

Dooyeweerd's Philosophy of Aesthetics: A response to Zuidervaart's critique

by

Dr. J. Glenn Friesen

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I. Introduction

In his philosophy of aesthetics, the Dutch philosopher Herman Dooyeweerd (1894-1977) devotes particular attention to two works of art. The first work that Dooyeweerd discusses is Rembrandt's "The Night Watch" (1642) [See image displayed online].

The second work that Dooyeweerd discusses is the sculpture by Praxiteles (c.370-c.330 BC) of the god Hermes holding the young god Dionysius [See image displayed online]. Hermes is the messenger of the gods, Hermes is holding Dionysius, the god of wine. The right hand of Hermes is missing; it once held a bunch of grapes just out of the reach of the infant.

The "Hermes" by Praxiteles, was discovered in 1877 during excavations of the ruins of the Temple of Hera. The sculpture is dated around 343 BC; it is now on display at the Olympia Museum. It is the only sculpture surviving today that can be attributed to one of the six great Greek masters of sculpture.

I will briefly examine Dooyeweerd's ideas of aesthetics in relation to these two works of art. The purpose of this article is to give sufficient detail in order to discuss Lambert Zuidervaart's criticism of Dooyeweerd's philosophical aesthetics in his article, "Fantastic Things: Critical Notes Toward a Social Ontology of the Arts," 60 *Philosophia Reformata*, (1995), 37-54.

Of course, Dooyeweerd's philosophy of aesthetics can and should be discussed in much greater detail. In particular, Dooyeweerd's philosophy of aesthetics must be understood in relation to his ideas regarding imagination in general. Therefore, this article should be

read together with my much longer article, “Imagination, Image of God and Wisdom of God: Theosophical Themes in Dooyeweerd’s Philosophy.”¹

II. Dooyeweerd’s Aesthetic Theory

A. Interrelated Ideas

Dooyeweerd’s philosophical ideas are interrelated. That also applies to his ideas on aesthetics. They cannot be understood apart from his ideas of the modal aspects, individuality structures, *enkapsis*, and imagination. And these ideas in turn cannot be understood apart from Dooyeweerd’s central idea of our supratemporal selfhood. Our supratemporal selfhood was created as the religious root of temporal reality. It is fallen, but redeemed in Christ, the New Root. And our supratemporal selfhood expresses itself in temporal reality—both in our body, or mantle of functions [*functiemantel*], as well as in the rest of the temporal world. All of our acts proceed from out of our supratemporal selfhood, and express themselves in three directions. One of those directions is that of our imagination.

The aesthetic aspect is one of the modes of our consciousness. It is also one of the aspects in which individuality structures function in the external world. There is a correspondence between the modal aspects in which we temporally function (within our mantle of functions), and the aspects in which the external world functions. That is why what we imagine by means of our sensory imagination, which in its expanded form is purely intentional (directed to our own temporal functions of consciousness), corresponds to the outer world. I have investigated this correspondence in my article already cited, “Imagination.”

B. The Nature of the Aesthetic Aspect

Dooyeweerd says that every modal aspect has a central nucleus, surrounded by analogies that refer to the other modal aspects. These aspects follow a temporal order of before and

¹ J. Glenn Friesen: “Imagination, Image of God and Wisdom of God: Theosophical Themes in Dooyeweerd’s Philosophy,” (2006) online at [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/Imagination.html>] [‘Imagination’].

after. They succeed one another as moments of time. Each of these aspects has analogies to all of the other aspects. The analogies within the aesthetic aspect either point backwards to the aspects that precede it in cosmic time (these are the retrocipatory analogies), or they point forward to those aspects that succeed it in cosmic time (these are the anticipatory analogies).

Because the nuclear moment of each aspect is central and directive, we cannot logically define its meaning. This nuclear moment only displays its individuality in close liaison with its analogies.² Dooyeweerd repeats this idea in the *New Critique*:

It is the very nature of the modal nucleus that it cannot be defined, because every circumscription of its meaning must appeal to this central moment of the aspect-structure concerned. The modal meaning-kernel itself can be grasped only in an immediate intuition and never apart from its structural context of analogies.³

Although we can obtain a theoretical concept of the modal meaning of a law-sphere, such a concept only grasps its restrictive function (the nucleus together with its retrocipations). The full expansive function can be only be approximated in a synthetical Idea of its meaning. But this *Idea* of a modal aspect must not be used as if it were a concept, for by doing that we would eradicate the modal boundaries of the law-spheres (*NC* II, 186-87).

The Idea of the nuclear or kernel meaning of the aesthetic aspect is that of harmony:

The nuclear moment of the aesthetic aspect is *harmony* in its original sense, a modal meaning-moment found in all the other law-spheres only in an unoriginal, retrocipatory or anticipatory function (cf. Harmony of *feeling*, *logical-harmony*, harmony in social *intercourse*, *linguistic* harmony, *economic* and *juridical* harmony, etc.) (*NC* II, 128).

This harmony requires an aesthetic unity-in-diversity (*Ibid.*). Dooyeweerd sometimes also refers to the aesthetic in terms of norms of beauty. Beauty is evident not only in

² Herman Dooyeweerd: "Introduction to a Transcendental Criticism of Philosophic Thought," *Evangelical Quarterly* 19 (1947), 42-51 at 46.

³ Herman Dooyeweerd: *A New Critique of Theoretical Thought*, (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1997; Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1969; first published 1953) II, 128 [*'NC'*]. This work is an English translation and revision of Dooyeweerd's *Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee*, (Amsterdam: H.J. Paris, 1935) [*'WdW'*].

works of art, but also in nature. But only humans can appreciate such beauty, since an appreciation of beauty depends on the earlier mode of symbolic meaning:

But the modal meaning of the aesthetic law-sphere is not only expressed in works of art, but also in the beauty of nature (not subjectively, but objectively). The objective beauty of nature is also founded in a symbolic meaning-substratum. An animal may have a sensory feeling of pleasure when it is impressed by the sight of a sunlit landscape. The aesthetic harmony of the scene, however can only be apprehended on the basis of an awareness of its symbolic substratum, its symbolizing signification (*NC II*, 139).

Some reformational philosophers have disagreed with what Dooyeweerd says is the nuclear, kernel meaning of the aesthetic aspect. For example, Calvin Seerveld prefers to describe it as ‘play’ or ‘allusiveness.’⁴ Others have given different characterizations of the kernel meaning. This may appear to be mere tinkering with how the aesthetic modal aspect is named, but it is in fact the result of differences in philosophy. For one thing, these different descriptions generally proceed from faulty interpretations of what Dooyeweerd means by ‘modal aspect.’ For Dooyeweerd, the modal aspects are modes of our consciousness. Our *acts* of consciousness proceed from out of our supratemporal selfhood, and these acts are then *expressed* temporally in all of the modes. It seems to me that to speak of the aesthetic aspect in terms of ‘play’ confuses the *act* of playing with a *mode* of consciousness. Acts occur in all modalities, not just the aesthetic. Several times in his article, Seerveld refers to children pretending to be bears, and he says that children playing bears do not see themselves as bears, but are “making believe.” He says again that pretended bears are not bear images. Even if that is true, pretending to be a bear is an act that takes place in all modalities, and it is a mistake to characterize the aesthetic aspect in this way.

And is also a mistake to characterize the aesthetic modality in terms of ‘allusiveness.’ For that emphasizes only one of the retrocitations of the aesthetic aspect—namely, the

⁴ Calvin Seerveld: “Imaginativity,” *Faith and Philosophy* 4 (January 1987), 43-58 [‘Seerveld’].

lingual or symbolic aspect, which precedes it in the temporal order or succession of the modes.⁵

Seerveld distinguishes imagination from sense-perception, from retinal imaging, and from conceptual knowledge. In this way, Seerveld misses the role that Dooyeweerd says is played by our imagination in those acts.⁶ Instead, Seerveld regards the role of imagination as restricted to fantasy and as “making-believe.” This explains why he regards aesthetics as play, since for him, imagination does not relate to the way that we perceive the real world. For Seerveld, imagination is the reality of making-believe, the human as-if functioning:

...when the imagining function of making-believe frames a certain human doing, we may call the activity an imaginative act. Artistic activity is an act of imaginativity *par excellence*, and assumes a measure of maturing skill to fix the *as if* treatment of whatever one is busy with imaginatively in a medium that objectifies the nuanced meaning which is fascinating the artist at the time (*Ibid.* 46).

