The Reformational Contribution to Aesthetic Theory

Duncan Roper

1. INTRODUCTORY

By the Reformational contribution to aesthetic theory, I mean the attempt to develop a theoretical understanding of aesthetics and art out of a consciously developed outlook shaped by Biblical contours. By the latter I do not mean a theological aesthetics, nor do I mean an attempt to derive the specific contents of our aesthetic theory from the Bible. I mean simply the ordinary, fallible human exercise of theorising about matters aesthetic that yet takes its starting point from a religious orientation that sees the Lord Yahweh as the ultimate source of all meaning and order of our experienced cosmos, and views humankind as His image-bearer, and in that sense a meaning-former within the created order.

The principal contributors to developments of this kind in the twentieth century are H. Dooyeweerd, D. H. Th. Vollenhoven, H. Rookmaaker, C. Seerveld, N. Wolterstorff and others such as L. Zuidevaart.

The contributions of Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven have been those of systematic philosophers, without specialist interest or expertise in matters aesthetic. In this respect a good evaluation of Dooyeweerd's contribution to aesthetic theory has recently been given by Calvin Seerveld in the volume 'The Legacy of Herman Dooyeweerd'[1]. The contributions of Rookmaaker[2], have been principally those of an art historian with a strong interest in systematic philosophy and aesthetic theory.

The significant contributions of Seerveld[3], on the other hand, have been with respect to aesthetic theory proper, having moreover been developed within the general tradition of Reformational philosophy, as it has been pioneered by Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven.

The contributions of Wolterstorff[4] are also concerned with aesthetic theory. Whilst they deserve to be included within the broad scope of a reformational contribution to aesthetic theory, they are made without any overt reference to the philosophical tradition of Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven, but are more specifically orientated toward the contours of the more recent Anglo-Saxon philosophical tradition.

Whilst all the above cited authors work within an orientation that acknowledges the general way in which religious issues function in all of human life, including art and aesthetic theory as discussed in the fourth foundational point of Part III there are important differences with regard to the ways in which they develop their responses to the other fundamental issues surrounding the articulation of the zone of the aesthetic discussed there. The next immediate objective will be to give a brief description of the way some of these authors deal {3} with some of these issues. This will serve as a prelude to the final objective of proposing solutions that, whilst deeply indebted to these contributions, yet involve some significant new points of departure.

The contents of this part of the essay will therefore be set out as follows:

    1.   **Introductory**

2. A BRIEF CRITICAL RESUME OF THE REFORMATIONAL CONTRIBUTION TO AESTHETIC THEORY

2.1 Dooyeweerd

Dooyeweerd develops his view of the aesthetic as a modal aspect of the lawfully ordered cosmos. Bearing in mind the fundamental issues considered in the last section of Part III — which any aesthetic theory needs to give an account of — Dooyeweerd's position is characterised by the following basic features: The kernel or irreducible basic character of the aesthetic aspect is considered to be beauty or fittingness, in the sense of harmony.

(i)The aesthetic aspect is located in a post-historical or post-technico-cultural position, one that is also 'post-social, between the economic and jural aspects of reality.[5]

(ii)In respect to the question as to the aesthetic functioning of natural creation Dooyeweerd seeks to give an account of this via aesthetic anticipations in the psychical aspect, coupled with what he calls 'non-conventional' sensory symbolism.[6]

(iii)Fine art is considered to be things fashioned by human beings having an aesthetic qualification, in the sense of harmony. All other things fashioned by human beings in the course of cultural formation are deemed to have an aesthetic function, but are not *qualified* by that aesthetic function. Dooyeweerd's view of the kernel of the aesthetic as *harmony* implies that there is a close alliance between his view and the classical tradition of the aesthetic — with the concern for harmony, balance and fittingness as the primary normative concern.

(iv)Imaginativity is considered by Dooyeweerd to play a key role in aesthetic life.[7] A work of art, for example, is deemed to involve the aesthetic conception of the artist's productive imagination, with its intentional object, founded in the sensory function of fantasy. This imaginative intentional object is then deemed to be represented in a real, sensible thing like a painting on a canvas or a marble sculpture.[8]

Imagining, along with knowing and willing, are both considered by Dooyeweerd to be inseparably intertwined faculties that together relate to the act-structure of the human person, whereby actions come forth from the heart and function within the structured whole of the human body, via the subject functioning of the various specific normative or post-natural aspects of reality.[9]

In this respect, imagining is *not* considered by Dooyeweerd to have a specific modal qualification, but rather to function in all modal aspects, from the psychical on, in ways that are typical for that aspect. Thus, within the psychical aspect the sensory function of the imagination is deemed to constitute an *original type of modal individuality,* the products of which have merely an intentional objectivity, as distinct from the actual sensory objectivity of actual things.[10]

2.2 Lines of Criticism of Dooyeweerd.

Several lines of criticism may be developed against the above positions. Calvin Seerveld, in particular, whilst continuing to work within the broad lines of the reformational philosophy developed by Dooyeweerd and {4} Vollenhoven, has been instrumental in opening up at least three of these lines of criticism.

1.Dooyeweerd's view of the kernel of the aesthetic aspect as harmony implies a close reliance upon and indebtedness to the long classical tradition of the aesthetic, wherein the concern for harmony, balance and fittingness is deemed to be the primary feature of aesthetic normative concern.

Seerveld subjected this longstanding tradition of 'beauty' concerning the aesthetic, to a radical critique.[11] In its stead he has put forward the idea that the kernel of the aesthetic is rather to be found in 'suggestion', 'allusiveness' or 'nuancefulness'. Along with this he has repositioned the aesthetic aspect, along with some others so that the pro-posed order is: numerical, spatial, kinematic, physical, biotic, psychical, technico-cultural, aesthetic, lingual, analytical, social, economic, jural, ethical, confessional.[12]

I shall return to an analysis of the proposed ordering of the modal aspects later. For the moment it should be noted that it differs from Dooyeweerd's in two ways: the analytical (or logical) has been shifted to a post-technico-cultural or post-historical position, and the aesthetic has been moved to an earlier or more foundational position, one that is still post-technico-cultural, but is now both pre-lingual and pre-logical, as well as pre-social.

2.Seerveld has also criticised Dooyeweerd's view of imagining, particularly as it relates to a description of artistic activity. Referring to Dooyeweerd's view of the way imaginativity functions with regard to artistic composition, he writes:

Although such a cumbersome description of artistic activity heads off both a copy — of-natural-object idea of artworks and a subjective expressionism, Dooyeweerd's analysis remains partial to the neo-idealistic notion of artistic activity. Also, despite the important thesis that the 'technico-formative function' founds every bona fide art work (NC 3:121-133; 125), Dooyeweerd lacks the concept of a constructed image that is neither a 'sensory phantasm' nor a product of aesthetic fantasy. Much more clarity enters analysis on the formation of artworks when we distinguish retinal images, non sensory image-constructs, and bona fide aesthetic fictions'.[13]

Seerveld develops a concept of imagining that is primarily aesthetic in character in an article entitled 'Imaginativity'.[14] In this same article he suggests that such related features as imaging and hypothesising should be viewed as aesthetic retrocipatory or anticipatory moments relating to the sensory and logical aspects respectively. I shall return to a discussion of these matters later.

