

**INTRODUCTION BY THE EDITOR IN CHIEF,
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The 38th volume of *Philosophia Reformata* bears a very special character. For the collection of essays appearing in it have all been contributed in honour of Prof. Dr. DIRK HENDRIK THEODOOR VOLLENHOVEN to commemorate the 80th birthday which he celebrated on the 1st of November, 1972. This tribute to the 80 years old cofounder of the reformational philosophical trend of thought testifies to the deeply felt gratitude of the contributors for all that this master has given them both in his rich and oftentimes original reformative life-work and in his inspiring personal contact with them.

That I have been asked to contribute an introduction to this volume was to be more or less expected. The close spiritual contact that my brother in law and I enjoyed together during the years that both of us resided in The Hague turned out, after all, to have been of particular significance for the reformational turn in the development of our philosophical thought which was to result in a break with the traditional scholastic mode of thought in both philosophy and theology.

During the first years that followed the completion of our university training we were still in search of the new direction which our thought would have to take in disengaging ourselves from the scholastic ways of thought. During this transitional period the young Vollenhoven was philosophically better equipped than I was. For while I, after completing my studies in law, still needed to undertake my philosophical formation on my own authority, Vollenhoven had not only successfully completed a course of theological studies leading to a candidate's degree but had also passed his doctoral examination in philosophy. Furthermore, in 1918 he had obtained a doctor's degree (*cum laude*) on account of the defense of a dissertation about 'The Philosophy of Mathematics from a Theistic Point of View'. Originally he had also intended to concern himself in his thesis with the fundamentals of modern natural science, but later he abandoned this plan, rightly so I think, for it could not but have taken him far beyond the limits of the time-span he had set aside for the completion of the dissertation. His thesis was an enormous achievement. Although his university education did certainly not lead him in this direction, he not only demonstrated an up to date acquaintance with the development of modern mathematics and logistics, but also presented an extremely penetrating critique of the philosophic foundations of the main directions taken in modern mathematics; especially his critique of Cantor's theory of transfinite numbers and of Brouwer's intuitionism have gained considerable attention.

But the thetical part of his dissertation could hardly be said to follow the reformative line of thought that was to be characteristic of his later philosophical publications. For the 'theistic' philosophy of mathematics, whose

main traits he developed in the thetical part of his book, still proved to be quite bound to the traditional metaphysics of realist scholasticism. It was only later that Vollenhoven was to discover the unbiblical character of the religious background on which this metaphysics depended. Nevertheless, this early work of Vollenhoven, which dates from the pre-reformational phase of his philosophical thought, remains very important since its critique of the dominant trends in modern mathematics contains numerous worthwhile considerations meriting our attention even today.

It is tempting to raise the question why Vollenhoven (who had, after all, received his university training in the theological faculty and the faculty of letters) besides being highly interested in the history of philosophy, continued to be so very much attracted to logic and the epistemology of the so-called exact sciences. Undoubtedly it was commonly supposed that these areas especially gave support to the idea of the autonomy of scientific thought suggesting the latter's independence from religion and faith. For those who rejected this suggested autonomy, that might be reason enough to pay particularly close attention to the logic and epistemology of modern mathematics and to try to develop an encyclopedic philosophical theory of the sciences leading to a critical investigation into the place and value of mathematics and the natural sciences from a reformational christian point of view. However, I think that Vollenhoven, by personal talent and disposition, had a particular affinity for exact thought which betrayed itself even in his subsequent elaboration of a problem-historical method which he developed as a tool for the discovery of historical interrelationships within the history of philosophy. For Vollenhoven did call this method the *consistent* problem-historical method, thereby indicating that he intended to carry through this method in its logical consequences. Perhaps this involved a certain risk of overestimating the part that logic is to play in historical research. That may somewhat explain why the initial reception of the first volume of Vollenhoven's monumental work 'History of Philosophy' (published in 1950) was often so sharply critical with respect to his method; some critics even went so far as to suggest that this method equates the history of philosophy with a logical system for the classification of the various possible trends in philosophical thought. Such criticism was certainly far from doing justice to this important work. For its primary intention was not to provide a logical classification of thinkers according to preconceived distinctions; rather, it wished to highlight historical interrelations present in the development of philosophical problematics that had hitherto remained unnoticed. And it is precisely here that Vollenhoven's method proved to be very fruitful; still, the schematic manner in which thinkers were classified could occasion criticism that was not altogether unfounded.