...imaginativity is the nucleus of an ontologically prime, functional aspect of reality. It makes historical and philosophically reforming sense to attribute the name “aesthetic” to such an irreducible mode of allusive reality—“making-believe” (*Ibid.* 50).

And Seerveld says that playfulness and pretending *as if* may even be the minimal *sine qua non*, sufficient conditions for a given act to be qualified by an imagining function:

...the singular, determinative feature of a human creature’s imaginative act may be best described perhaps as a *simulation of strange affairs* (*Ibid.* 50).

Seerveld refers to the entities that result from our imagination as ‘fictions’ (*Ibid.* 54).

In contrast, Dooyeweerd has a much higher view of imagination. It is not making believe; rather, our imagination is the way that we make the temporal world fully real.

I am content to retain Dooyeweerd’s idea of harmony and beauty as the nuclear meaning of the aesthetic. It also fits with those other central Ideas in the history of Western

⁵ Dooyeweerd’s understanding of the modal aspects cannot be understood apart from this temporal order of succession, of earlier and later.

⁶ See my article “Imagination” for a more complete discussion of these ideas.

philosophy: the Good, the True and the Beautiful, as long as we remember that Dooyeweerd does not have a static view of Ideas or essences, but a fully dynamic one. Not even God's eternity is static or unchanging. And our Ideas are a reflection, an image of God's dynamic Wisdom.

Dooyeweerd discusses the Idea of beauty in relation to Rembrandt's painting "The Night Watch." He obviously believes that the painting is beautiful. And he says that any such response to a work of art is determined by a universally valid norm of beauty:

If a man standing before Rembrandt's "*Night-Watch*", in opposition to the predominant conception, were to call this masterpiece *un-aesthetic, un-lovely* and at the same time would claim, "There exists no universally valid norm for aesthetic valuation," he would fall into the same contradiction as the sceptic who denies a universally valid truth. He can try to defend himself, by making the reservation: I for one think this painting unlovely. But then it has no meaning to set this subjective impression against the generally predominant view (*NC I*, 152).

It is no answer to say that our appreciation of a work of art is a subjective response. For our subjective response is itself determined by being subjected to a norm:

Every subjective valuation receives its *determinateness* by being subjected to a norm, which determined the subjectivity and defines it in its *meaning!* There exists no *aesthetic* subjectivity apart from a universally valid aesthetic norm to which it is subjected (*Ibid.*)

Nor can it be said that every work of art is so individual that it cannot be subjected to universally valid⁷ aesthetic norms:

Let it not be objected here, that the beauty of the "Night-Watch" is so thoroughly individual, that it cannot be exhausted in universally valid aesthetic norms (*Ibid.*)

III. Imagination and aesthetic creation

Productive aesthetic fantasy is founded in our sensory imagination. We must distinguish here between the sensory image in its restrictive form, which is shared by animals (*NC*

⁷ But "universally valid" in this sense of a norm that is valid for everyone—valid for all human positivizations—should not be confused with the distinction between universals and particulars. See discussion below.

III, 115), and the opened up sensory image, which only humans are capable of. It is in the opened structures of this type all subjective types of aesthetical projects are founded.

...it is exclusively characterized by the internal psychical fact that the sensory function of imagination produces its phantasms in merely *intentional* objectivity, entirely apart from the sensory objectivity of real things. In the opened structure of this modal type all subjective types of aesthetical projects are founded (NC II, 425-26).

An animal, which sees only the restrictive sensory image, cannot be aesthetic.

Aesthetic projects rely on the opened up or disclosed aspects of reality. In an aesthetic act, our imagination forms a representation or “fantasy” [*fantasie*]. Aesthetic creation involves forming a merely *intentional* visionary object. Dooyeweerd gives the example of the sculpture of Hermes by Praxiteles:

In the aesthetically qualified conception of Praxiteles, the productive imagination has *projected* the sensory image of his Hermes as a merely *intentional* visionary object (NC III, 115).

By ‘merely intentional,’ Dooyeweerd means that the image is internal, inner, with no relation to what is external.⁸ The inner is what we experience in our own temporal mantle of functions. This merely intentional object can then be actualized or realized in an external aesthetic work, although it need not be. For example, Praxiteles realized the internal image in the external marble. But the internal visionary object is already an aesthetic work.

As I discuss in my article ‘Imagination,’ Dooyeweerd does not have a copy theory of perception. Neither does he have a copy theory of art. He says that for Praxiteles, the proper sensory *Urbild* for his Hermes is not the sensory form of the living model. It is related to the ideal harmonious sensory shape evoked in the productive fantasy of the artist by the contemplation of his living model. Praxiteles had a productive vision of two living deified human bodies (NC III, 117).

The opened sensory image evoked in the artist’s productive fantasy may then be actualized externally, e.g. by realizing it in the marble. But it need not be actualized:

⁸ We must not misunderstand Dooyeweerd by interpreting ‘intentionality’ in terms of phenomenology. See my article ‘Imagination.’

There is no action without act; but not every act comes to realization in an action. So it is possible for a scientific act of knowing or an esthetic act of imagining to remain entirely inwardly-directed.⁹

This actualization may be by the performance of the work in an actual event. Or it may occur by the representation of the aesthetic project in an artistic work, by which it achieves somewhat more permanence. For example, a musical work may be represented symbolically in a written score. Or an aesthetic image may be represented in a painting or a sculpture.

A thing in its proper sense implies a relatively constant realization of its individuality-structure. A poem, a musical composition or a drama are imaginative totalities of an aesthetic qualification which can be reproduced only in a coherent series of mental acts and acts of performance, with the aid of their symbolical objectification in books and scores (NC III, 111, fn1).

Note that Dooyeweerd distinguishes between the intentional (inner) individuality structure, and that structure as it may later be reproduced. The intentional individuality structure is reproduced by acts of performance (which take place in all modalities). Books and scores may symbolically objectify the composition, but that objectification is not the original individuality structure.

Dooyeweerd asks whether the individuality of Rembrandt's "Night Watch" is to be attributed to its sensory matter in the objective impressions of its paint (NC II, 423). Dooyeweerd's answer is that its individuality is not founded in any sensory matter. For, as already discussed, Dooyeweerd's view of things is not that they are based in some substance or matter, but that they are individuality structures that individuate from out of Totality. When the aesthetic project is actualized in an artistic work, a new individuality structure is created.

Events such as a musical performance have an individuality structure, too, and function in all aspects. But in the case of a score, or a painting, or a sculpture, there is an enkaptic

⁹ Herman Dooyeweerd: *Encyclopedia of the Science of Law*, ed. Alan M. Cameron (Lewiston, New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2002), 223 [*Encyclopedia*]. Antoine Faivre refers to this as "intransitive action," which is exercised on the body of the imagining subject only. See Antoine Faivre: *Theosophy, Imagination, Tradition: Studies in Western Esotericism* (Albany: State University of New York, 2000), 99.

interlacement of the aesthetic individuality structure in a new individuality structure that also includes the structure of the medium in which the representation is made (the paper, the canvas, the marble).

The aesthetic individuality structure, which is enkaptically interlaced with the other individuality structures, is founded in the historical law sphere, which is modally qualified by free formative control (*NC III*, 120). The aesthetic structure that is enkaptically intertwined is not the same as the original structure evoked in the artist's fantasy. It is a *representation* of that merely intentional object.¹⁰ The marble statue is the "objective plastic *representation* of an aesthetically qualified intentional fantasy-object, which itself appeared to be typically founded in a sensory *fantasm*" (*NC III*, 120).

The person viewing the work of art must not regard it as a copy of external reality. It is not a copy of reality, but a copy of the productive fantasy of the artist, which was evoked by reality. The viewer therefore needs to view the work of art in an aesthetic way, and not as a copy of external reality. Therefore, the observer of a work of art must also have aesthetic imagination.

The objective beauty, which is present in the thing in a latent objective function, is made manifest, *i.e.* disclosed, in the actual subject-object relation to the receptive aesthetical appreciation of the observer (*NC III*, 114)

Aesthetic appreciation is therefore reproductive. To see it as merely a copy of a beautiful natural object, the observer lacks a real experience of the sculpture (*NC III*, 114-115).

In the case of Praxiteles' sculpture of Hermes, the artist's productive aesthetic fantasy deepens and discloses the anatomic structure of living bodies (*NC III*, 117). It does not merely copy the closed and non-deepened image.

It is true that a natural thing may also be beautiful. But such beauty is not necessarily related to the individual productive fantasy of the perceiving subject, and does not have an inner aesthetically qualified structure (*NC III*, 114).