For the moment I shall simply make one preliminary point. There is much of value in Seerveld's critique of Dooyeweerd's idea of imaginativity in relation to artistic activity. Also his idea of imaginativity functioning as an aesthetic subject function is one that deserves consideration.

However, with reference to his criticism of Dooyeweerd, it would seem to me that he does not adequately discuss the latter's idea of imagining as one of the three intertwined features of the act structure. In this part of Dooyeweerd's theory, imagining, along with knowing and willing, is deemed to have no specific modal qualification, but is orientated to the various types of acts as they have such specific modal qualification.

Nor does it seem to me that his post-technico-cultural positioning of the aesthetic aspect lends the needed natural foundation to what he calls 'imaginativables'.[15]

3.A third line of criticism intimated by Seerveld concerns Dooyeweerd's discussion of the nuclear moment of the lingual aspect.[16] Whilst it seems to me that he is correct in claiming that 'for Dooyeweerd symbol is synonymous with 'sign.[17] I am not convinced that he is fair in his claim that this identification of symbol with sign is 'close to the standard of G. W. Leibniz, Charles S. Pierce, and others who have telescoped semantic and analytic functioning into one another and leave aesthetic interests curiously on a sideline'.[18]

It seems to me that Dooyeweerd is anxious to make a place for 'non-conventional' or 'natural' sensory symbolism, wherein he claims, for example, that 'sensory symbolism' in sound images, and the aesthetic anticipations founded in it, are essentially related to symbolical and aesthetic anticipations in the subjective sensory perception.'[19] He also speaks of a 'natural symbolism which lies at the foundation of objective aesthetical relations in nature'.[20]

Whilst I think Dooyeweerd does confuse 'sign' with 'symbol',[21] it is more accurate to appreciate this confusion with reference to the way in which the sensory functioning of natural and cultivated signs (that are neither primarily symbolical nor primarily aesthetic) need to be distinguished from the lingual or symbolic character of humanly cultivated symbols.

Two preliminary examples of signs in the above sense are 'the wagging of a dog's tail as a sign of its happy contentment or playfulness' and 'the ringing *of* the doorbell as a sign that someone is at the door'. The first is an example of a natural sign whilst the second is one that is humanly cultivated. A flag, a word, a memorial, a gesture, on the other hand, involves the human forging of associated meaning in such a way that the subjective symbolising results in a symbolic object — that stands for and embodies the associated meaning given by that embodiment. {5}

Thus a national anthem is a symbol of national pride and heritage. It may function as a sign of the living expression of that pride when it is sung or played in a modern

international sporting arena, for example:

There are are several examples in the 'New Critique' in which Dooyeweerd uses the word 'symbol' when, in terms of the distinction just introduced it is clear that he means 'sign': Thus, for example, he refers to 'objective sense-phenomena' as 'analogical, perceptible objectivations of original states of affairs' and are 'no more to theoretical physics than *symbols* referring to the pre-sensory aspect of energy'.[22] I suggest that sensory colours and sounds, not to mention tastes, smells and touches are *signs* rather than symbols of energy functions, and that it is this confusion between signs and symbols that enables Dooyeweerd to refer to 'natural' or 'non-conventional' symbols. The significance of the latter for aesthetic object functions that are not simply subjectivistic is made clear by Dooyeweerd in the following paragraph:

'Non-conventional is in general the sensory symbolism of original aesthetical means of expression. It is *explicit* for instance in the case of musical themes or motifs designating a dominant mental disposition, and *implicit* where the contribution of the successive sound-images of music symbolizes only an abstract aesthetical structure. It is evident that this sensory symbolism in the sound-images, and the aesthetic anticipations founded in it, are essentially related to symbolical and aesthetic anticipations in the subjective sensory perception' (emphasis his).

'But also here *we should guard against every subjectivistic interpretation* of this anticipatory subject-object relation. *If there were no perceptible symbolic and aesthetical anticipations realized in the sound image* of a musical work of art itself, the *whole realizing objectification of the subjective aesthetical conception of the composer in its reproduction by the executing artist would be impossible'. (emphasis added).[23]

Dooyeweerd clearly wants to guard against the subjectivising of the perceptible 'symbolic' and aesthetic features of sound, with particular reference to the way they function in music. However, it seems to me that Dooyeweerd's characterisation and positioning of the aesthetic aspect, coupled with his confusion of 'sign' and 'symbol' renders a serious difficulty to his theory being able to withstand the kinds of 'subjectivising' features mentioned above, and I shall take up these issues again later.

A Further Possible Line of Criticism
4. One further line of criticism against Dooyeweerd's stance on aesthetics has been suggested, but not explicitly made, by Nicholas Wolterstorff in his book 'Art in Action'. This is that the tradition of 'high art', as it has come to function in the West since the 18th century, is thoroughly idolatrous. The basic idea here is that art works have become prized for their own sake, without reference to the way they function in human life other than for aesthetic contemplation. Art works are placed or performed in special buildings. Frequently when they have been restored from former epochs in the West, or from other cultures, they are thus wrenched from the life contexts in which they had a broader social and cultural meaning. Artists are deemed to be creators of meaning, like unto God, and we are to endeavour to appreciate their work in a manner of aesthetic contemplation that is deemed to be a final end in itself.

As already indicated in Part I of this essay, in its main lines, I believe Wolterstorff's criticism to be quite correct. Although he refrains from saying so explicitly (indeed he does not even discuss Dooyeweerd in his book) I think that he would view Dooyeweerd's discussion of art as 'aesthetically qualified' products of human work

constituting a distinct sovereign sphere of human culture under God, at worst an endorsement of the idolatrous trend in the Western tradition of high art, or at best a view that was inadequately critical of it.

Because of the way Dooyeweerd's views are allied to a conception of the aesthetic that is too closely bound to classical views of harmony and beauty within which the idolatry of the high art tradition was nurtured, I think that some criticism along these lines would be justified. However, in fairness to Dooyeweerd, it needs to be pointed out that a person like Hans Rookmaaker, who was very close to Dooyeweerd in his aesthetic theory, placed much significance upon the way in which religious issues were bound up with the contextual perspective of a work of art, that he was acutely aware not only of the way idolatry functioned within a work of art, but also able to discuss the way art and artists function idolatrously in human society.[24]

In other words, in the way that Rookmaaker developed Dooyeweerd's ideas, the idea of a sphere of culture — fine art —having its own differentiated integrity, was in sharp contrast to the aestheticism of the modern high art tradition. The reason for this, of course, is that Dooyeweerd's idea of differentiated spheres of cultural activity is one that needs to be distinguished sharply from the modern secularist ideas of cultural autonomy. All differentiated cultural spheres are anchored in, and expressions of, religion, which provides the coherence of meaning that is reflected in respective differentiated cultural spheres.

Perhaps the main line of criticism is to be directed at Dooyeweerd's positioning of the aesthetic aspect. Because of its post-social positioning, coupled with the idea of differentiated spheres of cultural activity, it may, but need not, function in such a way as to lend support to the secularizing development of the tradition of high art in the West since the 18th century. However, it needs to be pointed out that this can only happen if the meaning {6} of the aesthetic is not only cultivated in terms of its social distinctiveness, but also in a way that involves aesthetic meaning functioning in a manner that is *isolated* from the rest of life — isolated for the purposes of aesthetic contemplation. Further, whilst this question of isolation or pretended independence of meaning is of a centrally religious character, it is also closely linked with the relationship of the aesthetic to the social and cultural spheres as these too are related to the religious roots of life.

