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A CHRISTIAN ANALYTIC METHODOLOGY FOR THE STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF POETRY: AN EXPLICATION

1. A Christian world view

No sectionalistic psychocritique, thematic review or any positive approach, can comprehensively analyse the totality of a literary text. Such analyses fall short and fail to unlock the poem in its dimensional potentiality. The necessity of an integrated structural approach which will open up, analyse and evaluate poetry in its multi-dimensional/valencial possibilities is thus evident.

It is only on the basis of a complete modal scale, which encompasses the explicit techno-formative aspects as well as the implicit symbolic dimensionality of the text, that full justice can be done to a work of art. If such a methodology departs from a specifically *Christian* point of view, its vision is an integral and comprehensive one, including all of reality, whether secular or spiritual. But even more important is the integrality of this world and the next, envisioned and permeated by the eschatological future.

As a true Christian world and life view should be a fully integrated one, the literary manifestation of this perspective must also be reflected in the integrated, objectified Christian spirit of the text.

It is just such a methodology based on a Christian world view which will allow the text to unfold itself, revealing the coherent totality of the poem. But in order to understand the roots of an integrated approach to literature, it is also necessary to understand the contribution of the Reformed world and life view to the development of the ideal of a Christian philosophy and a Christian science, as well as the Calvinistic idea of the intimate interrelation between religious and scientific knowledge.

A short review of Dutch history will be helpful for the comprehension of the subsequent influences in the Netherlands, the United States of America and South Africa.

In 1793 when William V was overthrown with French assistance, the revolution brought into being a reorganization in state, church and education, and caused secularization to pervade social life. Dutch nationalism was reflected in literature, and a religious revival movement

wished to counter the liberalistic spirit of the times. This two-fold movement involving the arts and politics resulted in a secession from the state church, the *Nederlansche Hervormde Kerk* in 1834, and the founding of a separate Christian Reformed Church (*Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk*), which was also opposed to the current Anabaptist focus on personal and individual piety.

Because of discrimination and persecution of the separatist group, many followers emigrated to South Africa and Michigan in the United States of America, where they founded their own Christian Reformed churches. Groen van Prinsterer, who was the leader of the political group which shared responsibility for the religious secession of 1834, gave the earliest systematic account of the Anti-revolutionary principles. This theoretical basis was expounded by Groen van Prinsterer in his major work, "Unbelief and Revolution", in which he argued that unbelief inevitably leads to revolution and social disintegration. For him social conditions and religious beliefs reciprocally influence each other, and he urged Christians to continue testing their ideas, to determine whether they remain true to the Gospel or have been influenced by the atheistic spirit of the revolution (Hexham, 1975:20).

Van Prinsterer even considered the freedom to criticise the state, permissible on the condition that it remained a freedom within the Law of God.

Thus he urged Christians to withstand the corrosive influence of revolutionary thought by means of their allegiance to the Scriptures. Realizing the struggle of the Christian community to preserve their religion, he emphasized the close relationship between the Gospel and all areas of life.

He suggested the development of Christian theories of politics and education, and championed the establishment of Christian schools in Christian communities, in order to protect children from liberal, revolutionary influences.

After Groen van Prinsterer's death in 1876, Abraham Kuyper vigorously pursued the policy of revitalizing Dutch Calvinism, especially in the field of politics and education. He strengthened and popularized the Anti-revolutionary movement, which had developed under the guidance of Groen van Prinsterer, and based his contributions to this ideology, on the traditional Calvinistic doctrine of the sovereignty of God. On this foundation he could justify the Anti-revolutionary movement's social and political actions among Calvinists.

Thus he broadened the belief about individual salvation, to a “redemptive fact that embraces the whole of creation” (Hexham, 1975:24). Apart from Kuyper’s contribution to politics in general, his main scientific contribution was in the field of theology and specifically in Dogmatics (Botha 1976:249).

In order to understand how Kuyper integrated science and his interpretation of Calvinistic principles, it is necessary to note that for Kuyper, Calvinism was an all-embracing world-and-life view and that this view of the world, which includes nature, was intimately related to the fundamental relationship of man to God (Kuyper, 1976: 72 and 24). According to him ‘Religion’ did not exclude a single aspect of life, and should be of such a nature that it must lay hold upon our whole existence (Dooyeweerd, 1953, Vol. I:515).