¹⁰ The aesthetic object-function is only the aesthetic representation [copy]. It is not an objectification of the aesthetic subject-function as such

IV. A Discussion of Zuidervaart's Critique

In his critique of Dooyeweerd's aesthetics, Zuidervaart says that Dooyeweerd reduces:

1. structure to law
2. art to artwork
3. artwork to a thing
4. the thingly artwork to the artist's aesthetic conception

Zuidervaart says, "The upshot of these reductions, in pejorative terms, is that art comes to seem like a preordained collection of unnatural and fantastic things" (Zuidervaart, 39).

Let's look at these four criticisms in more detail.

1. reduction of structure to law

This criticism can be broken down into sub-arguments:

- a) individuality structures versus things
- b) the supposed rigidity of law
- c) lack of respect for individuality
- d) lack of respect for creativity

Let us look at each of these sub-arguments in more detail.

a) individuality structures versus things

Dooyeweerd's idea of things *as* individuality structures is very different from the idea that temporal things *have* a structure. To say that things *have* a structure assumes that our experience begins with temporal individual things, that these things have properties, and that by analyzing these properties, we can determine the nature of the thing's structure. But this viewpoint does not differ very much from the view that things are based on substances with properties, except that it assumes that these things are created. To argue that Dooyeweerd has 'reduced' things to structure is to use the term 'reduce' in a way that is very different from 'absolutization.' Indeed, Zuidervaart's argument against Dooyeweerd may itself involve an absolutization or hypostatization. For what is his own view of the thing that he says Dooyeweerd has reduced in this way?

Zuidervaart refers to Kent Zigterman's study of Dooyeweerd's idea of individuality structures¹¹, and he concludes that Dooyeweerd reduces structure to law. Zigterman, like Hendrik Stoker, argued for an idea of substance. In my view, any rejection of Dooyeweerd's idea of individuality structures must lead to Zigterman's view that there is some substance that is at the basis of a structure.

I have analyzed Zigterman's views and shown how Dooyeweerd's idea of individuality structures is not that individual things *have* a structure but that they *are* a structure that endures in time.¹² It is not that the individuality structure is reduced to law, but that the law is one side of the structure; its individuality is based on its subject-side, which is its subjective duration in time. I agree with Zuidervaart (p. 41) that individuality structures cannot be divided into factual structures that are subject to law structures. But Zuidervaart does not seem to understand Dooyeweerd's idea of individuation from out of Totality. This is not surprising, since most reformational philosophers, following Vollenhoven, have rejected the idea of a supratemporal Totality that is individuated in time, and they have consequently also rejected the whole idea of individuality structures.¹³ Dooyeweerd's view is that an individuality structure is "an architectonic plan according to which a diversity of "moments" is united in a totality." This structure is "knit together by a directive and central 'moment'." This is a much more dynamic view of things than we find in Vollenhoven.

Zuidervaart does acknowledge (p. 41) Dooyeweerd's distinction between modal structures and structures of individuality, but he does not follow up on this distinction—how it relates to the process of individuation from out of Totality, and how it

¹¹ Kent Zigterman: "Dooyeweerd's Theory of Individuality Structure as an Alternative to a Substance Position, Especially that of Aristotle," (Master of Philosophy Thesis, Institute for Christian Studies, 1977).

¹² J. Glenn Friesen: "Individuality Structures and Enkapsis: Individuation from totality in Dooyeweerd and German Idealism," 2005), online at [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/Enkapsis.html>].

¹³ J. Glenn Friesen: "Dooyeweerd versus Vollenhoven: The religious dialectic in reformational philosophy," *Philosophia Reformata* 70 (2005) 102-132 online at [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/Dialectic.html>] ['Dialectic'].

results in a distinction between aspects and the functioning of individuality structures in these aspects.

b) the supposed rigidity of law

Zuidervaart acknowledges (p. 40) that for Dooyeweerd, thing-reality is “a thoroughly dynamic and continuous realization.” But Zuidervaart then objects that this idea is undermined by Dooyeweerd’s view of structural principles as the structural frame in which alone the process of genesis and decay of individual beings is possible (*NC III*, 106). Zuidervaart complains that Dooyeweerd treats structural principles as invariant laws:

Dooyeweerd tends to treat structures and structural principles as invariant laws, regardless of the specificity, scope, and historical, cultural, or societal uniqueness of the structure in question. (p. 41)

It is true that Dooyeweerd says that structural principles do not come into being, change or perish, and that individuality structures, which have a law-side to them, do endure and perish in time.

But Dooyeweerd rejects any static view of these structural principles. He rejects the idea that we are seeking for a rigid ‘*eidōs*.’¹⁴ The law is dynamic, even in its temporal refraction. The idea of a rigid and unchanging reality is a Greek metaphysical idea, and not even God’s eternity is like that! (*NC I*, 31 fn1, 106).

Dooyeweerd says that a rigid view of aesthetic conformity to law is due to an over-mathematicized view of it. He says that classicism found that aesthetic meaning is not just in the psychical-emotional aspect of feeling. It opened up the aesthetic aspect, discovering mathematical, logical and economical analogies in the modal aesthetic meaning-structure, disclosing aesthetic unity in multiplicity and aesthetic economy. But it then became caught by the Humanistic science ideal:

¹⁴ Dooyeweerd says that Parmenides’ idea of Being identifies theoretical thought with its product (*NC III*, 5). Dooyeweerd’s own view (like Baader’s), opposes a fixed or hypostatized figure:

In theoretical laying bare of modal meaning, we do not grasp a rigid *eidōs*, an absolute essential structure, a *Sache an sich* (*NC II*, 485).

Moreover, classicism discovered that the aesthetic meaning cannot be lodged in the psychical-emotional aspect of feeling. But it by no means denied that a work of art should also appeal to the imagination and to feeling. It did not conceive of the aesthetic aspect in the rigid primitive commitment to its substrata in nature, but in the transcendental direction of time, i.e. in a relative deepening of meaning. But, in spite of this relative deepening of aesthetic thought, the aesthetic Idea of classicism became rigid, guided as it was by the faith in the Humanistic science-ideal. As a result the modal aesthetic aspect was not conceived in its universality and specific sovereignty within its own sphere. It was seen as a specific expression of the logical-mathematical ‘ground of being’, supposedly differentiated in various ways in the psycho-physical aspects of nature and in the aesthetic modality (NC II, 347).

Dooyeweerd goes on to say that it is this logicist-mathematical line of thought that gave so much offence to romanticism and the ‘Storm and Stress’ [*Sturm und Drang*] movements in art. This logicism levelled out the individual internal structure of an artistic product into a one-sided functionalistic-aesthetic way of thought. This logicistic way of viewing art gave scope to the artist’s individuality only in the *form* of his expression (NC II, 348).

Furthermore, Dooyeweerd specifically distinguishes between law and its positivization. Positivization is historically founded. Aesthetic norms, as they are positivized, vary with time and place (NC II, 240). The kernel meaning of the historical modality is the way that we *form* temporal reality. Such historical forming is done in different ways in time, but it is in response to and reflective of structural principles that precede such historical forming. In other words, our historical forming is not arbitrary, but is related to the Wisdom of God.

Zuidervaat is also wrong in characterizing Dooyeweerd’s view of the modal aspects as conformity to law (p. 40). He says that for Dooyeweerd, the dynamic realization of structural principles in things is synonymous with a conforming to law or a being determined by law.

Explaining the nature of things in relation to their conformity to law is characteristic of Vollenhoven’s philosophy. But for Dooyeweerd, the objectivity of individuality structures is explained not by conformity to law, but by the intra-modal subject-object relation. He specifically says that objectivity is not the same as universally valid law-

conformity (*NC II*, 370). And he specifically denies that the *Gegenstand* of our theoretical knowledge is to be understood in terms of what is generally valid, with law-conformity.¹⁵

Dooyeweerd says that cosmic time differentiates both the central law and the central subject.¹⁶ Thus, both the law-side and the subject-side of temporal reality are individuations! This is in sharp contrast to the view of reality supposed by Zuidervaart, where individual things are subjected to universal laws. For Dooyeweerd, the law-side of reality is differentiated into the aspects, and the subject-side is individuated into modal structures and individuality structures.¹⁷ Modal structures have an *a-typical* individuality,¹⁸ whereas individuality structures have a *typical* individuality. The modal structures are the *foundation* of the individuality structures, which are ordered in a typical way.¹⁹ And these individuality structures function within the modal structures.