When we began to have our regular discussions in The Hague, Vollenhoven (who had married my sister Hermine directly after his having acquired a doctor's degree in philosophy), had become pastor of the Reformed (Geref.) church in The Hague in May of 1921, after having first served the congregation of Oostkapelle (in Zeeland) for some years as their pastor. Meanwhile I had pursued an administrative-legal career after having received my doctor's degree in jurisprudence. However, in 1922 I received and accepted an appointment as assistant-director of the 'Dr. Abraham Kuypersstichting'. I must apologize for going into this event a moment, but since it

throws light upon my cooperation with my brother in law during our stay in The Hague, I must do so. The Kuyperfoundation had been established after the death of the great theologian, statesman, and popular leader Dr. Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920). Colijn and Idenburg, its spiritual fathers, had located the foundation in Kuyper's former home in the Kanaalstraat (later called Dr. Kuyperstraat) in The Hague. The foundation, though sharply distinguished from the party's office, was closely affiliated with the anti-revolutionary political party which, after the death of its founder Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer, had been made by Kuyper into the most well-organized party in the Netherlands. Kuyper had also given it an inspiring spiritual foundation by reawakening Calvinism (which had nearly passed into oblivion as a cultural power) as an all-embracing world and life view. In the light of the Scriptures this neo-Calvinism was to posit its reformational principles over against those of Roman Catholicism and modern Humanism in every area of life. The Kuyper foundation was to proceed in Kuyper's neo-Calvinistic line. Mr. H. Colijn was appointed as the foundation's director in order to indicate its intimate ties with the Anti-Revolutionary Party whose acknowledged leader he had become since Kuyper's death.

The task of the Kuyperfoundation was to provide the party's leaders as well as its members with instructive advice as to the application of anti-revolutionary principles to current political and juridical questions. There was an awareness, however, of the need to think through the anti-revolutionary theory of state more thoroughly and to elaborate it in the neo-Calvinistic sense intended by Kuyper. To that end the statutes contained a clause providing for a special chair in this theory of state at the Free University in Amsterdam which Kuyper had founded.

Kuyper's neo-Calvinist conception of anti-revolutionary politics, however, had after all run aground in the scholastic dualism of nature and grace leaving the 'natural sphere' of life and knowledge to the natural light of human reason; this dualism could no more allow of a christian idea of the state than it could allow of a truly reformational christian philosophy. Moreover, this dualism directly conflicted with Kuyper's own oft-quoted statement appearing in the impressive speech which he delivered in 1880 at the opening of the Free University in Amsterdam: „There is not an inch in the whole of temporal life of which Christ, as Lord of all men, does not say 'mine'. "Although I did not gain full clarity as to the source of this conflict in Kuyper's thought until some years later, I had been convinced already as early as 1922 that Kuyper's deepest intentions had been voiced in the statement referred to above.

The board of the Kuyperfoundation, most generously, gave me complete liberty to implement the tasks described in the programme that I had planned. This meant that I was able to devote the better part of my time to the study of philosophical theories of law and state as well as to the study of social philosophies in both their historical development and in their present forms. This research, which naturally led me ever more deeply into the study of universal philosophical systems and their historical interrelatedness, was necessary to come to an understanding of Kuyper's neo-calvinistic conception of anti-revolutionary politics in contrast with other political views. Such a study alone, moreover, could clarify the nature of the conflict in Kuyper's thought. Through it I learned to see that the philosophical 'Wissen-

schaftslehre' which Kuyper had developed in the first volume of his Encyclopedia of Sacred Theology (Encyclopedie der Heilige Godgeleerdheid) was not, as I had previously assumed, in line with his reformational basic conception of Calvinism as world and life view but, instead, opposed its consistent elaboration.