Instead of the current convictions of Anglo-Saxon Calvinism with Spurgeon as its main voice, claiming that service to God meant the soteriological aspect of the salvation of souls, Kuyper emphasized the Lordship of Christ in every area of life. Kuyper pleaded for an integrated way of life which enveloped the whole man, instead of the worship of Christ on a spiritual level only.

The Scriptures had to serve as a light by which to examine the lives and actions of Christians. Kuyper thus called for a continued reformation of the whole of life and not simply a momentary revival (Hexham, 1975:26). Life was viewed as a religious totality.

And this total life includes science, philosophy and theoretical thought and implies that no facet of human existence can be considered indifferent to religion.

According to Dooyeweerd, Professor of Law and significant contributor to the development of a Christian philosophy, author of ‘A new critique of theoretical thought’, Kuyper’s major scriptural conception, is his insight that all science is rooted in faith (Kuyper, 1976: 131). Even more fundamental to the construction of a Christian philosophy, is Kuyper’s conception of the cosmic significance of Christ’s redemptive work. For Kuyper the exclusive worship of Christ, without God the Father and Creator, was dualism (Dooyeweerd, 1953, Vol I:154 & 155). He stresses the fact that a conception of Christ as a saviour only and of no cosmological significance, tends toward the dualistic.

The teaching of the Scriptures extends the work of redemption beyond the limits of individual souls, to that of the world and the restoration of the entire cosmos (Kuyper, 1976:62).

The central theme of Kuyper's theology is the absolute authority of the Scriptures as the only and main principle of theology, and his theological conceptions were foundational to his central convictions that all spheres of life were subject to the Lordship of Christ.

Thus, in the field of science, Kuyper did not accept a dichotomy between faith and science, but like Dooyeweerd believed that "a radical Christian philosophy can only develop in the line of Calvin's religious starting-point" (Dooyeweerd, 1953, Vol I:515).

According to Kuyper, Calvinism as a way of life, must depart from a special significance of man's relationship to God. This religious root of human existence manifests itself in all man's life and activities and this root is determined by the relationship of faith between man and God.

With this conception of the human heart in its relationship to God through Jesus Christ, as the common source from which the issues of life spring, Kuyper posited one of the major starting points of Dooyeweerd's Calvinistic philosophy which developed in the first half of this century (Botha, 1976: 253).

2. BASIC ASSUMPTIONS OF A REFORMATIONAL WORLD VIEW

2.1 The Word of God

A basic point of departure of these reformational doctrines, formulated by Kuyper, is that the world in which we live can only be fully understood in the light of God's Word. It is the life-root of man and the final norm by which man must live. The Word of God is revealed to man in the inscripturated Word, the Bible: the creative Word or the law-order for creation, and the incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of all creation. In Timothy 3,16, the Scriptures are seen as the rule of law for life, they are structure and directives of God to man and creation: "All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching (the faith) ... for resetting the direction of man's life and training him to good living. The Scriptures are the comprehensive equipment for the man of God and fit him fully for all branches of work". The Scriptures give guidance and direction to our daily lives; they explicate the principle outlines of a confessional vision which are to obediently reflect the will of God for every area of life.

If and when man accepts the Word of God, in its full cosmic scope, and is filled with the spirit, then man will manifest this new creatureliness, which is a new heartedness, in visible commitment. The authority of the Scriptures

will becomes explicit in a confession of the Lordship of Christ, who becomes the integrating force in life. Such avowal of faith will then be developed into a world and life view, a Christ-centred ethos, which will lead man, influence him and shed light on all aspects of life.

The Word in the flesh, incarnate in Christ, was a two-fold redemptive act: atonement to redeem man, which is known as the soteriological dimension of redemption and the cosmic dimension of redemption, in which all of creation was redeemed and reconciled with God (Col. I:13-20). The central perspective of the Scriptures is the redemptive, and as such, Olthuis (1975:4) sees the Old and New Testaments and Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and Lord, as special redemptive revelations of this Word for salvation.

In the tradition of Groen van Prinsterer and Kuyper, the reformational 'third way' with its affirmation of the authority of the Bible, placed God's sovereignty in a redemptive relationship with the theology of creation, allowing man to glory in the world which God had made (Hexham 1975:24). Thus the Word of God in its 'primary meaning' (Olthuis 1975:4), refers to the expression of God's will with regard to creation. God created the heavens and the earth; they were brought forth by the Word of God and thus creation breathes the spirit of God and reveals the creator in creaturely ways (Olthuis nd. 23). While it is in the essence of creation to be revelatory of God, it is the obedient response of all creation to God, that is the fulfilment of God's intention for creation.