¹⁵ Herman Dooyeweerd: *Encyclopedia of the Science of Law*, Vol. I, 187. In a footnote, the General Editor of the *Encyclopedia* says that Dooyeweerd does not acknowledge “universality at the factual side of reality.” But instead of attempting to understand Dooyeweerd’s view of individuation from a supratemporal totality, he attempts to correct Dooyeweerd.

¹⁶ This is why Dooyeweerd speaks not only of a ‘law-Idea,’ but also of a ‘subject-Idea.’ See Dooyeweerd’s 1964 Lecture, (Discussion, p. 14), online at [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/1964Lecture.html>].

¹⁷ There is a difference between subject-side and what is factual. Only individuality structures are factual. Modal structures are not factual. Individuality structures function factually within the modal structures. Reformational philosophy has generally not observed this distinction. Within the modal structures themselves, there is no factual side, although there is a subject-side, and the subject-object relation occurs within the modal structures.

¹⁸ Dooyeweerd says,

A modal aspect thus individualizes itself only *within its structure*, which is fitted into the inter-modal meaning-coherence of cosmic time. It is not exhausted by this structure. The pole reached by modal individualization in the full temporal reality on its subject side, is the complete or a-typical individuality of the modal meaning (*NC II*, 424).

¹⁹ Herman Dooyeweerd: “De Kentheoretische Gegenstandrelatie en de logische subject-object relatie,” *Philosophia Reformata* 40 (1975) 83-101, translation online at [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/jgfriesen/Mainheadings/Kentheoretische.html>]. At p. 90,

By viewing objects or things in terms of conformity to law, Zuidervaart also misunderstands Dooyeweerd's idea of law-types. Zuidervaart understands types in terms of universals that require a particular. He says (p. 41, fn13) that all radical types, genotypes and their sub-types belong to the creation order. They are all "types for which there are no tokens." But although that kind of reasoning fits with Vollenhoven's philosophy, where the law as creation order is outside of the cosmos that it determines, it does not fit with Dooyeweerd's view, where the temporal cosmos has both a law-side and a subject-side. And as we have seen, Dooyeweerd does not view the law-side in terms of universals for which there must be particulars. Both the law-side and the subject-side of temporal individuality structures are individuated from out of Totality. For Dooyeweerd, the relation of aspects to modal structures and individuality structures is different from the relation of universals to particulars as supposed by Zuidervaart.

c) lack of respect for uniqueness and individuality

Zuidervaart says (p. 42) that we learn little from Dooyeweerd about what is unique to Praxiteles' sculpture. I think that this criticism is rather unfair, since the discussion of the sculpture occurs in the section of the *New Critique* that is devoted to individuality structures. Dooyeweerd's point is to show the nature of individuality structures, both in their purely intentional (inner) form and in their reproduced form in enkaptic structures.

Zuidervaart criticizes Dooyeweerd's view that all artworks are founded in the historical aspect and qualified by the aesthetic aspect in that this gives no real particularity to the artwork under discussion. But if they are individuality structures, how else would they be qualified? In the enkaptic interlacement the artwork with other individuality structures,

he refers to modal structures with no individuality. Since, as we have seen, modal structures are themselves individualizations of the modal aspects, he must mean, "with no *typical* individuality."

The modal structures *lie at the foundation* of the individuality-structures, *and not the other way around*. For without the foundation of modal structures with no individuality, we would not be able to speak of a typical ordering and gradual individuation of the functions in these modal aspects of concrete entities in their individuality structures.

such as the marble, we find other individuality structures that are not qualified by the aesthetic aspect.

But not all works of art are *reproduced* enkaptically in that way, for not all artworks are externally realized. In those cases, they are still individuality structures, and still so qualified. The aesthetically qualified individuality structure has not yet been realized. Dooyeweerd's point here, and it is a wonderful one with many implications for artists, is that in our imagination, we reflect and image the true reality that exists only in a potential form until we humans realize it. In this way, we help to make the temporal world truly real. We real-ize it, in relation to the 'figure' that we find within our imagination, which is related to God's law and Wisdom.

It is only after we have understood this basis for artistic creativity that we can analyze details of a work of art. I don't think that Dooyeweerd intended his ideas of individuality structures to be a complete philosophy of aesthetics, and I fully agree that more development is called for. Dooyeweerd does marvel at how Praxiteles has expressed the living nature of the two bodies in the sculpture, and he points out that it is evident to us that these are images of the living, and not images of a dead body. And Dooyeweerd does give some very particular details:

Consider the inimitable position of the head of Hermes; the dreaming-pensive expression of the face; the tender warm tone of de [sic] body achieved by rubbing the surfaced with wax; the application of a refined technique of painting to the hair and eyes; and the gracious position of the left arm, bearing the boy Dionysus, while the right arm playfully shows a bunch of grapes to the child (*NC III*, 117).

But much more analysis can be given of Praxiteles. Some of it will relate to the innovations in style and technique that Praxiteles introduced. For instance, Praxiteles used a slender head, longer limbs, accenting of the hips, and the Praxitelean S-curve of the body. Richard Kortum says,

Here, Hermes' small head, soft facial features, and extra-long legs contributed to the Praxitelean canon for the male figure. The fluidly shifting planes of Hermes' figure became widely imitated as the "Praxitelean curve," a posture highly popular today among photographers of international supermodels. Praxiteles' new vision strongly influenced

sculptors of the following Hellenistic Age, who became interested in more frankly sensual portrayals of the human figure.²⁰

Or as the *Encyclopedia Britannica* describes Praxiteles,

Three names dominate 4th-century sculpture, Praxiteles, Scopas, and Lysippus. Each can be appreciated only through ancient descriptions and copies, but each clearly contributed to the rapid transition in sculpture from Classical idealism to Hellenistic realism. Praxiteles, an Athenian, demonstrated a total command of technique and anatomy in a series of sinuously relaxed figures that, for the first time in Greek sculpture, fully exploited the sensual possibilities of carved marble. His Aphrodite (several copies are known), made for the east Greek town of Cnidus, was totally naked, a novelty in Greek art, and its erotic appeal was famous in antiquity. The “Hermes Carrying the Infant Dionysus” (Archaeological Museum, Olympia) at Olympia, which may be an original from his hand, gives an idea of how effectively a master could make flesh of marble.²¹

Praxiteles is also important for the degree to which the marble is polished, its apparent translucent nature, and the vividness of the folds of cloth and other details. We can historically investigate when these details were first introduced into art. Praxiteles was also the first artist to sculpt the nude body, beginning with his sculpture of Aphrodite. He had an immense influence on other Hellenic sculptors.²²

Even the very subject matter of the Hermes sculpture is of interest. To what extent is the appreciation of this sculpture of the god Hermes related to the appreciation for “Hermetic” philosophy? Is there a contrast between an Apollonian idea of form in Hermes and a more material motive in the infant Dionysius? Is Dooyeweerd’s form-matter motive evident here?

All of these questions deserve more exploration. And none of these questions are excluded by Dooyeweerd’s philosophy of aesthetics. But following Dooyeweerd, we

²⁰ Dr. Richard Kortum, East Tennessee State University, online materials at [<http://faculty.etsu.edu/kortumr/07hellenicgreece/htmdescriptionpages/23hermes.htm>].

²¹ *Encyclopedia Britannica*, online at [<http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-30350s>].

²² See the notes online at [<http://faculty.etsu.edu/kortumr/07hellenicgreece/htmdescriptionpages/24aphrodite.htm>].

must also be careful to ensure that what is unique and individual in this sculpture does not lead to an individualism that denies the universal applicability of aesthetic norms.

d) lack of respect for creativity

If in imagination and in the activity of art we are merely reflecting, merely echoing the Wisdom of God, does that not deny creativity to human artistic work? The answer to this problem is that in one sense, it does. Creativity is never original in the sense of creating something absolutely new, beyond what God has willed and desired for His creation.²³ Such views lead to pantheistic identification of our cultural achievement with the self-development of God. In my view, a truly Christian view will separate God's 'internal' development and satisfaction from human satisfaction and development. We cannot say what God's originality is like, but our own originality must always be a return to our Origin, God.²⁴ Any other view of creativity is more that of the Enlightenment's view of freedom and genius, which Dooyeweerd rejected.