My brother in law, *Vollenhoven*, had come to the same conclusion in his own way, as I was soon pleased to discover. Therefore our discussions in The Hague centered on the necessity of a reformational epistemology and ontology that would be able to match itself against both the neo-thomism dominant in reformed scholasticism and the Humanistic neo-kantianism which still dominated epistemological theories during the twenties. We were also agreed that a veritable reformation of philosophy would have to be understood in the spirit of Kuyper's basic conception of Calvinism as a world and life view that was to be clearly distinguishable from both the Roman Catholic and the Humanist ones. In that conception of Kuyper, the principle of the internal sphere-sovereignty of the various areas of life, which principle was founded in their mutually irreducible proper inner nature and their own peculiar internal law as determined by God the Creator's sovereign will, was essential. Kuyper himself never did think this conception through philosophically, as is sufficiently clear from the fact that he never indicated a methodical criterion for the determination of what he understood by 'spheres of life sovereign in their own area'. Hence one may find several different enumerations of spheres in Kuyper's works where the most heterogeneous matters are mentioned at random, for example: 'nature', the human person and his conscience, individualized societal communities like the family, the state, the church, the business-firm, autonomous parts of the state like municipalities and provinces, and also spheres which in the 'philosophy of the cosmonomic idea' are referred to as 'modal aspects of the human horizon of experience', like the logical sphere, the ethical, the aesthetic, and the sphere of faith. In consequence of this unordered and inexact conception of sphere-sovereignty, all insight into the mutual order and coherence of the modal aspectual spheres (a prerequisite for the attainment of insight into their internal structural principles) could not but be lacking.

Nevertheless the basic idea of Kuyper's conception has had a directive significance for the reformational philosophy as first developed in my *'De wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee'* (The Philosophy of the Cosmonomic Idea), the three volumes of which were published in 1935 and 1936 and in the later amplified and revised English edition of this work entitled *'A New Critique of Theoretical Thought'* (2nd printing in 1966). The importance of that directive significance can hardly be overrated. For Kuyper had given his conception of sphere-sovereignty profound biblically religious anchorage in relating it to God's absolute sovereignty over all that He had created *after its inner nature* in subjection to His law. This law finds its unity of Origin in God the Creator's will and, everywhere in creation, imposes its limits upon temporal reality. In the first place it establishes the absolute limit of being between the Creator, Who is *not*, and the creature which is *subject* to the law. This is by no means to imply that God's absolute sovereignty over everything which He created may be conceived of as despotic arbitrariness in the sense of Occam's *potestas Dei absoluta*. For such despotism would amount to the negation of all law and order and could therefore never be

the origin of laws which God upholds for the whole of his creation. Therefore Calvin observes: „Deus legibus solutus, sed non exlex”. The nominalistic conception of God’s creative sovereignty is *antinomic* in character (against law). The biblical conception is *cosmonomic* (everything created is subjected to law).

Furthermore God has implanted in every creaturely sphere of life an internal law of life; such a law’s area of validity is limited by the intrinsic nature of the sphere concerned. It was this richly variegated, and biblically founded conception of the unity of God’s law within the rich diversity of laws peculiar to the various spheres of life that induced Kuyper to passionately choose position over against every attempted erasure of the limits which God had established in His creation and over against the uniformity of a world and life view that was only constructed at the very expense of the rich diversity and characteristic law-conformity of life’s spheres.