The existence of creation has no other purpose than its relation, its directionally and its response to God (Romans II, 36). In this creation man was the crown and was given dominion and power over the earth, which he had to cultivate, care for and enjoy. All things on earth, in the seas, in the air were given to man to rule and subdue (Genesis I,28). But at the same time, man, to whom all things belonged, in turn belonged to God (I Cor. 3:22 and 23). To be a creature is to be subject to the Word of God and requires a continuing response, an obedience to the will of the Lord. The question now arises as to the manner of man's response and knowledge of the will of God. God created the universe, set in a particular order and man was structured into this order and law. Because God found creation good and so too, man, creation was the image of a harmonious relationship between God and creation, and God and man. Thus man can never be a separate world from God, nor can creation or part of it, ever be autonomous. The Word of God orders, structures and continues to uphold creation, and thus reality (which includes poetry) is ordered or structured. Certain constant structures are typical for human life, and for creation in general, thus they display a universal, fixed and constant character. These structures are evident

everywhere and at all times. Such a structural normlaw is thus, in reality, the criterion whereby man can identify and recognize things. The structural laws are like an architectural plan and must be obeyed and responded to. The peculiarity of reality is, that these structures or norms, are only revealed and recognized when they have found concrete form in reality itself. In other words we know the structures and laws for God's creation from the created subjects.

This thesis is underpinned by the teachings of Scripture which are explicit about the revelation of God in his creation (Ps. 33:6-9 and Ps. 148:8).

This law is the boundary between God and cosmos, but it is also the bond, the sign of God's faithfulness to reality. And reality only exists by the laws of God: for instance, language can only be spoken according to semantic and other laws given by God.

Romans II:36, "For from him and through him and to him are all things", states the dependence of all things on God, and also means an acknowledgement of this dependence by means of service to God. Life means to live in harmony, to walk and act in accordance with the laws which God laid down for human existence (Botha 1980:19).

If it is thus posited that man is called to live in accordance with the law of God, then it implies the obedience of the law of God in the central religious sense,¹ but also in the large diversity of ways of existence of the law of creation (Botha 1980:12).

The Word of God is a unified diversity. The great variety of creatures exists in a related order, in an interdependence in which each plays its specific part. And yet the diversity of creatures displays a coherence. In its diversity, creation reveals that it is a unity under the one Word (Malcolm, 1978:7). But the coherence depends on each creature playing its peculiar part. And thus God's order for existence gives the possibility for life in its rich diversity.

¹ The central religious law, which is manifested in the 10 commandments, is refracted into a diversity of laws for concrete reality and human existence.

The central religious sense of the law, which regulates man's central heart commitment, and the diversity of spheres, expressed via beliefs, cultic worship, the arts, politics, economics etc., is the central focus and its centrifugal embodiment and the basis of this philosophy's distinction between the creational law and modal laws.

There is therefore no danger of a static creation, as each creature responds according to its nature, in obedience to the great diversity of words which structure the unity and diversity of all creational existence (Olthuis, nd. 21). Although it is difficult, if not impossible, to prove the existence of a universal order for life, to others who adhere to a different world-view, it is only the science of a creative order, which will give an existentially satisfactory answer and provide an adequate understanding of the fundamental human situation (Olthuis, nd.:18).

Man is created in God's image and called to fulfil a mission and a duty in this world (Genesis 1:27,28). He has a commission to respond to the Word of God and to obey His will; also to reflect the Glory of God in reality.

It is precisely in this relationship of dependence and trust, that man responds to his Lord, by imaging Him and thus fulfilling His will, bringing praise and glory to his Maker.

Sin came into the world through man's disobedience and a break resulted between God and man, man and fellowman and man and nature — and so through the whole of life and creation. Sin darkened man's vision and thus he could only be a dim reflection of the Glory of God. Man looked through a glass darkly, and at a world broken, "subjected to frustration ... but ... in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God" (Rom. 8:20,21).

In His redemptive act God in Christ, healed reality and once again integrated everything under His rule and man to the service of His Kingdom (Col. 1; Hebr. 1; Eph. 1).

Man once more experienced life as meaningful in its wholeness, by fearing God and doing His will (Ecclesiastes 12:13: "... here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man").