But if we cannot create something entirely new, but are set within God's law as refracted by time, does that not limit our creativity? To even ask that question seems to me to be an indication of an attempt to be more than what we were created for. God is endlessly creative, and we have no reason to believe that man, as His image, is also not capable of more varied creativity than will ever be completed, even in the life hereafter. If I may quote from what I said in 'Imagination':

The fact that God's Wisdom is the temporal law-side of reality brings a dynamic relation to individuality structures. This dynamic does not exist when things are seen as merely responding to a law completely external to them. And to say that finding God's law limits creativity is rather like saying complaining that the musical notes in our scales, which also have law-structures, somehow limit our creativity. The history of music, and particularly the improvisation of jazz show that the creative possibilities are endless. As Dooyeweerd says, our forming is "a free project of form-giving with endless possibilities of variation" (NC II, 197). Dooyeweerd's

²³ Antoine Faivre says that unlike God, the artist, and man in general, does not create his Idea, but creates *in it*, or *by direction of it* (Phil de lat Nature 107).

²⁴ It was in this sense that Dooyeweerd regarded his work as original—as relating back to the Origin. He denied any other originality.

modal scale is not a boring representation of what modernistic science is doing, but a Wisdom tradition. It is like a Glass Bead Game that is contemplative as well as magical in the sense of actually forming temporal reality and making it real.

The idea of making temporal creation become real is something like the meaning of those stories that children love so much of inanimate objects becoming real, like the wooden puppet Pinocchio who becomes real, or the Velveteen Rabbit, who becomes real because the boy (properly opening up the normative aspects inherent in the toy), loves the rabbit.

2. reduction of art to artwork

Zuidervaart criticizes Dooyeweerd for assuming as unproblematic that Praxiteles' work is a "work of art" (Zuidervaart, 43). There are several sub-arguments to this criticism by Zuidervaart. These are:

- a) That historically, the Hermes was not considered a work of art.
- b) That emphasis on a work of art emphasizes product over process
- c) That Dooyeweerd examines its status as an independent thing.
- d) That this divorces structure from their social and historical settings

Let's examine these sub-arguments in detail.

a) That historically, the Hermes was not considered a work of art.

This sub-argument contains many subsidiary points, all related to cultural criticism. Zuidervaart points out that there are changing cultural ideas of what is art, and that Dooyeweerd's views reflect a Western cultural orientation. Whether it is a specific Western orientation or not, I would agree that Dooyeweerd does distinguish between primitive and opened societies. He regards Western society as one of the opened societies, along with others. So Zuidervaart's comment (p. 42) that marble sculptures like Hermes simply do not occur in many cultures and societies is a true statement, but it must be read in view of Dooyeweerd's idea of cultural opening and development from out of primitive societies.

Now this idea of opening and cultural unfolding may not be in line with the prejudices of cultural criticism today. It may also be one reason that Zuidervaart rejects Dooyeweerd's

philosophy of art.²⁵ Is Zuidervaart trying to develop a view of art that flattens out development, so that primitive art and art in a more developed society are equal in the extent of their artistic expression? That may be a politically correct view today. But Dooyeweerd cannot be reinterpreted in this way without losing the essence of his idea of unfolding and the opening up process. For him, there is a cultural development from primitive societies to those that have been opened up.

A more peculiar argument made by Zuidervaart is that Praxiteles' Hermes was not initially considered to be art. He says (p. 53) that Hermes was not even created as an aesthetically qualified work of art. Zuidervaart's argument appears to be that this is because the sculpture was situated in a temple. But even although it was situated in a temple, the sculpture of Hermes is undoubtedly a work of art. There is no suggestion that it was used as an idol, and even if it were, a work of art can be enkaptically interwoven with other individuality structures. Dooyeweerd gives the example of carving within a piece of furniture. When separated from the furniture, such carving would be considered a free work of art. But in its enkaptic condition, such carving has a structural function within a whole (the furniture) that is not itself aesthetically qualified. The carving then must not "Obtrude at the expense of the proper character [of the furniture]" (NC III, 141). Thus, even if it could be shown that the Hermes was intended to be qualified by the faith aspect instead of the aesthetic aspect, there would still be an aesthetic work enkaptically enclosed within it. This is Dooyeweerd's distinction between free art and bound art, a distinction that Zuidervaart does not seem to accept (p. 43).

²⁵ Zuidervaart's criticism of Dooyeweerd is based not only on cultural criticism, but on fundamental disagreements with Dooyeweerd's philosophy. See his article, "The Great Turning Point: Religion and Rationality in Dooyeweerd's Transcendental Critique," *Faith and Philosophy* (January, 2004). Zuidervaart there criticizes Dooyeweerd's transcendental critique. In my view, Zuidervaart fails to appreciate the supratemporal/temporal distinction in Dooyeweerd, and how this relates to the alleged circularity of reasoning, for Dooyeweerd specifically acknowledges that learning is encyclopedic, or in a circle, from the center to the periphery.

Even in antiquity, Hermes was considered a work of art. Authors such as Pliny, Cicero, and Quintilian compared Praxiteles to other sculptors like Pheidias and Polykleitos.²⁶ Diodorus Siculus said of Praxiteles that he “informed his marble figures with the passions of his soul.”²⁷ And someone who wrote in the style of Lucian refers to the greatness of Praxiteles’ art as a craftsman.²⁸ To regard Hermes as a work of art is not just a later convoluted sociohistorical process. Zuidervaart’s criticism here therefore appears to be based more on today’s attempts to discredit Western society than it is on the evidence from antiquity.

Furthermore, Zuidervaart has not properly analyzed Dooyeweerd’s arguments of individuality structures and *enkapsis*. He criticizes Dooyeweerd for “seeing art as a cultural thing wedded to a natural thing” (p. 49). That is a misstatement of Dooyeweerd’s view of *enkapsis*. The individuality structure that is produced by art is not two different things wedded together, but a new individuality structure altogether that incorporates other individuality structures. Dooyeweerd’s entire idea of individuality

²⁶ See Christine Mitchell Havelock: *The Aphrodite of Knidos and Her Successors. A Historical Review of the Female Nude in Greek Art* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1995). Havelock demonstrates that 2nd century B.C. variants of Aphrodite were derived from Praxiteles.

²⁷ Cited *Encyclopedia Britannica*, online at [<http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-9061218/Praxiteles>].

²⁸ Amores, attributed to Lucian, online at [http://penelope.uchicago.edu/~grout/encyclopaedia_romana/greece/hetairai/aphrodite.html]

“...we entered the temple. In the midst thereof sits the goddess--she's a most beautiful statue of Parian marble—arrogantly smiling a little as a grin parts her lips. Draped by no garment, all her beauty is uncovered and revealed, except in so far as she unobtrusively uses one hand to hide her private parts. So great was the power of the craftsman's art that the hard unyielding marble did justice to every limb.....The temple had a door on both sides for the benefit of those also who wish to have a good view of the goddess from behind, so that no part of her be left unadmired. It's easy therefor for people to enter by the other door and survey the beauty of her back. And so we decided to see all of the goddess and went round to the back of the precinct. Then, when the door had been opened by the woman responsible for keeping the keys, we were filled with an immediate wonder for the beauty we beheld.

structures has not been properly understood in reformational philosophy. This is largely due to the influence of Vollenhoven, who rejected the whole idea of individuality structures and *enkapsis*. This is likely due to his rejection of Dooyeweerd's Idea of individuation from Totality, and Vollenhoven's substitution of a more substantive view of temporal reality.

b) That emphasis on a work of art emphasizes product over process

Zuidervaart asks (p. 44), "Why examine a product rather than a process?" This comment is unfair for several reasons. First, Zuidervaart fails to understand the meaning of 'product.' A product is not necessarily an external thing, and it is certainly not a commodity as Zuidervaart argues. Our inner, intentional imagining is also a product. A product is that which is expressed within temporal reality. The expression may be internally, within our own mantle of functions or body. Or it may be expressed outwardly. And whatever is expressed is the result of a producer that stands outside of the temporal process, on a higher level. Dooyeweerd also uses the word 'reveal' [*openbaring*] in relation to such production. Man expresses, reveals himself by what is produced in the temporal world (See my article 'Imagination').