It is my hope that the relocation of the aesthetic aspect that I shall propose shortly, together with Seerveld's re-evaluation of the kernel or core character of the aesthetic will go a long way toward meeting the kinds of theoretical objections that Wolterstorff's valuable critique of 'high art' might bring against an aesthetic theory in the philosophical tradition of Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven.

2.3 Seerveld
Calvin Seerveld's work in aesthetics has been a major contribution to reformational scholarship, and I would like to take this opportunity of expressing my personal indebtedness to his work.

In much of what has preceded as well as in much of what follows it will be apparent to what extent I am indebted to his contributions: to the modal kernel of the aesthetic aspect, to a positioning of the aesthetic aspect that differs fundamentally from Dooyeweerd's, to the significance of the distinction between the artistic and the aesthetic in human cultural activity, and to the character of imaginativity as it is

qualified aesthetically.

However, if Seerveld's discussion of the aesthetic has shown a weakness, then it seems to me that that weakness is in respect to a discussion of *the aesthetic side of creation as it is unaffected by human cultivating activity*. I believe that this weakness results from his positioning of the aesthetic aspect as post-technico-cultural. I wish to propose that the aesthetic aspect be positioned before the logical, as Seerveld does, but with both the logical and the aesthetic aspects preceding the technico-cultural aspect. My reasons for doing so, together with some of their implications for dealing with some of the problems elucidated above, will be discussed shortly.

2.4 Wolterstorff
In his two books 'Art in Action' and 'Works and Worlds of Art', Wolterstorff has been principally concerned with a theory of art rather than a theory of aesthetics. In modernʼ terms, in spite of the continued reference to beauty, in Encyclopaedia and Dictionary definitions, aesthetics has become largely identified with theoretical reflection upon the fine arts. However, as I have tried to point out in Part III of this essay, both our common experience and the breadth of historical reflection of aesthetic theory calls this tendency into question. Accordingly, one of the main purposes of the present essay is to develop an aesthetic theory that is consider-ably wider than a theoretical reflection upon the fine arts.

In this respect the contributions of Wolterstorff provide many valuable points of interest and insight with respect to a reformational approach to art, but are much weaker in respect to the more general aesthetic questions that are of concern here. Further, because they are more particularly orientated to the general tradition of Anglo-Saxon philosophy than is the continental tradition of philosophy that nurtured the development of the Reformational philosophy of Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven, it tends to have both a greater clarity of argument and a more limited scope. The present essay, working within an Anglo-Saxon context that seeks to develop and reform the tradition of Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven, has obviously much to learn from the contributions of people like Wolterstorff. Wolterstorff's discussion of art within the contours of a Christian outlook may be considered to fall into two parts:

(i)a discussion of 'the given' with which the artist works:
(ii)a discussion of the nature of art as 'the action of world projection'.

Although he adds some interesting points to (i), much of it is based upon Osgood's work on synesthesia, in general it seems to me to lack the insight of the kind of aesthetic (as opposed to artistic) theory being developed by Seerveld: On the other hand his discussion of art as 'the action of world projection 'is rich with a carefully worked discussion of the character of the aesthetic with-in the full context of human experience, and these insights I have attempted to rework critically into the contributions of reformational philosophy.

The main purpose of the present essay is to set out foundational issues with respect to the zone of the aesthetic. Hence an unduly extended discussion of the artistic is not the main issue at stake. For this reason, rather than discuss the many good features of Wolterstorff's contribution to a theory of art, I wish rather to point to what I judge to be the weaknesses of his approach: to his failure to adequately distinguish the aesthetic and the artistic on the one hand, and to his inadequate treatment of the aesthetic in respect of natural creation on the other. {7}

3. SOME NEW POINTS OF DEPARTURE THAT BUILD UPON THIS BACKGROUND

In what follows I shall attempt to develop some proposals for the further reformation of aesthetic theory. None of these proposals may be considered completely new: almost all of them have been gleaned from the interaction with others, especially from Dooyeweerd and Seerveld.[25] However, I think it fair to say that the overall stance presented here does involve some significant new points when taken in its entirety.

3.1 Aesthetic Order and Meaning

I propose a view of the zone of the aesthetic that is with-in the broad contours of the tradition of Reformational Philosophy indebted to Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven bearing in mind Seerveld's proposals with regard to the kernel of the aesthetic.

However, I would like to discuss the relationship between God and Creation less in terms of Law, and more in terms of God's faithful ordering of His creation with no intermediary or 'boundary — such as law — being envisaged between them. This counts as a major point of revision in Reformational philosophy, for the idea of the cosmos as a 'Law Order' and its modal aspects as 'law-spheres' has been one of the principal emphases in its development.[26]

The idea of a boundary between God and his Creation is, however, a spatial analogy that all too readily con-notes a third entity between God and Creation, one that may easily begin to assume an autonomy from God. The basic relation between God and creation is one of dependence. God has brought His Creation into being and is in the process of bringing it to its fulfilment in Christ. In doing this God is faithful and trustworthy. However, human knowledge of the way God orders His creation is limited to what God declares to us in His covenant Word, and to our intuitions as to the functioning of God's world, as well as our fallible responses in our analyses of our experiences of God's ordering of His world. In this respect I follow the main lines of the approach developed by Stuart Fowler in his article 'Law, Order and Regularity'.[27]

Thus the various aspects of creaturely functioning — numerical, spatial, logical, lingual etc., are to be viewed less as law spheres and more as distinct levels, aspects or modes of meaning. God initiates and orders His creation in such a way that these various levels or aspects of meaning are bound up with the dynamic unfolding of Creation to a fulfilment in Christ. Further, since the Fall this ordering of Creation involves a redemptive strain as an integral part of its dynamically unfolding features. God is busy bringing all things to their fulfilment in Christ in a way that takes account of the sin and idolatry of humankind:

For this reason I would prefer to talk of an *ordering* and an *ordered* side of creation rather than a law and a subject side. We have an experience of God, the One who faithfully orders the Creation of which we are part, but we do not have any direct experience of the *Lazo* by which He orders Creation, apart from our experience of participating in the ordered side of it, as creatures: We certainly have an experience of the normative aspects of that ordering, in respect to justice, morals etc. His faithful ordering of creation is responsible for that experience in a way that declares His personal character to us. However, the existence of a form of Law as anything but the faithful personal Word and will of God as this is an expression of His character, has to be viewed as highly dubious: Any discussion of the specifics of the faithful ways in which God orders his cosmos has, accordingly, to be based upon an analysis of the

details of the *ordered* side of creation, as we experience it concretely.

The Scriptures reveal something of the ways in which God is active ordering the Creation, through the work of His Word and Spirit. Moreover, although the Scriptures, as the Word of God written, bear faithful witness to this ordering activity as well as to the One who is undertaking it, they do so within the context of the same theatre of activity in which all else takes place in human experience, namely, to the ordered Creation, as it is subject to the diverse, faithful and meaningful ordering activity of God:

Now, the immediate consequence of this, of course, is that our theorising is always a formulated response as to the way creation is ordered under the faithful ordering hand of God: theorising too is subject to the creational conditions of God's ordering, and thus is never to be identified with the way that ordering activity itself takes place. Hence our theories always need to be open to the criticism of experience — to the ways creation is ordered by the Word and Spirit of God.