The crucial question for men of all times has been the commandment to keep God's laws. When the fall dulled mankind's understanding of the Word, God's Word also came to man Inscripturated and Incarnated (Olthuis, 1976b: 10). The Scriptures re-published the Word in a creaturely fashion (Olthuis, 1976b: 11), enlightening man on the nature of man, of life, the task of man, knowledge of God and His laws etc. Man's duty was to know and obey God and this he could only do by means of obedience to the light of the Scriptures and the Spirit that lead him. In this reformational philosophical approach, the Bible is the only firm and sure directive on how

to live; thus knowledge of the Word is fundamental for a Christian to fulfil his mission, especially as man can only know himself in knowing God.

Knowledge of God is given to man through the written Word of the Scriptures, the Word made flesh in Jesus Christ, and God's revelation in creation. Only when man knows the incarnate Word of God in faith, can he see the world in which he lives in the right perspective (Hebrews II:3). It is only when faith opens up life and its many activities, that man is on the way to stability, wholeness and a life of integration. Knowing that God's Word holds for all of life, men as servant-rulers are empowered in the Spirit to further search out God's will for life in all dimensions and situations.

God also reveals himself in his creation. Romans I:20 explicitly states the imaging character of creation: "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities — his eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse".

It is therefore the task of man to unfold the possibilities which God has structured into creation, in order to glorify His name. In order to discuss the task and duty of man more fully, it is necessary to examine the religious relationship between man and God.

2.2 The covenant

In Jeremiah II, the prophet relates the terms of the covenant which God made with the people of Israel: "Obey me and do everything I command you and you will be my people, and I will be your God". This covenant was a community relationship, a bond between God and the whole man and the whole of creation. The covenant, also signified as the religion of man, indicated the totality of human life in its relationship to God. In this covenant, man is called to be a co-worker with God, called to proclaim the Kingdom of God in anticipation of the coming of the eschaton. Already in the Old Testament-covenantal relationship, hardly any facet of human life was excluded — neither economy, agriculture, justice, education nor any aspect of life — from the relationship between God and His creatures. Even at that time, the whole human life had to be sanctified, and not simply those aspects which concerned cultic ritual and sacrifice. It is thus important that Religion is an all encompassing life-situation, of which divine worship and devotional exercises, form only part of the fact that all life is religion, and service to God. The reformational Christian vision stresses the need of a view of religion which recognizes the religious dimension as an integral part of a total life-response to God, and not simply an additional, extra-ordinary

way of looking at things (Olthuis, nd.: 3).

The New Testament should be seen as a continuation of the old. In Acts 1:8 the disciples are called by the Lord to be witnesses of the joyous message of salvation. Furthermore, man is to share in the process of reconciliation of which Paul speaks in Colossians 1:20.

2.3 The confessional vision

It is clear that when man confesses to the Word of God in Christ and is heartcommitted to Christ, he lives in an integrated covenantal relationship with the Lord. Such commitment will, both explicitly and implicitly, be developed into a confessional vision, which will be an expression of the religious direction of the heart of man. According to Olthuis (nd.:4), the quest for certainty is a common human experience. Man needs to commit himself and it is precisely this certitudinal aspect, that gives a feeling of safety, unity and purpose to human beings. It touches upon fundamental questions like the relation of man and God, the meaning of life, the concept of God etc. In a pervasive manner it interpenetrates all dimensions of existence, giving ordinary experience a depth-level dimension (Olthuis nd.:4). For Olthuis this certitudinal dimension has the function of unfolding, as well as grounding life in ultimate certainty. Once man has a certainty anchor, he is committed and must make a decisive stand, which will give direction and meaning to his life.

When this certainty is confessed, it plays an integrating and leading part in life and experience. This grounding and integrating quality is then crystallized into a vision and way of life. With the assistance of a vision, we perceive life with 'visionary' eyes and things fall into place; we have criteria to guide us and we feel a sense of security. The vision becomes a framework by which reality in its experiential and fundamental dimensions, can be interpreted, valued and integrated. It gives us a perspective of life which is determined by our heart-commitment, and inner attitude of life which Troost calls the ethos (Troost, 1970/1971).

This vision is then related to life itself and it becomes manifest in articulated words and deeds, when the ethos expresses itself in an external ethos-style of life.

Because of this ethos, human life achieves a certain visible form, which is revealed in the existence of the individual, but also in a group, community or a culture.

2.4 Man's responsible task

With such a totalitarian vision, which is concentrated in the heart of man, man is called to covenant-partner service. He is impelled to further investigate creation in all its many dimensions of economy, language, history, the arts etc.

In other words, man as co-worker of God (Gen. 1:28), has a cultivating task within God's creation which he has to fulfil in obedience to God's Word.