Second, Zuidervaart's comment is unfair because Dooyeweerd does devote extensive time to the process of acts of creative imagination. I believe that Zuidervaart's failure to acknowledge Dooyeweerd's idea of the supratemporal selfhood, which expresses itself within time, has caused a blurring of the distinction between acts (including the performance and appreciation of art), and aspects and individuality structures such as an art work. Zuidervaart is surely incorrect in his statement (p. 44) that Dooyeweerd's view of art banishes liturgical art, most movies and nearly all of folk and popular music. Zuidervaart himself correctly refers to Dooyeweerd's references to art that need to be actualized by way of performance. Dooyeweerd specifically says that not all works of art are objective things:

It would be incorrect to assume that all works of fine art display the structure of objective things. This will be obvious if we compare plastic types (*i.e.* painting, sculpture, wood carvings, *etc.*) with music, poetry and drama [...] ..artistic works of these types are always in need of a subjective actualization lacking the objective constancy essential to works of plastic art. Because of this state of affairs they give rise to a separate

kind of art, *viz.* that of *performance*, in which aesthetic objectification and actualization, though bound to the spirit and style of the work, remain in direct contact with the re-creating individual conception of the performing artist (*NC III*, 110).

Third, Zuidervaart's comment is unfair because the passages he chooses to emphasize deal with Dooyeweerd's discussion of the reproduction of a work of art within an enkaptically intertwined structure of various individuality structures, such as marble. In other words, the discussion relates to *plastic* types of art. Dooyeweerd's discussion here is not in the context of the inner imaginative process, nor in the context of a performance or event (which he also acknowledges as aesthetic), but in the context of the plastic dimension of our experience, and of individuality structures in particular. His discussion of Praxiteles' Hermes is in this context of how our formative [historical] work results in a new enkaptic individuality structure.²⁹

Zuidervaart criticizes Dooyeweerd's distinction between human and non-human as being merely different levels at which humans function as subjects (p. 47). But such a view of humanity based on levels of functioning is more indicative of Vollenhoven's ideas than of Dooyeweerd. For Dooyeweerd, man is distinguished by his supratemporal selfhood. Mere temporal reality, including the animal world, has no supratemporal selfhood. The very existence of temporal reality is in humanity as the supratemporal religious root (See my article 'Imagination').

3. reduction of artwork to a thing

There are two sub-arguments here:

- a) That the artwork is something like Heidegger's *Vorhandenes*
- b) Cultural critique

Let us examine these points.

²⁹ Dooyeweerd says that the two enkaptically intertwined structures should not be observable as two structures:

In such an enkaptic union there ought not to be any dualism observable between the natural and the aesthetically qualified structures [...] To the degree that the marble strikes us as a resistive natural material, not completely controlled by the artistic technique, the work of art is a failure, or at least lacking in perfection (*NC III*, 125).

a) *Vorhandenes*

Zuidervaart says (p. 39) that there is a tension in Dooyeweerd “between treating the work of art like a (natural) thing and recognizing that the entire realm of art is historical, cultural, and bound up with societal structures.” Zuidervaart compares his interpretation of Dooyeweerd’s view of “things” with what Heidegger referred to as inert ‘*Vorhandenes*.’

But Dooyeweerd never refers to art works in this way. He says, “The thing presented here *is the work of art*. A natural thing is not given at all in this structure” (NC III, 115). More importantly, Dooyeweerd does not refer to ‘natural’ things as inert ‘*Vorhandenes*.’ Dooyeweerd specifically *rejects* any view of reality as inert ‘*Vorhandenes*’!³⁰ Dooyeweerd says that Heidegger’s view of temporal reality as *Vorhandenes* rests on a failure to appreciate the dynamic character of reality, a failure to appreciate the *existence* of all created things as meaning, with no rest in themselves (*WdW* I, 79; *NC* I, 112). He criticizes Heidegger’s view of *Vorhandenes* as a blind and meaningless nature into which human existence (*Dasein*) is thrown (*WdW* II, 24; *NC* II, 22). And Dooyeweerd says that Heidegger knows only the transcendence of the temporal finite human “*Dasein*” above what Heidegger calls the ‘*Vorhandene*’ (the sensible things that are given), but that this is not an ideal transcendence above time itself (*WdW* II, 456; *NC* II, 525). In other words, Dooyeweerd rejects Heidegger’s temporalized view of the selfhood. Instead, Dooyeweerd emphasizes the supratemporal nature of the heart. Zuidervaart makes no mention of the supratemporal heart, which is such a key idea in Dooyeweerd’s philosophy, and which helps us to understand why Dooyeweerd rejects Heidegger’s views.

And Dooyeweerd certainly does not restrict his discussion of art to the context of “thing-structures,” most of them “natural,” (Zuidervaart, 39). This comment fails to appreciate Dooyeweerd’s view of natural things, whose potential functions are opened up in our perception and imagination. Dooyeweerd’s primary discussion of art is in the context of

³⁰ See Linked Glossary, entry for ‘*Vorhandenes*,’ online at [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/jgfriesen/Definitions/Vorhanden.html>].

this opened up aesthetic image. This opened up image is the expression of an individuality structure, but it is an expression of that structure in its opened form. Thus, the opened image is definitely not linked to the merely ‘natural’ thing. This opened, merely intentional image of the thing-structure, may or may not be reproduced in another enaptically intertwined individuality structure. Only in the event of such reproduction does the relation to a ‘natural’ individuality structure take place.

Indeed, this criticism by Zuidervaart is inconsistent with his fourth criticism, that Dooyeweerd reduces the thing to the subjective artistic conception. Zuidervaart says,

From a Heideggerian vantage point, Dooyeweerd reduces artworks to mere things, **even while he mistakenly privileges the intentionality** of the artist in the origin of the work of art (p. 38, my emphasis).

Zuidervaart cannot have it both ways—arguing that Dooyeweerd reduces art to a thing and then inconsistently arguing that Dooyeweerd gives priority to the inner conception. For Dooyeweerd, the inner (intentional) conception has priority. That artistic individuality structure may be performed or enacted, it may be symbolically represented in scores and symbols, or it may be reproduced in an enaptically intertwined new work.

Zuidervaart’s criticism that Dooyeweerd has reified the art work therefore seems to involve a more static view of “thingness” than Dooyeweerd’s own idea of individuality structures. It is more Vollenhoven's view of a thing that Zuidervaart seems to be attacking. It is Vollenhoven who denies that things restlessly refer beyond themselves, and Vollenhoven who has a dualistic and functionalistic view of the subject object relation, rejecting Dooyeweerd’s nondual and very dynamic intra-modal subject-object relation. Zuidervaart does not distinguish between the philosophies of Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven. Zuidervaart says,

Readers familiar with the ontology developed by the Dutch philosophers Herman Dooyeweerd and D.H.Th. Vollenhoven will recognize the term “predicative availability” as a modification of their notion of a “logical” (or “analytic”) “object-function.”³¹

³¹ Lambert Zuidervaart: *Artistic Truth: Aesthetics, Discourse, and Imaginative Disclosure* (Cambridge University Press, 2004).235 fn 18.

But Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven differed sharply in their ontology. They also disagreed in their understanding of the subject-object relation.³²

b) Cultural critique

Zuidervaart says that he wants to give a “strong and critical interpretation” that asks what Dooyeweerd’s philosophy implies for his social ontology. And yet Zuidervaart acknowledges that Dooyeweerd “breathes scarcely a word about art when he analyzes social structures in Part II.” So why does Zuidervaart believe that it is a “strong and critical” interpretation to look at the social implications of Dooyeweerd’s theories of art? Why is not the strongest interpretation one that makes sense of what Dooyeweerd does say, instead of that of which he “breathes scarcely a word?”

It seems to me that Zuidervaart’s “critical” attitude here depends on assumptions that are not shared by Dooyeweerd at all.³³ Far from being a strong interpretation of Dooyeweerd, it is a weak interpretation of Dooyeweerd, and one that falls into a historicistic interpretation of arts and aesthetic norms. For Zuidervaart seems to use ‘critical’ in the sense of a sociological theory that evaluates theories of art in terms of their relation to social structure. Although Zuidervaart does not mention it by name, a neo-Marxist analysis would be one type of such supposedly ‘critical’ analyses. And it is this kind of analysis that Zuidervaart seems to base his critique on. He says (p. 46):

Dooyeweerd treats the sociohistorically embedded structures of art as ahistorical laws of reality, and he tends to turn the complex and dynamic cultural realm of art into a structural-defined collection of artworks of various types.

What does he mean by ‘sociohistorically embedded’ if not sociohistorically determined? Is that not historicism in Dooyeweerd’s terms? And why would Zuidervaart refer to ahistorical laws of reality when Dooyeweerd specifically acknowledges that the

³² See my articles ‘Dialectic’ and ‘Imagination’ for a discussion of the radical differences in viewpoint between Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd regarding the subject-object relation.