The Aesthetic Aspect
The aesthetic aspect, or mode of creation is therefore to be understood as an aspect of meaning that is distinctive, fundamental and irreducible. As such aesthetic order and meaning functions in coherence with all other aspects of creaturely meaning within a creation that is everywhere ordered by God. I follow Seerveld in identifying the kernel of this aspect as *suggestiveness, nuance-fulness* or *allusiveness*.

3.2 Sign and Symbol
Before proceeding to discuss the aesthetic aspect in any further detail I shall give some further attention to the distinction between sign and symbol introduced above. I do so here because I think it has important {8} implications for an adequate understanding of both the aesthetic and the symbolic aspects.

There are a whole host of both natural and conventional *signs* that function both in animal and in human experience.[28] Consider the howling sound of a strong wind; the creek and snap, and subsequent crash of a tree falling down. The sound of the latter is a sign that the wind in the storm has brought the tree down. Or consider the bark, the whine, the whimper, the growl, or the howl of a dog; or the screaming, crying, or yelling of a human being: Each of these sounds are natural signs, pointing both to an emotional condition in the dog or human; and to the factors that may be causing this emotional condition. As such the sensory character of these natural signs is the sensory objectification of these concrete cause-effect relationships. In the case of the tree falling in the wind, the causal relationship is of a physical character; in the cases of the dog and human sounds, the causal relationships are emotional in character, perhaps drawing attention to the causes of whatever emotional condition is being signified.

The *sign* character of these natural sounds derives from the way in which the auditory sensory features qualifying the sign are bound to the specifics of these causal relationships. One of the member features signalled in the sign — the fall of the tree, the whine of the dog, the scream of the human — points and draws attention to the cause of these signalled effects, even though they may not be fully disclosed in the signs that have been given.

Signs are not limited to the natural functioning of creation. Similar characteristics

may be observed when we examine the ways in which humanly-formed features may be involved. Consider, for example, the way in which a dinner gong, the mentioning of the master's name in the presence of the dog, or a doorbell all function as signs. In each of these cases there are features of the conventions of human formation involved: the time for dinner, as well as the manner of signalling its readiness; the master could have given the dog many other names; the presence of a visitor at the door could be signalled in other ways than by the sound of a doorbell.

However, these conventional features do not detract from the fact that all of these sounds function as signs. Again, what the auditory sensory features qualifying the sign have in common is the fact that they are bound to causal or associative relationships which are objectified in the sign in such a way as to call attention to this relationship.

One of its member features predominates in the sign, but in a way that calls attention to the other. The sounding of the dinner gong points beyond the person making the sound to its associated cause — dinner is ready; the mentioning of the dog-owner's name causes the dog to bark and wag its tail in the expectation that the one spoken of will make an imminent appearance; the sound of the doorbell draws attention to the one causing the sound, a visitor announcing his arrival, calling for our response to answer the door.

A sign, therefore, is the *sensory objectification of a* concrete cause-effect or association relationship in a way that one of its two member features is drawn to the attention of observers in such a way as to cause them to give attention to the other. In the case of a *symbol* on the other hand, whilst it will invariably involve sensory features, these are *not* bound to the sensory objectification of a concrete causal or association relationship. A symbol involves the free formative activity of a human subject in the utilisation of a sound, touch or visual impression as 'standing for' something else that, in general, need not be *immediately* capable of sensory experience.

This distinction between a sign and a symbol may be well illustrated in the way a road sign functions in every day life. The *name* on the sign is a symbol that may function in all manner of contexts, quite physically and sensorily removed from the place itself. However if children having heard their mother speak many times of the house and street and town in which she was brought up, finally want to see it for themselves, then they want to *relate the symbol to the reality in perceptual terms*. To do this they need signs – signs that actually point to the places that are symbolised by their names. In this respect the street sign functions as the visual sensory feature that connects the symbol embodied in the name with the thing symbolised by that name. In other words a street sign is a sign, not a symbol, but it does use a symbol to signify.

The joint functioning of sign and symbol indicated in this example may be illustrated by some further examples. The first one I shall consider is a wedding ring. By convention a wedding ring *symbolises* the love, the troth and promises made between husband and wife. The exchange of rings in a marriage celebration, and the continued wearing of them is a *sign* to all that the wearers have taken upon themselves these promises and are married to each other. It is because of the symbolism involved in the rings that the exchange and wearing of them is able to function as a sign to the effect that these particular persons have taken upon themselves the promises and obligations connoted by the general symbolism of the ring.

My second example is that of shaking hands or kissing on the cheek. Both these gestures symbolise goodwill, trust and affection between the respective parties. The symbolism that has been developed by convention amongst peoples means that when two people shake hands or kiss on the cheek they give a *sign* to each other as well as to those watching that goodwill, trust and a measure of affection is intended to function mutually between them. Of course it does not always work quite like that. When Judas kissed Jesus on the cheek in the {9} garden it was not meant as a sign of goodwill, but as a *signal* for the soldiers to take him. In using the kiss as a signal in this way Judas was denying the conventional symbolism associated with the kiss on the cheek with the result that the action was no longer a sign of good-will, trust and affection, but of treachery. In both this particular example as well as the many other ones like it before and since, we have illustrated both *the sign* and *the signal* of treachery. It is a sign of treachery in that the act functioned as a cue for the soldiers to act and arrest Jesus. Further, of course, the particular incident has since become *a symbol* of treachery — doing a Judas.

The final example that I shall consider relates to the celebration of the Communion or the Lord's Supper.[29] The bread and wine in the Communion *symbolise* the body and blood of Jesus Christ. However the act of communion is not simply a remembrance or reminder of God's mercy and grace, given to humankind through Christ in his act in dying on the cross in the past. Rather it is a *sign* of the real presence of Jesus Christ imparting His grace to believing hearts as they share in the remembrance and meaning of his sacrificial death, partaking of the bread and wine that symbolise the broken body and the shed blood of that death.

Against the background of the transsubstantiation doctrine, the Church was in danger of losing the symbolic nature of the bread and the wine in favour of a literal-ism. Further, it had come to confer upon the priesthood the power of re-enacting "the once for all sacrifice of Jesus Christ for sin", and these features together opened up the possibility of a magical treating of the sacraments. As Segundo writes:

"Magic, reduced to its essential elements, consists of the quest for an efficacy that goes beyond man's power: It achieves this by having recourse to superior powers, whom it tries to operate in a specific way through symbolic gestures. These gestures, taking on superhuman power but nevertheless controlled by man through symbolism, will produce the proper effect directly. It will be all the more automatic insofar as the efficacy is not the human, common effectiveness of an ordinary concrete action.

If one is trying to cause the death of his enemy, he will resort to a spell so that his trivial act will be tied up with a superior power. With this combination of deeds and words one expects an automatic result that is out of all proportion to the action performed but that is con-trolled by the symbolism of it".[30]

If there have been ways in which the emphases of the Council of Trent opened up the way for magical factors, then in reacting to them many Protestant interpretations affirmed not only the symbolic character of the bread and wine but also emphasised that it had simply the character of a remembrance of the once for all sacrifice of Christ, thus effectively denying the real presence of Christ in the sacraments.