So it is understandable that the newly arising reformational philosophy could not accept an analogical notion of being, comprising both God and the creature, as its basic philosophical idea (an idea as is to be found in Thomistic scholasticism), but that it, instead, would only acknowledge a biblically anchored idea of law and its correlate, the creaturely *subjectum*, as its basic philosophical idea. For such an idea alone can maintain and acknowledge the absolute boundary distinguishing the creature (as law-bound) from the being of God (not so bound), and binds philosophical thinking to the limits which God has established for it in His law, thus restricting philosophical thought to the limits given with the human horizon of experience and thought. This horizon, consequently, must itself be a structural law determinative of the human character of the world of thought and experience. The Scriptures teach us throughout that human nature has been provided with a root-unity pregnantly called the ‘heart’ of human existence. Out of the heart as the radix or root-unity of human existence are “the issues of life” as the Old Testament book of Ecclesiastes tells us expressly. It is here that man becomes aware of himself, so that he knows himself to be an *I*, an *ego*, (the central and individual concentration-point of his entire temporal existence within the diversity of the spheres of human life). But it is here too that man becomes aware of God. Therefore Calvin, at the beginning of his *Institutio Religionis Christianae*, observes that man’s self-knowledge is dependent on his knowledge of God, since man is created in God’s image. The human ego is no self-sufficient entity, no metaphysical ‘substance’ which “nullia alia re indiget ad existendum” according to Descartes’ definition. It is nothing by itself; that is to say, it is nothing apart from the three central relations in which it has been placed by God, viz. the religious relation of dependence upon its Creator, the central relation to the alter ego of his fellow man and the central relation to the world in which God has placed man. The inexhaustible diversity given with the latter relation as disclosed within cosmic time, must find its creaturely root-unity in the heart of man. And since God has placed all of creaturely reality under His law, the rich diversity of law-spheres in which God’s law is refracted within cosmic time also finds its religious root-unity in the central love-commandment that is directed to man’s heart: Love God above all, and your neighbour, who, like you, bears God’s image, as yourself. For God’s law and the creaturely subject subjected to it are correlate. No law without

a creaturely subject subjected to it, and no creaturely subject without law. This biblical conception of the heart as the religious radical unity of human existence, and of the central love-commandment as the radical unity of the manifold richness of the law-spheres in which God's law discloses itself in the various spheres of life, had been lost in scholastic philosophy and theology. According to the traditional scholastic conception man is a substance composed of two incomplete substances that complement each other, a material mortal body and an immortal rational soul that, as such, was taken to be the 'substantial form' of the material body. The central position within human nature, according to this conception, was occupied by the intellect or conceptual theoretical thought-activity. This position derived from Aristotle's metaphysical ontology. Aristotle, just like his master Plato, had attributed divine character to philosophical theoretical activity of thought, viewing it as an activity entirely independent of the material human body. This philosophical view of man, if for no other reason, could not possibly make room for the biblical conception of the heart as religious radical unity of the *whole* of human existence. Aristotle identified the Godhead himself with pure theoretical activity of thought which, in blessed contemplation reflects upon itself alone (noësis noëseōs). Here again the truth of Calvin's statement referred to above becomes apparent: that self-knowledge depends on knowledge of God also holds good for apostate self-knowledge and knowledge of God.

It was Abraham Kuyper who made a radical break with the traditional Aristotelian-scholastic view of man (which in his major theological works he had himself still accepted) through the rediscovery of the biblical revelation of the heart as religious centre and root-unity of man's entire existence. In his famous Stone-lectures on Calvinism, which he presented at Princeton University in 1898, Kuyper brought this biblical radical view into direct relation with his impressive speech on sphere-sovereignty as delivered at the occasion of the opening of the Free University on the 20th of October, 1880. In it he had developed his view of the rich diversity and peculiar law-conformity of life's spheres. From then on, the biblically reformational line of development in Kuyper's thought began to mark itself off against the scholastic one (dominated by the dualistic motive of nature and grace) ever more clearly.

However, how was this reformational line to find adequate expression in philosophy? First of all it had to be clearly recognized that the rediscovery of the religious root-unity of human existence had to lead to a radical turn in philosophical anthropology and cosmology. The need for such a turn could only be demonstrated by way of an enquiry into the structure of the human horizon of thought and experience. This horizon appeared to be perspectival in character. That is to say that man's experiential world, as it discloses itself within cosmic time in its great variety of modal aspects, or fundamental modes of experience (which do not determine the concrete what, but only the how, the *modus quo*, of human experience and which express their mutual irreducibility, their indissoluble mutual coherence and their place within the cosmic order of time in their modal structure) is as it were radioscoped by the central religious sphere. In its turn the multi-modal dimension of the human horizon of experience throws light upon the inexhaustible diversity of individuality-structures in which things, events, and