Creation, which is not yet fully developed, is waiting to be opened up by the responsive activity of man. This 'foundational commission' (Malcolm, 1978:16), entails an involvement of cultivation, unfolding and form-giving of creation's structure — and this is man's responsible share in what we call culture (Roper, 1979:3).

In this cultural task, every science is possible and deals with one or more dimensions of the Word of God. It is the Word of God that is the structuring-directing condition for creation (Olthuis, 1975:10), and even if man's implementation of God's Word is fallible and open to correction, it unfolds the meaning of God's Word, if it is a faithful reflection.

Olthuis (1975:10) points out that the two-directional interaction between the unfolding and the understanding of the Word of God, effects a deepened insight into the unity of life and the relevance of the Scriptures for life and creation.

The Scriptures become relevant for life, they give direction to our thoughts and actions, and reveal the excitement and seriousness of our task as image bearers with a confessional vision, who "continue to work out (our) salvation with fear and trembling..." (Phil. 2:12, 13). Such a confessional vision provides a canon of values and a basis of human action for life; it is decisive in the shaping of personal identity and is incarnated in a way of life. It usually "acquires explication, unfolding, deepening and application as the universal order for life in theoretic cosmologies and anthropologies" (Olthuis, nd.: 9, 10).

Such an 'explanation, unfolding, deepening' of life is the significance of Dooyeweerd in the development of a Christian philosophy which is scripturally founded but also scientifically and existentially orientated. The development of this specifically Christian philosophy of the Cosmomic Idea will be traced in the following section.

3. THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE COSMONOMIC IDEA

3.1 Dooyeweerd's development of a Christian philosophy

“The significance of Dooyeweerd lies in his contribution to the development of the Christian philosophy that is biblically directed and orientated not only to the needs and data of the special sciences, but also to the passing issues of the 20th century” (Zylstra, 1975:15).

An appreciation and assessment of the significance of the Dooyeweerdian Cosmonomic Idea, calls for some insight into the fundamental principles and premises which constitute the philosophy.

Although Dooyeweerd admitted to have been strongly influenced by Neo-Kantian philosophy and later, by the phenomenology of Husserl, the “great turning point” in his philosophical thinking was brought about by the “Discovery of the religious root of thought itself” (Dooyeweerd, 1953: Vol. I.v). He came to realize the unacceptability of the Kantian view of the self-sufficiency of human reason and the impossibility of the subsequent efforts to bring about a synthesis between Christian and non-Christian philosophies. This realization resulted from the most important premise of the philosophy, which lay in the assumption that reality is created by God whose will is sovereign and redeeming law for reality (Zylstra, 1975:31).

It is clear that such a point of departure was a radical break with the philosophical view of reality which is rooted in the immanence-standpoint (Dooyeweerd, 1953. Vol. I. Foreword. vi).

Confronted with the religious root of all creation, which owes its ordered character to the Word of God, Dooyeweerd realized that the whole of temporal cosmos had to be seen in the relation, which Kuyper had explicated in his ‘Stone lectures’ (1976:70) when, in answer to the question, what the Calvinist meant by his conception of the ordinances, Kuyper gave the following clear explanation: “Nothing less than the firmly rooted conviction that all life has first been in the thoughts of God, before it came to be realized in creation. Hence all created life necessarily bears in itself, a law for its existence, instituted by God himself. There is not life outside us in Nature, without such divine ordinances — ordinances which are called the laws of Nature-, not laws originating from Nature, but laws imposed upon Nature”.

Botha points out that Dooyeweerd's intention was therefore not to contrast philosophies, with or without religious presuppositions, but to prove that all

philosophies are rooted in pre-suppositions of a religious nature (Botha, 1976:251). Dooyeweerd states that: "... the concentric direction in theoretical thought must be of religious origin. It must be of religious origin, even though it always remains theoretical in character. It springs from the tendency to the origin in the centre of human existence" (Dooyeweerd, 1953, Vol. I:59).

To him philosophy by its very nature, is a religiously determined act, and thus it is not only Christian philosophy which is religiously founded, but all philosophical and scientific endeavours are determined by underlying religious motives (see Dooyeweerd, 1953, Vol. I:21).