The distinction between symbol and sign suggested here enables us to appreciate both the symbolic character of the sacraments, thus undermining the tendency toward

magic, and at the same time to experience the real presence of Christ in the celebration, thus under-mining the tendency toward a mere remembrance that denies a real presence. The symbols of the body and blood of Christ function as signs of the actual presence of Christ acting in grace and mercy. This emphasis thus averts any tendency toward viewing the communion as an historical remembrance that is devoid of the mystery of the real presence of Christ in the present moment.

When Jesus spoke of the bread and wine as his body and blood, he conferred on these elements of our basic diet the category of symbols of the new covenant, founded in the historic act of his birth, death and passion. As such they are symbols of God's grace and mercy to repentant sinners who acknowledge their poverty of spirit. The reality of God's grace and mercy, symbolised by the bread and wine, is available to be claimed by faith.

In this respect, of course, the reality of the reception of God's grace in the lives of men and women takes place quite apart from the celebration of Holy Communion: It takes place in many ways through the dynamic work of God's Word and Spirit in the world. In this sense the act of communion might be said to *symbolise* this.

However, the act of celebrating communion is not simply a symbol of this more general reality of the work of God's grace in the world: Rather it is both a *sign* of the real presence of the work of Christ in the act of communion, and *a symbol* of the reality of our dependence upon Christ and of his activity in day to day life. As Segundo writes again:

'It might seem, on the one hand, that God needed the sacraments to communicate his grace. But if the sacraments are necessary, it is not because their absence would mean the absence of grace in the world. It is because without them the grace conferred would not be s*ignified'.*[31]

Thus, with all this in mind it should be clear that a sign and a symbol may well function together, and indeed within the context of human affairs frequently do. However, a symbol is a humanly formed meaning-bearer that in and of itself does not function in a direct perceptible relation to the thing, idea, or person, that may be symbolised. A sign on the other hand, is of necessity bound to the perceptible features that objectify the relation between the two members of the signifying relation: the sound of the tree falling and the cause of the fall; the wagging of the dog's tail and its playfulness, contentment, or joy at seeing its master; the scream of the {10} woman and its cause; the ring on the doorbell and the visitor; the broken twig and the animal or person who passed by breaking it; the footprint and the person or animal leaving it behind as a sign of their having been there; the animal droppings left on the pathway, their hardness and the time lapsed since the animal had passed that way; the wearing of a wedding ring and the trothfulness toward the spouse; the kiss on the cheek and the attitude of goodwill, trust and affection; the bread and wine and the real presence of the grace and mercy of God.

Now, it should be clear that a *natural symbol* is a contradiction in terms. Natural things or their generalised likeness, such as an eagle, a kangaroo, a kiwi, a bulldog, a maple-leaf or a snake, may indeed function as symbols, but they do not function as symbols without human formative power being brought to bear upon the content that is then symbolised by these naturally occurring things. The way these 'natural' symbols just mentioned function is exactly like the way in which symbols like the

cross or the hammer and sickle function. A cross is a humanly formed instrument of execution, a hammer and a sickle are examples of tools used in everyday work. Like the eagle, kangaroo and the kiwi, these humanly cultivated instruments may then be taken up and used as symbols that embody meanings that take certain suggestive features from the natural or cultural context and build them into their symbolism. It is precisely through these suggestive features that the aesthetic aspect comes to function in symbolisation. Thus the hammer and sickle suggest the nobility of ordinary day to day work, exalted to a secular ultimacy of meaning; the cross is suggestive of humiliation, of torture, of punishment, and, because of Christ's resurrection, hope through suffering.

However, whilst to speak of natural symbols is a contra-diction in terms, to speak of natural signs is both sensible and necessary. Now, in this respect it is of course, quite possible to utilise or imitate natural signs as symbols. Immediately we do that, however, they cease to function as signs; they are symbols: But that does not make them natural symbols: For example, the screaming face superimposed by Francis Bacon on Velasquez' painting of Pope Innocent X utilizes the facial sign of a scream. Whilst it may convey something of the feeling of pain, it is no longer *a sign* of pain or anguish; it is *symbolic* of it. As such it seeks to build on the natural aesthetic features involved in the act of screaming. It gains much of its artistic effect from the natural aesthetic facial features associated with screaming. However, it is better described as a form of symbolising that utilizes certain natural aesthetic features found in signs rather than as a natural symbol.

Now, in his remarks on the significance of what he calls 'natural symbolism' for the aesthetic functioning of natural creation, Dooyeweerd writes:

> *'A genuine symbol,* in contradistinction to a natural animal means of expression, always has a cultural and logical foundation. In the case of a *natural symbolism* which lies at the foundation of objective aesthetical relations in nature (for instance the objective beauty of a landscape) the *objective symbolical,* as well as the objective logical and cultural functions of the beautiful natural whole, are only given potentially in relation to human actualization by the corresponding modal subject functions'.[32] (emphasis added).

In this passage Dooyeweerd distinguishes *a genuine symbol* from what he calls a *natural symbol.* What he means by the latter, however is very unclear. If we consider him to be talking about what I have termed a 'natural sign' then in what sense can it be said to lie at the foundation of the aesthetic object functioning of creation whilst the latter is deemed to occupy a post-technico-cultural position in the modal order? I would suggest that it is possible to maintain this feature without admitting the relativism of the conventions of human formation only if the aesthetic features founded upon the functioning of natural signs are deemed to be *pre*-technico-cultural, a feature which I suggest is part of the intuitions of our common experience.

However, I doubt whether Dooyeweerd does mean what I mean by a 'natural sign' when he speaks of a 'natural symbol'. He more than likely means that a natural symbol is given only in principle, requiring to be unfolded by human subjective activity if it is to acquire the status of a 'genuine symbol'. Indeed he suggests this in the passage quoted above.

This latter line of reasoning would seem to me to raise the question as to what sense

may be made of the idea of 'natural symbol' that differs from that of a 'potential lingual object function'. I suggest that the latter does not carry with it any idea at all of the *actual* symbolisation connoted by the term 'natural symbol', and this point is well illustrated in the above discussion concerning the use of the kangaroo, the kiwi, etc. as symbols. As natural objects the latter may indeed be said to have potential symbolic object functions. As long as these are not actualised, however, we may not speak of a 'natural symbol' in this sense. Further, once they have been actualised, then they may only be described as 'natural' symbols in the sense that humanly-formed embodied meanings have been ascribed to natural things, utilising certain nuances that may be involved with them in the process.

If the aesthetic aspect of creation, like the lingual, is deemed to be post-technico-cultural, then, like the lingual it too needs to function percipiently or sensitively, and may make use of natural signs as symbols in doing so. In the case of the lingual, this means of course, that all *actual* lingual or symbolical object functions are culturally formed, even those which may be related to natural signs in the manner considered above: However, in the case of the aesthetic aspect, is it the case that it has no {11} natural object functions in its own right? To answer yes to this question would not only deny our intuitions concerning the objective aesthetic functioning of natural creation, but it would also deny the long tradition that recognises something aesthetically common to both natural and humanly-formed creation. Furthermore it would also jeopardise the possibility of the objectification of aesthetic subject-object relationships in a way that did not adequately guard against the subjectivising of the aesthetic object functions in all cultural things.