concrete societal relationships are realized within this horizon. It appeared also that such realization could take place only within an extremely complex system of interlacements of the internal structural principle determining the proper irreducible character of one individual whole with the internal structural principles of individual things, events, or societal relationships of a different nature. Through such interlacements an individual whole acquires so-called enkaptic functions in individual wholes of a different nature, which functions do not fall within the typical lawsphere of its own internal structural principle. A matrimonial community, for instance, has an enkaptic civil function within the state.

In principle, individual realities function in all of the modal aspects of the human world of experience as given within the cosmic order of time, and they do so either in subject-functions or in object-functions (the latter only occurring within subject-object relations). But in their internal structure of individuality these modal functions are grouped in a typical manner and are successively individualized to form an individual whole. This typical groupage of modal aspect-functions does, of course, leave the general order in which the aspects appear intact. The groupage, however, awards a typically leading role within the individual whole to one of these individualized functions. Hence the other functions proper to the internal sphere of the individuality-structure concerned, although they fully retain their irreducible modal structure, nevertheless acquire an orientation upon the leading function. Therefore this function is also called the internal guiding or qualifying function of the individual whole. Whenever the leading function's type of individuality appears to be typically founded in that of a function preceding it in modal order, this earlier function is called the typical foundational function of the whole. And so the whole multi-modal dimension of the human horizon of experience indeed proved to be foundational to the so-called plastic dimension of the individuality-structures and their respective variable interlacements. Distinguishing between these dimensions then indeed could serve to order Kuyper's conception of sphere-sovereignty which was as yet somewhat haphazard, not yet having been philosophically thought through. Therefore the discovery of the modal dimension of the human horizon of experience may indeed be called a landmark in the development of a reformational philosophy that, for the time being (in line with Kuyper's conception of neo-Calvinism as world and life view) received the name of "Calvinistic" philosophy.

Till now the philosophy of the cosmonomic idea has discovered fifteen mutually irreducible modal aspects, viz. that of arithmetically determined quantity, the spatial (in the original sense of static continuous extension in dimensions), the kinematic, the mode of energetistic working, the biotic or organic sphere of life, the sensitive sphere of feeling and sensory perception, the logical sphere of the analytic mode of distinguishing, the cultural-historical sphere, the sphere of symbolical signification and interpretative significance of symbols, the sphere of social intercourse with its norms of decency, deference, politeness, fashion, etc., the economical, the aesthetic, the juridical, the ethical and the pistic sphere of faith-certainty in its relation to divine revelation. Each of these modal (aspect-) spheres has a modal structure whose irreducibility is guaranteed by its meaning-nucleus and whose coherence with the other modal aspects is expressed by a

series of analogical meaning-moments. These analogical moments either refer back to the meaning-nuclei of aspects preceding that in which they occur, or they refer ahead to the meaning-nuclei of those aspects that appear later in the order of cosmic time. The philosophy of the cosmonomic idea calls the former kind of analogies retrocipations, while the latter kind are called anticipations. These analogical moments, however remain qualified by the modal meaning-nucleus of their own meaning-structure. They do not take on the original meaning of those modal aspects to which they refer. The aspect of numerical quantity, obviously, contains no retrocipations for lack of a preceding modal aspect, while the pistical aspect is without modal anticipatory meaning-moments since it is the terminal aspect in the modal order.

Along these lines then, the young reformational philosophy gradually attained to systematical elaboration. Meanwhile this philosophy was still hard-pressed to defend its very right of existence over against the dogma of the autonomy of theoretical philosophical thought, a dogma that, prior to W.W. II, had hardly been contested. It was still generally assumed that theoretical thought should proceed independently of presuppositions of faith and religion. In fact, any philosophy's non-acceptance of this dogma resulted in its disqualification as being of unscientific character.