³³ See also my discussion of Zuidervaart’s idea of “critical retrieval” of Dooyeweerd’s philosophy in my article “The religious dialectic revisited,” online at [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/aevum/Revisited.html>].

universally valid aesthetic norms are positivized differently depending on a given culture? Dooyeweerd says that there is a historical aspect of cultural forming, which is involved in any aesthetic work of art. The aesthetic norms that are positivized in this type of forming vary according to different cultures:

The aesthetic norms positivized in modern architecture, modern music, modern painting and belles letters, have a different concrete content form that of the early Renaissance, the High Middle Ages, or Greek antiquity, notwithstanding the invariability of the primary principles that have received their positive forms in them (*NC II*, 240).

Dooyeweerd does not view art as some kind of ideological superstructure based on a certain societal structure. Nor is it the opposite, where our Ideas of art determine the kind of society that we live in. I believe that what is troubling Zuidervaart is Dooyeweerd's idea of individuation from Totality. Works of art, as individuality structures, are such individuations. But they are only examples of individuations. The state and other social institutions are other examples of individuations from Totality. There is no doubt that some ideas of Totality can be used in a totalitarian way. But not all ideas of Totality are totalitarian, as I have shown in my article 'Totality.' It may be that Dooyeweerd's anti-empiricism is in some way incompatible with Locke's view of democracy, or with Rawls' theory of justice. But those points need to be argued much more stringently. And a comparison needs to be made of the pros and cons of various political points of view, and the views of the nature of man and of temporal reality upon which they are based. Zuidervaart may well have objections to Dooyeweerd's view of individuation, but if so, these objections are to an idea that is far more basic than Dooyeweerd's view of aesthetics. And if Zuidervaart rejects those basic ideas, then he is not really revising Dooyeweerd's philosophy, but proposing something very different.³⁴

³⁴ See Sander Griffioen's recent review of Zuidervaart's book *Artistic Truth in Philosophia Reformata* 71 (2006) 202-205. Griffioen criticizes Zuidervaart's work as being limited by postmetaphysical critique. Griffioen asks whether art does not become too involved in the battle for a better society:

Terug nu naar mijn bedenking. Mijn zorg is of in dit alles de creatuurlijke verbanden waarin kunst staat in volle breedte en diepte aan de orde kunnen komen. Is er toch niet een stukje van de postmetafysica kritiek die beperkend werkt? Raakt kunst niet te zeer geïnvolveerd in de strijd voor

A further source of Zuidervaart's critique here is his rejection of the historical modality. Zuidervaart says (p. 53 fn 40) that he objects to the notion of an historical modality, which de-historicizes history and historiography. But Dooyeweerd defends the historical modality on the grounds that it is essential to avoid the very type of historicizing view that Zuidervaart is putting forward! I suggest that Dooyeweerd's idea of the historical modality cannot be understood apart from his idea of the supratemporal selfhood. For our acts come from out of that selfhood, and are expressed in time, in all modalities, including the historical. That is why the historical modality cannot be confused with all events that occur.³⁵

4. reduction of the thingly artwork to the artist's aesthetic conception

This fourth criticism by Zuidervaart is rather peculiar and inconsistent with his previous criticism. If the artist's aesthetic conception is being "privileged," what is it that is not being so privileged? If "Dooyeweerd's account of the artwork's "natural" substructure privileges the artist's intention," (p. 50), does that not mean that Zuidervaart would prefer to speak in terms of the natural substructure? Is he not seeking for a more objective work of art as opposed to a subjectivistic work of art? Does that not land him back in the problem of the "*Vorhandenes?*" To understand Zuidervaart's objection here, we need to break it down into two sub-arguments

- a) subjectivism and the subject-object relation
- b) Zuidervaart's de-personalized view of art

Let us look at these in more detail.

a) subjectivism and the subject-object relation

I think that Zuidervaart's real concern here is subjectivism. This is found for example on p. 52, where Zuidervaart refers to Dooyeweerd's subjectivizing account of the artworks's

een betere samenleving? En krijgt de onbevangenheid die in creativiteit ook meekomt zo wel voldoende ruimte?

³⁵ See further discussion in my article 'Imagination.' And in his 1964 Lecture, Dooyeweerd again emphasizes that reformational philosophers have not understood his distinction between the historical aspect and historical events that function in all the aspects.

aesthetic function. He says that Dooyeweerd regards the individuality of the work of art as grounded in the subjectivity of the artist. But Dooyeweerd specifically denies that he is absolutizing the aesthetic aspect!

A truly *Christian* aesthetics can never absolutize the individual aesthetic subjectivity and make it a sovereign creator of beauty not bound by norms of the Divine world-order (*NC II*, 128).

Zuidervaart makes a similar confusion when he says that the aesthetic object-function that qualifies the statue as an artwork is itself the depiction of an intentional object of the artist's previously imaginatively-founded aesthetic conception (Zuidervaart, 52). The actual quote from Dooyeweerd is:

The aesthetic object-function of the work of art is only the aesthetic representation, in the objectively-aesthetically qualified structure of a real thing, of a merely intentional aesthetic object of the fantasy of the artist. Nevertheless, this intentional object can only function in an intentional subject-object relation of aesthetic modality. And so its aesthetical objectification in the sculpture is an implicit objectification of this intentional relation. It is not, however, an objectification of the aesthetic subject-function *as such*, *i.e.* apart from a particular intentional relation to the Hermes, as an object of Praxiteles' aesthetic fantasy (*NC III*, 116).

Zuidervaart confuses the reproduction of the artist's aesthetic fantasy with the functioning of an individuality structure in the aesthetic aspect. The artist has a subjective aesthetic fantasy, which is then expressed in an aesthetically qualified individuality structure. This is so whether it is reproduced again in a medium like marble or not. If it is reproduced, then there is another individuality structure, which is qualified by its functioning in the aesthetic aspect, but is enkaptically intertwined with other individuality structures that are qualified by their functions in other aspects (such as marble's qualification in the physical aspect). Zuidervaart seems to fail to understand the nature of individuality structures, the relation of *enkapsis*, and the subject-object relation.

The artist subjectively imagines the relations among the aspects, and forms the opened-up sensory image. The artist thus *finds*, but does not *invent* the individuality structure, and its individuality is not based in any subjectivity, but in the individuation from out of Totality.

And Zuidervaart mischaracterizes Dooyeweerd when he says (p. 53) that Dooyeweerd refers to

...the isolated artist, alone with his or her consciousness, and facing inert natural material to be rendered expressive of the artist's aesthetic conception. That is not how the making of art occurs.

First, this view of inert material is the same objection that Zuidervaart has made to the idea of things as *Vorhandene*. It is not Dooyeweerd's view. Individuality structures, even those that are qualified by the 'natural' aspects, are inert only in the sense that their potential normative aspects have not yet been opened in the cultural opening process. And Dooyeweerd's idea of 'expression' is related to the idea of revelation, of our acting from out of the supratemporal and expressing ourselves in the temporal. That is very different from using inert material for technical purposes.

Furthermore, Dooyeweerd does not have the idea of the individual human being as isolated. We are all connected in the religious root, and we all display the image of God. It is because we all share this same root image that love for God necessarily implies love for neighbour. The idea of the isolated human being is an Enlightenment view of human nature that Dooyeweerd rejects.

Zuidervaart confuses Dooyeweerd's subject-object relation, which occurs intra-modally, with sociohistorical context. Zuidervaart says that Dooyeweerd never gets around to discussing artworks in the context of the subject-subject relation. But 'subject-subject' is a term of Vollenhoven's. And Vollenhoven denied the intra-modal subject-object relation, so that type of thinking can only lead to a wrong interpretation of Dooyeweerd. That is not to say that Dooyeweerd does not deal with social and historical aspects. They are part of the modal aspects given in time, and part of the aspects that are unfolded in the cultural unfolding process. And Dooyeweerd certainly refers to the way that an observer must interact and reproduce the aesthetic act in observing the work.

We should try to understand what Dooyeweerd is saying, in a way that makes sense of his statements. We should not presume to know his philosophy better than he did. So where is Zuidervaart making his mistake? In my view, Zuidervaart misunderstands the distinction between the aesthetic aspect, and the functioning of an artwork within the modal aspects. The modal aspects are different from functions of individuality structures

in the aspects.³⁶ In Dooyeweerd's view, the artist's aesthetic conception is an expression of the opened individuality structure, which then *functions* in the aesthetic *aspect*. And yet Zuidervaart interprets the aspects in a functionalistic way. One example of this confusion is Zuidervaart's statement that Dooyeweerd "inserts an intentional object between the artist's aesthetic conception and the artwork's aesthetic object-function." This comment fails to understand the nature of the subject-object relation, and the difference between aspects and functions. Dooyeweerd distinguishes between the internal structural totality of a thing, and its expression in the sensory image. Dooyeweerd says,

The internal structural totality of a thing, this structural whole only finds *expression* in the sensory image, without being identical with it (NC III, 136).