3.3 The Positioning of the Aesthetic Aspect

As discussed in section 3.1 above, the aesthetic aspect, or mode of the creational functioning of all creaturely existence is to be understood as an aspect of meaning that is distinctive, fundamental and irreducible, functioning in coherence with all other aspects of meaning in the creation as it is everywhere ordered by God

The major thrust of my proposal for the further development of reformational aesthetic theory and general philosophy is with regard to the *positioning* of the aesthetic aspect. In the first place however, I propose, following what Dooyeweerd and others have referred to as the *psychical* be recognised as involving two distinct kinds of creaturely meaning and ordering — the *percipient* or *sensitive* on the one hand, and the *affective* or *emotive* on the other[33]. The percipient refers exclusively to the realm of sensory perception whilst the affective involves feeling and emotion. Clearly the percipient is foundational for the affective. Many creatures function percipiently that do not function affectively.

Further I propose that the aesthetic be positioned immediately after the affective, and that this be followed by the logical; then the technico-cultural followed by the lingual or symbolical:

Thus the modal order would then look, with special reference to the aesthetic, as set out in the diagram on this page.

The natural creation, unaffected by human formative power, has many kinds of aesthetic nuances. As realised in actual things, of course, many of these occur together: the sounds, the awesome heights, the colours of the rocks and vegetation all associated with a waterfall, for example. Furthermore, these belong, not only in an

aesthetic coherence, but also in coherence with the numerical, spatial, kinematic, physical, biotic, percipient and affective properties of the whole and parts of the specific creaturely things that make it up.

However, in accordance with the various modes of creaturely functioning that we may describe as *natural,* in the sense that their object functions do not require the exercise of human formative power for their actualisation, we may distinguish and identify them in accordance with the various modal aspects: *nuanceful unity and diversity,* harmony as a numerical retrocipation of the aesthetic aspect that functions with respect to *all* other aesthetic features, and perhaps by reason of this very universality and foundational feature has been mistakenly identified as the kernel of the aesthetic aspect for so long.

DIAGRAM SETTING OUT THE PROPOSED RELATION
OF THE AESTHETIC TO OTHER ASPECTS

confessional style of worship

ethical style of ethical relations

jural style of doing justice

economic style of dealing with scarcity

social intercourse style of social relations

lingual style of symbolising

technico-cultural nuanceful style

logical fruitful/rich idea; nuanceful idea

aesthetic (*nuancefulness*)

affective nuanceful relations, as expressed via touch: stirring,"touching" etc.

percipient nuanceful tastes, sounds, colours, smells

biotic nuanceful vitality

physical nuanceful energy, power, awe

kinematic nuanceful movements

spatial nuanceful patterns

numerical nuanceful unity and diversity, fittingness, harmony

The term 'beauty' has been used as a virtual synonym for 'harmony' in the sense just discussed. However I suspect that the term as it continues to be used in every-day usage has generally a broader connotation than this: It would seem to me that, without going into great detail, a case can be made for it describing certain kinds of aesthetic normativity — the kind of normativity that applies to the creation as it should be, unaffected by sin and decay. As such the fallenness and groaning of creation has very real aesthetic features that we describe as ugly. Going by its everyday usage, 'beauty' and 'ugly' are terms that, moreover, are generally applied to the aesthetic side of concrete wholes — of landscapes, buildings, cities etc. In this sense humanly formed aesthetic normativity cannot be said to be setting out a pristine ideal of 'beauty' and avoiding the ugly.

Creation is in the process of being redeemed. To testify to this means that its ugly features need to be seen as real but in the process of redemption.

At this point we could well discuss the significance of the 'less than beautiful' features of Rembrandt's paintings of naked, old women, comparing them with the attempts of Renaissance painters to paint a transcendent ideal of female beauty, or the attempts of Goya to paint the flesh and blood beauty of the women he knew. Rembrandt's paintings are neither beautiful nor ugly in the commonly used sense of these terms. The ugly features are {12} not hidden, but nor are they overplayed. They are recognised as part of the reality of the world we live in, but that world, though lost, is in the process of being redeemed. It therefore has dignity in the midst of its ugliness.

Nuanceful shapes are abundant in trees, flowers, rocks, seashells and indeed everywhere in creation, as are the *nuanceful movements* of birds, fish, animals, clouds, sandstorms and snow. *Nuanceful power and energy* are evident in the awefulness that evokes the terror of bush-fires, earthquakes, waterfalls and electric storms. *Nuanceful vitality is* present in the playfulness of pup-pies, lambs and kittens as well as the sheer exuberance for life on the part of many creatures.

The percipient functions of sound, sight, smell, taste are richly endowed with aesthetic nuances that are, of course, founded in the physical functioning of creation. The percipient function of touch, on the other hand, is closely bound to the function of affective relations. However, *affective nuances* are powerfully borne by the emotions, feelings and moods that have particular links to the percipient functions of touch and sound. In the logical aspect we may speak of an *elegant* argument, a nuanceful or *fruitful* idea as examples of aesthetic moments in that aspect.

Now, *the givenness* of these naturally occurring aesthetic nuances in the numerical, spatial, kinematic, physical, biotic, percipient and affective aspects does not exhaust the aesthetic features of creation within these aspects anymore than the occurrence of natural shapes exhausts the possibilities of actual shapes in the spatial aspect. Amongst the rich range of possibilities afforded by the creation under the good ordering hand of God, the cultivating hand of man as an aesthetic subject, forms and unfolds all manner of nuances both in the natural and the cultural functioning of reality.

Many of the aesthetic nuances of natural creation lie *undisclosed,* such as the woodgrain, the colours and shapes woven into the patterned design of wood, stone and sea-shells: In such cases the aesthetic nuances occur as natural object functions, but are undisclosed, requiring to be uncovered and realised by the executive skill and appreciative insight of a craftsman.

Insofar as aesthetic object functions require human formation — as they do for example, in the design and construction of buildings, furniture and clothes, the foundational aesthetic feature is *style.* In this respect style is an aesthetic retrocipatory moment of the technico-cultural aspect of reality, and, as such, is foundational to aesthetic subject and object functions in *all* the posttechnico-cultural aspects of reality. Whenever a crafts-man uncovers aesthetic object functions such as wood-grain, he rarely simply uncovers, but, as an integral part of his work, goes on to open up these naturally occur-ring, but undisclosed aesthetic object functions by way of cultural artefacts that also involve *styling* in addition to uncovering. Thus woodgrain occurs in both the uncovered and opened out aesthetic object functions of wall panels and furniture under the leadership of the skill of a craftsman.

Style is fundamental to the aesthetic side of all human formative activity, including the artistic. However, style is not unique to art. It functions in cooking, gardening, building, city-planning, the making of furniture, house-hold appliances, clothing and all other fields of human formative activity, including worship.

To summarise, we may identify aesthetic object functions in the following categories:

(i)naturally occurring, and *disclosed,* e.g. the sight and sounds of waterfalls; the sight of snow on the Southern Alps, the red earth around Ayres Rock.

(ii)naturally occurring, but *undisclosed.* e.g. the wood-grain in growing trees.

(iii)naturally occurring, undisclosed, but *uncovered* by human hand. Usually this uncovering requires skill and is often simultaneously styled into an artefact, e.g. a piece of furniture crafted from wood so as to make a feature of the grain.

(iv)humanly formed involving features of *style:* e.g. the style of a garden, cooking,

clothing etc.

The positioning of the aesthetic aspect before the technico-cultural suggested here enables us to give a clear and adequate account of these four different kinds of aesthetic object functions:

(i) occurs naturally and may be appreciated as such by any aesthetic subject. (ii) occurs naturally but are generally not appreciated by aesthetic subjects. (iii) occur naturally but are disclosed as the result of the human work of disclosure, usually accompanied by culturally formed aesthetic object functions in the styling of various artefacts. (iv) occur only as the result of human cultural formation; as such they involve the opening up of the aesthetic possibilities in the earlier aspects.