Facing this situation the philosophy of the cosmonomic idea developed a radical transcendental critique of the theoretical attitude of thought and experience. This critique began with an inquiry into the intentional structure of this attitude to see whether its pretended autonomy really results from its inner nature. This critical examination led to the discovery of three preliminary questions which must always, whether implicitly or explicitly, be answered wherever philosophical enquiry takes place since the latter cannot start without answering them. These questions concern the Origin, the central point of reference, and the mutual relationship and coherence of the logical and the non-logical aspects of the human horizon of experience which, in our theoretical thought, are set apart and over against each other. The answer to these three transcendental limiting questions is to be found in the threefold transcendental basic idea underlying philosophical thought, an idea which indeed appears to be dependent on a communal religious ground-motive operative in the heart of human existence as a central spiritual motive power. In its transcendental critique of theoretical philosophical thought the philosophy of the cosmonomic idea has discovered and called attention to three religious ground-motives, each of which has exercised a dominant influence in western philosophy, namely: the Greek form-matter motive, the scholastic christian motive of nature-grace, and the modern humanist motive of nature (control over it) and freedom (autonomous human personality). These motives also explain the different ways in which the dogma of the autonomy of philosophical thought has been understood. These differences made it sufficiently clear that the current opinion, as though the idea of the autonomy of theoretical thought were simply evident from the very character of scientific thought, was not tenable.

The three religious ground-motives mentioned above were of an unbiblical dualistic nature since each of them involved two mutually irreconcilable motives opposed to each other in a religiously anti-thetical way. Since this antithesis is of a supra-theoretical rather than theoretical nature, revealing

itself in the central religious starting-point of philosophical thought, it is not possible to resolve it by means of theoretical synthesis in a dialectical philosophical way of thinking. As long as thought continues to be gripped by a dualistic ground-motive, Proudhon's observation concerning Hegel's dialectic will be quite applicable to it: "L'antinomie ne se résout pas" (The antinomy is unresolvable). Since a veritable religious synthesis of the two antithetical motives is impossible without destroying their original meaning, primacy must then be attributed to one of the two poles of the ground-motive while the other suffers religious depreciation, that is, denaturation. It is also possible of course to try to accommodate the two motives to each other in which case both of them lose essential traits of their original meaning. Such accommodation is particularly characteristic of the synthetic conception of the scholastic ground-motive of nature and grace as it was accepted by Roman Catholic church-doctrine (along the lines of Thomas Aquinas), and as it was subsequently adopted by reformed scholasticism as well, despite its accommodation to reformed church-doctrine.

Following Kuyper's reformational line of thought, the Philosophy of the Cosmonomic Idea has chosen its point of departure in the biblical ground-motive of creation, fall, and redemption through Jesus Christ in the communion of the Holy Spirit. This ground-motive, in its integral and radical biblical meaning penetrates to the root-unity of human existence. In consequence this philosophy was obliged to posit the demand of a radical reformation in philosophical anthropology and cosmology over against the scholastic attempt to accommodate with a philosophy dominated by an apostate ground-motive.

Vollenhoven, in his masterly book 'Het Calvinisme en de Reformatie van de Wijsbegeerte', (1932), presented a compelling case supporting this demand which, inevitably, would have to conduce towards acknowledgement of the religious antithesis also in its necessary philosophical expression. This work was composed of a systematic section in which Vollenhoven in his own way presented a lucid summary of the major outlines of the young reformational philosophy, and a comprehensive historical section in which, equipped as he was with an enormous knowledge of general history, the history of philosophy, and especially church-history and political history, he set out to demonstrate the penetrative effects of unbiblical ground-motives in both philosophy and the practice of life. Although these ground-motives were approached and delineated in a manner differing from that of the philosophy of the cosmonomic idea in its transcendental critique of theoretical thought, still Vollenhoven's conception too was single-mindedly intent upon highlighting the radical religious antithesis demarcating biblical from unbiblical basic motives and upon revealing their consequences for and in philosophy.