Although Dooyeweerd's predecessors, Kuyper and Bavinck, did not develop their fundamental principles into a coherent system, they greatly influenced Dooyeweerd in his task to formulate a distinctive Christian philosophy. Certain Kuyperian conceptions were foundational as valuable contributions in this respect. The sovereignty of God as a scriptural principle, was one such conception: "First stands the confession of the absolute Sovereignty of the Truine of God: for of Him and unto Him are all things" (Kuyper, 1976:46), as well as the central significance of the heart of man as the religious root of human life. The scriptural truth of Romans II,36, is formulated philosophically by Dooyeweerd in his conception that all of reality is meaning (Dooyeweerd, 1953, Vol. I:97), or that 'meaning' is the mode of existence of all reality.

The fundamental principle of the universal sovereignty of God, who has structured ordinances for all spheres of His creation, was developed into one of the most important concepts of Kuyper's philosophy, namely the idea of sphere sovereignty as a creational principle: "Everything that has been created was, in its creation, furnished by God with an unchangeable law of its existence. And because God has fully ordained such laws and ordinances for all life (.....) God is present in all life (.....) and no sphere of human life is conceivable in which religion does not maintain its demands that God shall be praised, that God's ordinances shall be observed, and that every 'labora' shall be permeated with its 'ora' in fervent and ceaseless prayer" (Kuyper, 1976:53). This meant that God has given every sphere of life and society, its own peculiar laws which govern its action and, which have to be obeyed.

The essential idea of Dooyeweerd's philosophy of law, was later developed in conjunction with Kuyper's basic conception of God's law as the boundary between God and His creatures. God's law constitutes all laws which govern creation and all creatures are subject to these laws. This was one of the main assertions, upon which the Cosmonomic Idea developed the whole

philosophy system of the modal and individual law structures which hold for reality (Botha, 1976:249).

Each system of philosophy is directed by an apriori conception of the origin and totality of meaning of the cosmic order. Dooyeweerd finds the content of his Cosmonomic Idea (literally, meaning the idea of the laws governing the cosmos) in the “central motive of Christian religion”, which is creation, the fall and redemption through Jesus Christ (Dooyeweerd, 1953, Vol. 1:95).

The Archimedian point, the vantage point from which everything can, in principle, be seen in true perspective, is found in Christ. Dooyeweerd describes it as: “This fixed point from which alone, in the course of philosophical thought, we are able to form the idea of the totality of meaning ... However, if we have found this Archimedean point, our selfhood makes the discovery that the view of totality is not possible apart from a view of the origin...” (1953, Vol. 1:8).

For Dooyeweerd, this is the position ‘in Christ’ of the believer (Wolters, 1975:347). In other words, the heart of man, which is the root of all human existence, forms the Archimedean point of Dooyeweerd’s philosophy. In scriptural terms, the heart is seen as the centre of life, which determines God’s relation to man.

3.2 The philosophy of the Cosmonomic Law-idea

The salient principles in the development of a specific Christian philosophy have been mentioned. The structure of Dooyeweerd’s philosophy of the Cosmonomic Idea now requires further explication.

All of the cosmos, which includes mankind, is ruled by the structural law-order of creation. Temporal reality comprises innumerable individuality structures; concrete, whole entities or events, which have special qualities, distinguishing each from every other individuality structure.

Each concrete entity functions in 15 modes of expression which determine and restrict the way in which inanimate nature, animals and man will behave. Not only does each individuality structure in temporal reality display 15 aspects, but each of the modalities mirrors all other modalities. While there is for instance, an aesthetic analogy in the logical, lingual and social modalities, the aesthetic in turn, also contains all other aspects, which means that every aspect reflects something of the 14 other modalities.

The cosmic variety of aspects has an accepted and unchangeable order,

which must be theoretically analysed by man. Dooyeweerd has systematized the world order in a certain structural pattern in which the earlier modalities (eg. from the numerical) refer to the later aspects by means of analogies called anticipations. The higher modalities again refer back to the lower ones by means of analogies called retrocipations. For example, the spatial aspect has a meaning nucleus of continuous extension. This is the original quality which identifies space. And yet, there are analogies of space in all the other aspects, for instance, 'Lebensraum' as jural space; claustrophobia as psychic space etc. Each modal aspect has an irreducible distinctiveness which gives it a sovereignty in its own sphere but, at the same time, shares a mutual relationship with all the other modes, by means of the anticipatory and retrocipatory analogies. A 'multi-sided coherence' (Kalsbeek 1975:71), also called sphere-universality, thus exists between the different modal aspects. These aspects express the manner in which they are experienced.

