, a pagan thinker moves to another normative strategy or changes his or her principles for detail. The consistency is merely that the pagan is always responding to a creation that is lawful and that has certain determinations. Therefore, all matters of detail and circumspection will have a certain consistency, even in their malignation, to the states of affairs and determinations of the cosmos.

¹³⁴ Thus, while all statements of detail can never be divorced from their original circumspection, they can be recircumscribed or transformed according to a different circumspection. This can only occur when one recognizes something correct in detail (i.e., the difference between a concept and extension) but yet something incorrect in circumspection (i.e., the realism given to a concept and the cosmic attributes given to the extension of a concept).

¹³⁵ Others principles are the 10 categories of Aristotle, "power" in Foucault, "différance" for Derrida, etc. etc..

¹³⁶ Earlier it was mentioned that in one's approach, one always comes to knowledge or error as results, to be "gained through analysis of something knowable" "*we brengen kennis en dwaling niet uit onszelf voort, maar komen tot die twee als tot resultaten, alleen bij de analyse van iets kenbaars te winnen*" (Isagooge § 172). Thus, in asking questions of the knowable, one is already seeking out either knowledge or error. This is due to one's circumspective concept, whether or not it contradicts the normative command to love God and one's neighbour as subject. Hence, in one sense, one already has the answer in which the question is asked, or, one is always *answerable* to God and neighbour in the questions one asks. The answer to one's questions – already in an answerable formulation – may be either correct or incorrect, but the extension that extends each question is always either an extension of an inheritance of further sin or further flourishing – one's answer may be correct, but that doesn't mean it is circumscribed for *good*. One who is always answerable to God is one who aims to do good that 'lasts for good' – that is, as long as that goodness flourishes, she is one who is constantly striving to get 'the devil out of the details' if you will, and one whose heart is continually re-circumscribed in a walk with God.

¹³⁷ The fact that the *this-that* and *thus-so* states of affairs are held in a relationship by genesis is only possible if genesis, like the two states of affairs it relates is also a case of subjects-in-relation in law-response unto God.

¹³⁸ It is not really a 'choice', for as we have seen, no one truly chooses their normative strategy nor their principles. But, on an intuitive or perceptual level, decisions are always being made. In fact, a careful historiography can reveal the minute shifts in these decisions. Thus one does not from the start decide upon a normative strategy, but one can slowly make decisions that lead to a normative strategy other than the one given by nurture. These decisions are rooted in one's primary concepts which result in either primary statements that refuse something as positivized or positivize something in an altogether new manner.

¹³⁹ This could create some potentially odd categories. Odd categories, such as a realism that sees structure as mythologized, can actually exist. One who sees the law as continually changing, for instance, would be of this type.

¹⁴⁰ This is thus also an anthropological split of body and soul. Any body/soul split is, for Vollenhoven, a specifically functionally (in the structural state of affairs) re-conceived malignment of the pre-functional (normative) heart of a subject and its structural functioning.

¹⁴¹ It has also been argued that another category should exist, that of partial individualism, where both universal and individual are on principle structured yet the universal exists for the sake of the individual whereas in partial universalism the opposite is true. This category may indeed be useful, but too often the problem of individuality and universality has become a problem regarding the place of the law, as though universals were immediately some sort of realism though universals can certainly be placed in the subject or object. As Tol remarks in VPECA, this was for a long time a problem for Vollenhoven himself. Vollenhoven himself, however, does not admit the reality of universals, for universals are always a matter of assigning a *mediating structure* to the universality of law response of individual subjects in the structural *this-that* state of affairs. For Vollenhoven this mediation is never one's universality (a universal), but the law that holds for this universality of law response (for an excellent discussion on this see Strauss *Individuality and Universality in Reformational Philosophy*). The only way universals mediate one's universality in law response for Vollenhoven is the transference of the primary states of affairs into the secondary states of affairs, that is, statements that *objectify* the primary state of affairs – for it is through the relationship of this objectification that one approaches the primary state of affairs. But these universals are hardly reified for Vollenhoven; they themselves are subject to God's law under positive law. After all, the very reification of these universals as a *relationship* relating knower and knowable (subject and object) is the very structural malignment of law in realism.

¹⁴² Monarchianism is an example of this view.

¹⁴³ He apparently once called himself an “interactionary monist” according to Calvin Seerveld.

¹⁴⁴ As a spiritual exercise, I have elsewhere (but not in any published format) spoken of the difference between the reality of God and the REALITY of God as a difference between *interrelativity* and *intrarelativity*. For Vollenhoven, all creaturely relations, whether *intra* or *inter*-individual, are always species of *inter*-relativity, for creatures exist only as subject to God (which gives a fearful shudder to one's conceived sovereignty). *Intra*-relativity might be a fine way to spiritually exercise one's conception of God, for whatever God *intrarelates* with must be self-identical to God. This allows a certain way into understanding intra-Trinitarian (not inter-Trinitarian) relations, for whatever God generates or spirates intra-relatively in eternity (since time is to be interrelatively subject) is always identical to God. Thus, the three persons of God are not just three interrelations, for REALITY in its intra-relative perfection (its self-love) existed before reality was posited. Thus, whatever is extended intra-relatively, even if it is hypostatically different from that who extends, is nonetheless intra-relatively identical to the hypostatical extender as 'God'.

¹⁴⁵ Does God always answer? The best response ever given to the problem of evil, or the question ‘where was God?’ is by a former spiritual mentor of mine, Harry Van Belle, who wisely stated that “God has a lot to answer for”. I agree. A holy yet tormented silence may be the only answer. Must even God be forgiven? Must we *give* to God our answerability – to place it at the *fore* – despite the lingering questions, despite unholy silences from the HOLY ONE? Is this not faith itself, so raw in such a horrific world?

¹⁴⁶ Oddly, though it connects verticality and horizontality and is irreducible to both, Vollenhoven speaks of genesis as another sort of irreducible horizontality. See also §158-167 where perception and apprehension are clearly irreducible to recollection and expectation yet are considered horizontal, and section §168 where the vertical connection is introduced.

¹⁴⁷ But then, “structure refers to creatureliness, culture to religion” (Wolters: EIPG, 32-3). Wolters does not make the tie between structuralness and primary concepts otherwise he would not subsume logic under a secondary concept. He realizes this on page 32, but then leaves it alone.



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