At the time, Vollenhoven had been Professor of systematic philosophy and the history of philosophical thought at the Free University in Amsterdam for six years. I had received my appointment as Professor in 1926 as well and was to teach legal philosophy, encyclopedia of jurisprudence, and legal history. It was a troubled time for the reformed community in the Netherlands when this new reformational direction in philosophy was introduced at the Free University. A serious conflict had arisen within the reformed churches. It concerned the exegesis of the first chapters of Genesis and had

finally resulted in a schism. Dialectic theology as introduced by Karl Barth, sharply opposed to Kuyper's neo-Calvinism, also gained adherents among young reformed theologians in the Netherlands and led to an oftentimes aprioristic rejection of the philosophy of the cosmonomic Idea which proceeded in Kuyper's reformational line of thought; this rejection, however, was by no means based on thorough acquaintance with this philosophy. Besides the dialectic theologians there were reformed theologians who wished to maintain the traditional scholastic type of philosophy; consequently, they were rather suspicious of the new reformational trend for its anti-scholastic implications. 'Philosophia deformata', according to some, properly characterized this philosophy.

The endeavours of the young reformational philosophy were powerfully supported, however, by the Calvinistic student movement whose annual congresses on the heaths of Lunteren during the thirties unmistakably testified to the enthusiastic interest with which the young generation of students represented here followed each new development of this philosophy. It was in Lunteren too, that the first efforts were made to arrive at the establishment of an Association for Calvinistic Philosophy. This association's constitutive meeting took place on the 14th of December, 1935, in Amersfoort. The meeting was presided by Vollenhoven whose opening-speech can be found in 'Perspectief', the volume which appeared in 1961 to commemorate this association's silver jubilee. For many years Vollenhoven was to remain the association's outstanding chairman. It was only after his retirement as Professor that he passed the gavel over to Prof. H. van Riesen. In the meantime the association had increased its membership considerably both at home and abroad. Both to *Philosophia Reformata*, the association's international journal, (Vollenhoven is still a member of its editorial board) and to the 'Correspondentiebladen' (intended to facilitate the exchange of ideas among the members), he contributed numerous important articles usually concerned with topics in the field of the history of philosophy. Through his chairmanship of our association, Vollenhoven was also member of the board of the *Algemene Nederlandse Vereniging voor Wijsbegeerte* (General Association for Philosophy in The Netherlands).

Meanwhile our association was beset by new difficulties, both of in- and external character. The association's constitution contained a circumscription of its basis that had been formulated by Vollenhoven. It aimed to give expression to both the biblical character of its startingpoint and the reformational direction in which the association would seek to stimulate philosophy. To that end every form of ecclesiastical bondage to a specific denomination, including the reformed churches, had to be avoided, just as it had been avoided at the Free University for all but the theological faculty which, with a view to the training of ministers, was contractually tied to the reformed churches in the Netherlands. It so happened that several reformed ministers too had become members of our association when it came into being. Among them was the wellknown theologian Klaas Schilder, who was Professor at the seminary of the reformed churches in Kampen. Several of his most prominent students too like Holwerda, Veenhof a.o., had joined the association. As early as the twenties Schilder had voiced sharp criticism of several of Dr. Abraham Kuyper's theological conceptions. Over against this criticism and also over against biblical objections that Vollenhoven and I

had raised in combat of the traditional scholastic tenets concerning the relationship of soul and body, Dr. Valentijn Hepp, then Professor in theological dogmatics at the Free University, had written his series of brochures entitled 'Dreigende Deformatie' (Impending Deformation). The synod which convened in 1936 at Amsterdam had appointed a committee of delegates, including both Vollenhoven and Schilder, in order to investigate whether the 'new conceptions' which Hepp contested did or did not accord with the Scriptures and the confessions. At the following synod which convened in the Frisian town of Sneek in 1939 and was moved to Utrecht in the latter days of May 1940 due to the German invasion, the report of the committee was tabled, occasioning vehement discussions. Finally a number of doctrinal decisions resulted, decisions which, initially, had seemed acceptable also for those members of synod who adhered to Schilder's conceptions. However, they proved to be no longer acceptable to them following upon the lengthy comment which the synodical board had appended to the decisions as formulated. Furthermore, the synod of Utrecht had arbitrarily extended its length of session, which according to the church order was not to exceed three years, so that Schilder would no longer acknowledge it as a lawful synod. Subsequently Schilder was suspended from the duties of his office and when he persisted in refusing to conform to the synod's decisions was finally debarred from his office. Numerous ministers who had followed Schilder's example were similarly deprived of their office. The result of it all was a second disastrous schism in the reformed churches. The ecclesiastical body of the so-called liberated churches went their own way and established their own theological seminary.