While the individuality structures are concrete 'whats', to which the modalities express the 'how', these aspects are never self-sufficient but function only as facets of concrete entities. In principle, an individuality structure functions in every modality; but sometimes, as in the case of a plant, it functions as a subject only in the first five aspects, after which it can only act as an object to the human being. Only man has subject-functions in all the aspects.

Each individuality structure has one aspect which characterizes the entity; for instance, any work of art has an aesthetic structure and is therefore qualified by the aspect of harmony; so too, each model function is not reducible to any other aspect. It can be distinguished from other meaning aspects by a typical activity, an element that guarantees the maintenance of the sphere sovereignty in each modality. Thus the biotic aspect has vitality as the meaning-nucleus; the historical has formative control as its kernel, and the lingual has the nature of symbolical meaning.

Each aspect is thus qualified by a nucleus, which is the irreducible kernel of that particular aspect. All other analogies, nevertheless, share this meaning nucleus in a mutual coherence, giving rise to a unity-in-variety. Because of this 'given' coherence of the cosmos, man as part of reality, also has a general awareness of the modal aspects. Intuitively, man is conscious of norms because he shares this reality. This awareness is an implicit 'feel' for the total experience which can only be articulated explicitly and thus become 'knowable' through the analytic distinction.

Modal laws can be divided into two categories: natural laws, which are laws

for the pre-logical aspects (arithmetic to psychic) which function without human recognition: in other words, things, plants, and animals (man to a certain extent), cannot disobey them. The second category is for the logical and post-logical aspects: the so-called normlaws. Although the laws require human recognition, their non-observance would in no way lessen the existence and law-fulness of the laws. Recognition of these laws always takes place — whether in obedience or violation for instance: justice and injustice or faithfulness (troth) and unfaithfulness. Yet man is only free to disobey laws within the limits, determined by the norm-law. But the norm-laws do not simply demand recognition; such acknowledgement must be followed by positivation and formulation into positive laws and norms. In order to be binding and valid, the positivation and these norm-laws always need to be counter-checked as it were, to the law-order itself. In fact, the presence of this control-connection, prevents the concretization from ever distancing itself fully from the law-order. The norm-law thus always remains binding and in force — even if tenuously.

Positivation is a specifically human act. To James Olthuis (1968:186) a “subject in his law-bound condition cannot resist positivation” and failure to do so, is conscious disobedience. Olthuis emphasizes that the glory of man’s task is, that he is called to open up the meaning of creation. Man is free to do so and yet, has the responsibility, which requires him to fulfil his duty. To Olthuis (1968:186), this exciting task is highlighted in the process of positivation.

As any kind of theoretical analysis of an individuality structure must begin with the structure of all modal aspects, before one can understand the unified structure of the concrete entity as a whole, (Kalsbeek, 1975:43) our poetic analysis will follow the same principle and pattern. The first, careful consideration should be given to an understanding of each modal aspect —beginning from the arithmetic or the lowest aspect. The modalities are always aspects of a concrete entity and, for theoretical purposes, such modal aspects are also separate, abstracted out of the concrete coherence of an entity. In order to distinguish different modalities which are to be analysed in theory, they must be abstracted from the continuity of concrete temporal reality (Troost, 1970:57). But in the complete reality of our temporal lives, we experience things in their concreteness; we live reality in the continual relation of things without explicit consciousness of the separate aspects and structures. It needs to be emphasized that a concrete individuality structure is never simply the sum total of the various separate functions. The structure in all its facets, like a total plan of architecture, forms the integral whole. The form-totality is a unity-in-diversity and yet is more than the individual parts.

Dooyeweerd's philosophy of the Cosmonomic Idea forms the basis of my analysis. Upon his analytical distinctions of the modalities, Troost (1970/1971), Rookmaaker (1946), and Seerveld (n.d. (a) and 1977) have developed their modifications, which I propose to implement and modify in my thesis.

Although we have noticed the abstract character of the aspects, each modality possesses a certain overruling 'eigen-aard-igheid' (Troost, 1970:34), a typifying central moment, peculiar to a specific modality and not to be interchanged or mistaken for another. Thus, the meaning nucleus of the arithmetic aspect is number or separate quantity, which Rookmaaker and Seerveld develop to a concept of unity-in-variety when applied to aesthetic entities.