3.4 The Aesthetic Subject-Object Relationship
Central to the development of modern aesthetic theory-since the 18th century has been the subjectivising of the aesthetic aspect of reality. This should not in and of itself be considered as necessarily implying a relativism: Quite the contrary in fact. In the 18th century the major emphasis may have been upon the subjective *sense* of beauty, but the latter was viewed as a feature of human nature that was common to the way *all* human subjects functioned and responded to God's ordering of reality. {13}

This subjectivising tendency consists in an emphasis upon the aesthetic *response* to reality on the part of human subjects as opposed to an emphasis upon those features in things, events, and panoramas that *occasion* the aesthetic response of subjects: Prior to the 18th century developments, not only things, qualities and people but also God had been described as beautiful, implying that what was aesthetically (and also morally) worthy was to be found in the aesthetic properties of the things, events and panoramas themselves, whether or not subjects responded appropriately to them.

These particular developments have much to do with the primary/secondary qualities doctrine as well as with the very foundations of the secular humanistic out-look that asserted itself very powerfully during the 18th century. Accordingly, a reformational outlook considering the aesthetic dimension of reality needs to give careful attention to the aesthetic subject-object relation. I shall begin with a critical discussion of this as it has been dealt with by Lambert Zuidevaart and Calvin Seerveld.

In his Master's thesis on Kant, Zuidevaart discussed the general subject-object relation in terms of the way a subject *guides* the object, citing by way of parallel, the example of the way soils function as biotic objects under the leadership of plants as biotic subjects — deriving nourishment from them.[34] He then goes on to discuss the aesthetic subject-object relationship in similar terms.

Human beings are the only creatures who actually function as aesthetic subjects, and thus 'the aestheticity *attributed* to non-human respondents objectively *depends on* human aestheticity.[35]

Thus, 'flowers exist as biotic subjects. But *when humans treasure them,* say, for their colourfully perfumed cheeriness, flowers function as aesthetic objects'.[36]

Now the general implication of all this would appear to be that natural things *only* have an aesthetic object function when human subjects appreciate them: Thus, if a human subject were to fail to appreciate or treasure 'the colourfully perfumed

cheeriness of flowers' the question arises as to whether or not the latter possess an aesthetic object function at all. Indeed Zuidevaart's discussion of the aesthetic subject-object relation as it functions with regard to the aesthetic object functioning of natural things would seem to suggest that the latter only existed when they were appreciated by an aesthetic subject! This I suggest is thoroughly unsatisfactory.

The basic feature of the relation between a modal subject and object is *not* one of leading or guiding, but one of *correlation* or *coordination,* with the object function playing the passive and the subject function the active role.[37] Now, in this sense a subject may *open up* object functions, and in *this* sense *lead* or *guide* their realisation. However, this still leaves open the question as to the sense in which object functions exist in the closed state. Zuidevaart's discussion of the subject's leading or guiding of the functions does not appear to be with reference to their being opened up — in the fashion of cultural objects, for example. To the contrary they are with reference to the aesthetic object functions in the *closed* state—recognising and treasuring 'a piece of driftwood' or 'the scent of flowers'. Presumably this could be extended to the appreciation of the scenery in the mountains, in the forests and of waterfall as well as all other natural aesthetic features:

In this light, the main point that Zuidevaart appears to be making is *not* that the aesthetic subject guides and leads *the opening up* of aesthetic object functions, but rather that they are *not actualised* even in the closed state unless activated by an aesthetic subject. Indeed one might consider the parallel with such objective symbols as the eagle, kangaroo, maple-leaf and kiwi considered earlier: they are indeed not actualised as symbolic objects apart from the leading activity of a symbolic subject, despite the fact that they already have a natural existence. However, this conclusion is not satisfactory for disclosed or undisclosed naturally occurring aesthetic object functions:

Now, whilst the aesthetic aspect is considered to be post-technico-cultural, the distinction between closed and opened aesthetic object functions cannot really be made. One of the conditions for a modal aspect to be post-technico-cultural is precisely that it has no actual object functions apart from the formative activity of a human subject. The basic problem with Zuidevaart's discussion of the aesthetic subject-object relation would therefore appear to be with his post-technico-cultural positioning of the aesthetic aspect:

Calvin Seerveld makes some interesting remarks on the aesthetic subject-object relation in his paper entitled 'Imaginitivity'.[38] Whilst the main concern of the paper — the location of the distinctiveness of imagining as an aesthetic subject function — is I think a feature which makes some distinct advances, his discussion of the aesthetic subject-object relation is decidedly ambiguous. On the one hand he states that 'the nuances (=aesthetic object functions) and suggestion-rich properties (=aesthetic subject functions) of primary states of affairs — things, acts, and events — can be captured by imagining subjects.[39]

It is quite clear from the follow-up to this sentence that both natural occurring and culturally formed creation are viewed as having aesthetic object functions — as nuances that are capable of functioning in relation to imaginative subject functioning. This seems to me to show excellent insight, for it suggests that imagining as a human aesthetic subjection function, is correlated with the aesthetic object functioning of creation, both with natural or un-opened object functions and with culturally formed

or opened object functions. Again I would {14} simply claim, however, that to admit that an aspect of reality has object functions that do not require them to be actualised via subjective human cultural formation, is to admit that the aspect concerned should be viewed as pre-technico-cultural.

Later in this paper Seerveld discusses what he calls *fictions* and in the course of doing so considers them as *aesthetic objects* — to be compared with words and concepts in the lingual and logical aspects respectively. Thus he writes:

'The kind of entities which result from imagining acts I call *fictions*. The distillate of brief, human imaginative acts may be fleeting imaginings, so fleeting or provisional a conscious hold on certain prehended nuance that the *Vorstellung* gets lost in the jumble of feelings, concepts, images, signs, concerns and beliefs that are constantly in one's consciousness. But musings and fancies, similes and graphic metaphors — imaginata — deserve recognition of their distinct identity.[40]

From this discussion of fictions or imaginata he goes on to make the pertinent remarks comparing words, concepts and fictions as objects in various subject-object relationships:

'A fiction is a nuanceful or aesthetic object in the way that concepts are analytic objects and words are semantic objects; results of human activity whose particular existence is defined by object functionality. Concepts exist to be thought, words exist to be spoken; fictions to be imagined'.[41]

In *this* context Seerveld is articulating a standpoint in which the lingual, logical and aesthetic aspects of reality are all deemed to be post-technico-cultural, with their respective object functions all requiring to be culturally formed under the correlative leading of their respective subjects.

At this point it is perhaps worthwhile considering why Dooyeweerd maintained that the logical aspect of reality should be considered pre-technico-cultural, for I think it sheds a lot of light on the problems under consideration.

For Dooyeweerd an object, in a modal sense, is always an object to a modal subject function co-ordinated with it: The modal subject is the *active* pole whereas the modal object is the *passive* pole. The latter, however, generally exists independently of any particular subject. Indeed Dooyeweerd stresses the point that a modal object in general has an individuality that is indifferent to the modal subjects with which it may be coordinated.[42]

For example, the objective sensory image of a thing or event is correlated with the subjective sensory perception of one or more subjects. However, the former has an individuality that is indifferent to the different subjective perceptions of the latter, although the same object function is correlated with them.