Despite the fact that Vollenhoven and I had presented an extensive petition against the disciplinary measures taken against Schilder and his followers we did not find the liberty to join the liberated churches. For Schilder, as well as for most of his adherents among our members, this constituted an occasion for discontinuing membership in our association. During an emotionally charged meeting at which Schilder himself, sought by the Gestapo as he was for his undaunted public testimony against Nazism, could not be present, it became apparent, however, that the deeper cause of the withdrawal on the part of these members was to be sought in the Schilderian view that further cooperative efforts in an association for reformational philosophy were no longer possible for lack of confessional-ecclesiastical unity. This view, which could not but lead to reformational philosophy's bondage to the church, indeed conflicted with the basis of our association just as it conflicted with Kuyper's idea of a Free University.

For the rest, the synod of Sneek-Utrecht rightly refused to deliver a verdict about the conflict between the Philosophy of the Cosmonomic Idea and the scholastic reformed theologians as to their conceptions of human nature. Also, the complaint submitted to the board of curators by the Free University's theological faculty of those days against Vollenhoven and myself for supposed deviation from the reformed confession on this same point, was dismissed for lack of factual and legal grounds, a lack that became apparent during a preliminary hearing of all the parties concerned.

At the close of World War II, the work of the association was taken to hand with renewed vigor. In 1947 a foundation was called into being for the establishment of special chairs for Calvinistic philosophy at public uni-

versities and institutions of higher learning. Such chairs were established at Leiden, Utrecht, Groningen, Rotterdam, Delft, and Eindhoven. The men that could take the tasks thus created upon themselves, happily, were available since our association counted several trained philosophers among its members who had been formed within the School of the Philosophy of the Cosmologic Idea and who had, furthermore, already established their reputation by means of a number of excellent books dealing with various philosophical topics. It did, however, become a matter of constant concern to the foundation's board of governors to procure in a time of increasing inflation the financial means needed for salaries and pensions. Symptoms of increasing indifferentism and scepticism among the post-war generations of students who came from a reformed tradition were a further cause for concern. This only underscored, however, the urgent need for these special chairs of philosophy. The wholehearted devotion with which the appointed professors carried out their tasks has not remained fruitless since, in their turn, they have trained disciples wholeheartedly committed to the cause of reformational philosophy and able to succeed in their master's footsteps. In this context it is to be remembered that Vollenhoven was the very able chairman of the foundation's board of governors until he reached the age of 70.

After his retirement as professor Vollenhoven disengaged himself from his directive functions in both the association and the foundation in order to be able to devote his attention wholly to the study of the history of philosophy. He did retain contact however, with the Free University, since he continued to lecture regularly on the latest results attained by means of the problem-historical method for interested students at the Central Interfaculty (the Department of Philosophy). In 1961 Vollenhoven and his wife still visited Grand Rapids and Toronto where he lectured respectively at Calvin College and the Institute for Christian Studies. In 1963 he visited South Africa where he presented guest-lectures at the universities of Potchefstroom, Johannesburg, and Bloemfontein.

Meanwhile Vollenhoven also experienced sorely trying times. On the 3^d of February, 1973, his faithful wife, whose mental and physical condition had been deteriorating for some time, was taken away from him. His own physical condition too was a recurrent cause of concern during the past few years. His deeply rooted christian faith, however, which had inspired and supported him throughout his life's work, also carried him through these trying experiences, causing him to simply trust the promises of God. It is this faith too, by which the now 80 year old Vollenhoven knows himself to be one with all who may call themselves children of God through Christ Jesus.