Each modality is subject to either natural-and/or norm-laws. As already shown, norm-laws must be positivized and formulated into positive laws. This act of making a norm valid by means of concretization, is the task of man as "human acknowledgement is the law-ordained means by which such laws are subjectively realized and effectuated" (Olthuis, 1968:184). And yet, in order to concretize, man needs to identify certain "law-conformities" (Olthuis, 1968:185) through experience and thus gain insight into the inner mechanics of such laws. Only then will one be able to positivize 'positive' laws. It must be stressed that such laws can, and should be revised, as the concretization is the indirect and individual actualization of a structural law and thus never irrevocably fixed.

As Olthuis points out, description and valuation already are subjective acts and so too, is the process of positivation. Thus he sees positivation as the last phase of a series of descriptions and evaluations and on the "basis of knowledge gained in valuation-description, one decides to concretize a positive law" (Olthuis, 1968:194). 'How' one evaluates and positivizes, finally depends on the central direction which is found in man's heart and which directs man's existential life. The validity of human evaluation, depends on its agreement with the law-order, and this soundness of one's evaluation depends on being rightly directed.

Man is called to subdue the earth and have dominion over it. This command includes the task of opening-up creation, of unlocking that which is still closed. Yet, nothing can be opened up which was not already given at the creation. Such explication is thus a disclosure of latent qualities already present in the cosmos.

Man cannot add or unfold what is not already there, nor can he ignore and

violate what is a creational given. Although normative laws can be transgressed, man will discover from experience that infringement of the law would result in disharmony in cultural life (Dooyeweerd, 1963). It would thus be necessary to give positive form to the normative principles expressing the inner nature of each sphere. This opening process must progress according to the inner nature of the various cultural realms; for example, the unfolding of an artwork will take place under guidance of aesthetic norms. Dooyeweerd stresses that the direction of the cultural disclosure is ultimately determined in time by the faith of the guiding cultural forces.

The faith aspect motivated by the religious ground motive, engaged in the process of unfolding creation, is thus of the first importance, as it determines the centre and direction of the opening process of culture. This positivation and implementation of all normative principles in human life, of the meaning nuclei of the modal aspects into practical qualities to be used in an art work, requires a Christian analytic methodology which will visibly reveal the 'Christianess' of Christian poetry.

This revelation of the Christian spirit is nevertheless not easily determined as the ethos is not Christian as such. It can only be recognized, analysed and evaluated in a manifested form; in the concrete poem. In other words, if the faith aspect is present and powerful in the artist, it will flow into the poetry and permeate it. In that case, if the ethos is a total reflection of the Christian in the whole of life, in all inter-human and other relationships, then the discovery of the ethos can also be realized through a reversed approach; through the actual poetic expression. And yet, in order to be able to ascertain the confessional witness of a text, it must be understood that such an attitude finds its point of departure in the root of human existence which is the heart. This 'wellspring of life' (Proverbs 3,23) is the religious concentration of man's 'Being'.

The 'I' finds concrete expression through the individuality structures and their modal aspects, which are called into existence by human positivation of norm-laws through acts. Such acts, pervaded by the subjective ethos, are centred in Christ and thus the expression of the dominant religious attitude of the human heart. This two-directional heartedness must also be outwardly directed into all ways and facets of life in order to reveal the Kingdom of God in temporal life.

The problem now is to discover 'how' the Christian perspective has been posited in a work of art.

It is here that a Christian-based analytic approach is needed; the establishment of a Christian aesthetic, incorporating all structural dimensions of poetry which require objectification. Foundational to such a method is the Word of God which '... issues the basic categorial modes of existence, conditioning the many lawful patterns of order and disorder...' (Seerveld, n.d.a. : 5) and it is man's positivation of these divine structures that brings about the visible manifestation.

The Christian artist's 'how' is therefore his committed responsibility as it will reveal his spirited vision. In order to determine the ethosfilled style, which is the coherent integration of the parts, the cosmological model for literary criticism, initiated by Calvin Seerveld and based on the philosophy of Dooyeweerd, has been adapted and extended into a Christian analytic methodology for the structural analysis of poetry. This integrated approach consists of a first-level lingua-formative basis which includes stanzaic form, compositional possibilities, metrical and rhythmical patterns and variations, musicality etc. The second level of analysis is an interpretative one. Under the guidance of the qualifying function of the aesthetic, the higher aspects of an art work are unfolded and revealed in their many faceted potentialities.

Finally, the leading function of the confessional aspect can disclose the whole process of analysis and determine the Christian, pseudo-Christian and nonchristian character of the poem.

By means of this integrated cosmological model for literary analysis the poem 'per se' can be opened up in the potential width, insightful depth as well as the spirited vision of its artistic totality.

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