As an example, Dooyeweerd refers to the style of a chair, which cannot be changed without affecting its identity.

In my view, it is precisely Dooyeweerd's ideas that overcome both subjectivism as well as objectivism in the sense of the '*Vorhandenes*,' since he overcomes the subject-object dualism.

In my article 'Imagination,' I discuss Dooyeweerd's view of the subject-object relation in detail, showing how he overcomes the traditional dualism between subject and object. Even in the act of perception, there is an interaction between viewer and viewed. I show how Dooyeweerd's ideas of perception are very different from Kant's division between a manifold of sensations and a form imposed by reason. And Dooyeweerd's view of imagination also differs from Kant's view, in that he expressly says that Kant's view of imagination is still dependent on reason. Zuidervaart's statement that Dooyeweerd "presents a conception of the artwork that reconfigures the Kantian divisions discarded by Heidegger" (p. 37) therefore appears to miss the radical difference not only between Dooyeweerd and Heidegger, but between Dooyeweerd and Kant.

³⁶ See Dooyeweerd's last article "*Gegenstandsrelatie*." And see my Glossary entries for 'aspect' and 'function': online at [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/jgfriesen/Definitions/aspects.html>] and [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/jgfriesen/Definitions/Function.html>].

b) Zuidervaart's de-personalized view of art

Zuidervaart says that he wants to have a more de-personalized conception of artistic production (p. 48). It is unclear what he means by this. He says that he wants to break with the modernist emphasis on “artwork” and “autonomy” and that the idea of “work of art” “serves to shift the emphasis in art making and art enjoyment from process to product, from occasion to commodity, and from use to status” (p. 46, fn24). Some of these points have already been addressed. Dooyeweerd does not eliminate the importance of the *process* of making art. On the contrary, he develops a detailed explanation of the processes and acts of perception and of imagination (See my article ‘Imagination’). He does not restrict his view of art to that which has been reproduced in enkaptic interlacement with other individuality structures, but clearly allows for art works that need to be performed. And from the observer’s perspective, Dooyeweerd also emphasizes the importance of participating in reproducing the aesthetic understanding. Nor can Dooyeweerd be accused of turning art into a commodity, something that is an inert object, as in Heidegger’s view of *Vorhandenes*. Dooyeweerd’s view of the individuality structure of a work of art is much richer than that. Nor does the fact that an external individuality structure can be bought and sold mean that it is such an inert commodity. Or is Zuidervaart suggesting that Praxiteles was not compensated for his labour in producing the Hermes?

If by putting forward a de-personalized view of art, Zuidervaart is merely expressing his opposition to subjectivistic theories of art, then I would agree, and I believe that Dooyeweerd’s philosophy is helpful. It is helpful because (1) its view of the self is not caught within a dualistic subject-object dichotomy, since the supratemporal selfhood, as redeemed in Christ, is the root of all temporal existence, which does not exist apart from the selfhood (2) its view of the intra-modal subject-object relation, in perception as well as artistic creation, provides for a real interaction between our subjective selfhood and temporal individuality structures, including our own mantle of functions and (3) Dooyeweerd’s view of imagination, in referring to modal aspects that are the same aspects as the ones in which the external world functions, bridges the subjectivistic problem of linking fantasy to the external world.

And this last point is perhaps the key to understanding Zuidervaart's critique of Dooyeweerd. For the title of his article refers to 'fantastic things.' He seems to have a problem that our imaginative fantasy will be unconnected with structures in temporal reality, and that it must of necessity be subjectivistic.³⁷

Zuidervaart's concern with subjectivism is also shown in his discussion of the impasse that he sees in today's philosophy of aesthetics.

What is false...dialectic.

But Dooyeweerd emphasizes the correspondence between inner and outer, between our subjective imaginative fantasy and the outer world. This is given by God's law or Wisdom, which is the basis for the modal aspects in both the inner and outer world, and for the creative and imaginative opening process of reality. This breaks the problem of subjectivism.

Another clue to what Zuidervaart means by a 'de-personalized' view of art is found in his reference (p. 53) to Heidegger's view that neither artist nor artwork is the sole origin of the other. Art is the origin of both. Is this Zuidervaart's preferred view? That view seems to be an absolutization of the aesthetic aspect. Zuidervaart goes on to say that neither artist nor artwork could exist were it not for the categorial and institutional framework of art, itself the achievement of a long historical dialectic. Again, although the historical aspect is certainly the founding sphere for artistic activity, to argue that art and the artist could not exist apart from an historical dialectic seems to ignore Dooyeweerd's crucial view that the aesthetic is part of God's law and Wisdom, something that is part of the "givenness" of our reality, and not something that is invented by us. From Dooyeweerd's viewpoint, Zuidervaart's argument must be dismissed as an example of an historicistic view.

And if by 'de-personalized,' Zuidervaart is putting forward a view that would allow for non-intentional art, for "found art," the "happenings" of the 1960's, or the chance art of

³⁷ Perhaps this is a result of the influence of Seerveld on Zuidervaart. As we have seen, Seerveld also refers to aesthetic objects in terms of fantasy, in the sense of pretending as-if.

John Cage, then this would be contrary to what Dooyeweerd is saying. For Dooyeweerd, all cultural formation, including artistic pursuits, is based on an intentional and free historical forming. Such deliberate forming is different from the instinctual patterns of animals, or of nature in which we also see an aspect of beauty. So Zuidervaart is certainly wrong when he says that Dooyeweerd lumps artworks in with rocks, trees, cats, bird's nests. For Dooyeweerd, artworks have been formed by humans, in a different way, by free cultural forming. True cultural forming is in accordance with imagination, which relies on our seeing into God's modal aspects, which are refractions of God's Wisdom.³⁸ While this may be a de-emphasis on personal, subjectivistic art in the sense of the Enlightenment, it is at the same time the most personal view of art, since it relates all art to the Person of Christ, who is the fulfillment of the image of God.

Conclusion

Reformational philosophy has not understood Dooyeweerd's ideas on imagination. As a consequence, Dooyeweerd's ideas of perception, aesthetic imagination and theoretical thought have also been misunderstood. This is particularly so insofar as reformational philosophy follows the philosophy of Vollenhoven, who did not accept the importance of imagination, and who also rejected Dooyeweerd's other key ideas, including those of the supratemporal selfhood, individuality structures, *enkapsis*, and even Dooyeweerd's meaning of 'modal aspect.'

Zuidervaart's critique of Dooyeweerd is related to his failure to distinguish Dooyeweerd's philosophy from that of Vollenhoven. As a result, Zuidervaart has not properly understood Dooyeweerd's philosophy of aesthetics. This includes a failure to consider what Dooyeweerd himself says about imagination as an act that proceeds from

³⁸ Faivre says that Baader compares the genesis of work of art to the engendering of Sophia within divinity. The artist first has an idea that presents himself to him, mute as if in a mirror. He must elevate this figure to the power (*potenzieren*), strengthen this figure magically, so that it retains its natural powers, no longer detached from nature, so that it can become living Word, creator. Antoine Faivre, *Philosophie de la Nature: Physique sacrée et théosophie XVIII-XIX siècle* (Paris: albin Michel, 1996), 106, citing Baader, *Werke* III, 378.

out of our supratemporal selfhood, the role of imagination in perception, the nature of individuality structures and of their enkaptic interlacements. Had he separated Dooyeweerd's philosophy from Vollenhoven's philosophy, Zuidervaart might have reached different conclusions. Of course, Zuidervaart still might have rejected Dooyeweerd's aesthetics. But the arguments used to understand and ultimately accept or reject Dooyeweerd's aesthetics would necessarily be different from those that Zuidervaart has advanced in this article.

Dooyeweerd's philosophy of aesthetics depends on his very powerful ideas on imagination, by which we reflect God's Wisdom, and so open up temporal creation in a way that unfolds its potentialities. And these potentialities are not mere static Ideas in the sense of 'eidos,' but they are endlessly dynamic within God's even more limitless and dynamic Wisdom. And our artistic creation, like other acts of opening up the temporal world, help to make that world real, to fulfill it and to redeem it.

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