Again, an objective symbol, such as a word is correlated with symbolical signification by or between lingual subjects: Whatever way a particular lingual subject may want to engage in symbolical signification needs to take account of the way in which the *existing objective symbols* — such as words and gestures — already function as lingual objects *independently* of the individuality of the lingual subjects with which they may be coordinated.

These two examples, however, make it clear that objective sensory images function as sensory objects in the *natural* aspects of reality in ways that do require human formative power, and, for that reason the percipient modal aspect of reality should be viewed as pre-technico-cultural. On the other hand, the meaning of a word or gesture as a lingual or symbolical object (as distinct from a sign), *requires* the exercise of human cultural formative power to exist in the manner of a lingual object: On these grounds the lingual aspect should be viewed as post-technico-cultural.

Dooyeweerd made a sharp distinction between *a logical object function* on the one hand, and the *intentional logical content of a subjective concept* on the other[43]. Reality is think-able because it has logical object functions, just as it is perceiv-able because it has percipient object functions that function as the objective sensory images that may be correlated with the subjective sensory perceptions of sentient creatures. Thus Dooyeweerd writes:

> "A satisfactory insight into the logical subject-object relation can be gained only if we try to understand also this relation from the temporal meaning coherence of the modal aspects. *Temporal reality itself has a logical object-side.* This is the first fact that should be grasped. The logical object cannot coalesce with its intentional logical content of a subjective concept".[44]

Dooyeweerd suggests, in other words, that logical objectivity is not to be found by any attempt on the part of logical subjects to be rational, unbiassed, neutral, to follow scientific method, or to be in intrasubjective agreement. Logical objectivity, more fundamentally, is the functioning of reality independently of any particular logical subject: Reality *is thinkable, capable of logical analy*sis on the part of *any* logical subject. Nonetheless *the intentional content of any particular logical subject,* whilst existing only in the logical subject-object relation, *may not be identified with the logical object functioning of reality.*

Logical object functions, in other words, *do not* require the exercise of human subjective cultural formative power for their functioning. Although I do not know of anywhere in which Dooyeweerd states it explicitly, it would seem to me that this is the primary reason why he placed the logical aspect prior to the technico-cultural. Furthermore, it would seem to me that this insight is {15} both correct and one that has far-reaching significance in a day in which relativisms of all sorts are gaining ground.

It is along similar lines that I would claim that the aesthetic aspect of reality should be viewed as pre-technico-cultural, and, indeed, pre-logical.

Objectification
Before we proceed further with a specific consideration of the aesthetic subject-object relation, it is of some importance to discuss the process of objectification, as there are many ways in which it can shed further light on some of these problems.

Objectification is the process whereby a subject function or a subject-object relation is realised in the object functioning of a later aspect via a subject functioning in that aspect. It is in the latter sense that I have already sought to discuss the functioning of *signs* as *the objectification of subject-object causal or association relations in the percipient aspect,*

In a similar vein, rather than view a concept as a logical object, I suggest that it is better to view it within the con-text of a logical subject-object relation that is objectified in the public domain in the lingual or symbolical aspect on the part of a lingual subject through what are generally referred to as 'terms' — or words that carry with them well-defined, if not always precise conceptual meaning [45]. In this way the subjective response to the objective logical functioning of creation embodied in 'the concept' is given public expression for scrutiny, examination and criticism.

Thus a concept is *the subjective content* in response to the logical object functioning of reality existing in a logical subject-object relation. As such it is objectified in the public domain through the lingual or symbolical aspect of reality in the denotation-connotation features of terms in a language. The *denotation* of the terms of the language point to logical objective properties of reality — logical distinctions that may be made — whilst the *connotation* of the terms of the language point to the subjective content of the conceptual responses to these objective properties. In the first instance, of course, the connotations belong to the language as it has been shaped by its users, and to engage in intentional effort to draw the distinctions differently, drawing attention to logical object functions that have been somewhat distorted in the use of language, can itself be quite a difficult task.

Thus the two features — the logical subject-object relation and the symbolical denotation-connotation relation stand in a close correlation to each other. Furthermore, the subjective content of a concept can only function intrasubjectively via this process of objectification, and the accuracy of the subjective responses is only open to the critical assessment of others via this process. In the latter, other logical subjects respond to the same objective logical properties of reality, and we are able to assess the responses of others through the way the logical subject-object relation is object-ified in the public domain through the lingual aspect.

My alternative proposal to the discussion of what Seerveld calls 'fictions' or 'imaginata' would be along parallel lines to those that I have just discussed with regard to concepts—to view them as *the subjective con-tent of responses to the objective nuanceful properties* of reality, whether or not these are culturally formed. In a sense Seerveld has already admitted that this is the case when he claims that 'imaginativables in the world 'are to be viewed as 'aesthetic object-functions of non-human creaturely reality'.[46]

What Seerveld calls 'imaginativables' are aesthetic object functions that relate to the aesthetic moments of all other aspects of reality (not just, as he seems to suggest, the non-human ones). As such they may either relate to *natural* aesthetic nuances (spatial patterns, movements, colours etc., as these are realised in actual things and events) or to *culturally formed* aesthetic nuances (words, gestures, clothes, ways of doing things, personal styles of public figures, etc.) As such they are comparable to the logical object functions in the logical aspect considered above.

'Fictions' or 'imaginata', on the other hand, are to be compared with the 'intentional subjective content' that is involved with concepts. These do not exist apart from 'imaginativables'; they exist in an aesthetic subject-object relation which in the first instance is private. If it is to become an intrasubjective or shared experience, then it requires objectification, and in parallel with the situation that we have just discussed with reference to the logical aspect, this is achieved through the symbolical or lingual

aspect.

People may indeed imagine fictions as a private experience, just as they may think and analyse in private. However, if 'fictions' or 'imaginata' are to function in the shared experience of children's pretend games or story-telling for example, then language, gesture, the use of clothes and implements etc. are necessary, and through them the 'imaginata' or 'fictions' entailed in the aesthetic subject-object relationships of the activity are objectified in the public domain.

Of course aesthetic object functions are not exhausted by 'imaginativables'. The latter are aesthetic object functions with particular reference to their being correlated or coordinated with the subjective activity of imagining — to be realised in the fictions of daily experience — in private, in the shared experience of pretend games or in the more permanent form of works of art. {16}

I would therefore suggest that the positioning of the aesthetic aspect into a pre-logical, pre-technico-cultural position in the manner discussed in the previous section enables a much more coherent and satisfactory account to be given of the aesthetic subject-object relation.

3.5 The Structural Character of Imagining

In his paper 'Imaginativity',[47] Seerveld attempts to 'stake out a reliable idea of imaginativity', seeking both 'to locate the pivotal errors of traditional reflection on imagination' and to distinguish and describe imagining as 'an irreducible sort of bodily activity' — one that is primarily aesthetic in character.

Many features of Seerveld's paper take their starting point from Edward Casey's book 'Imagining' which, as a thorough-going phenomenological study, is an attempt to set out and understand imagining as a distinctive phenomenon of human consciousness.[48]

In this venture Casey attempts to characterise imagining as an intentional act involving what he calls an act-phase and an object-phase.[49] However, he regards neither creativity nor aesthetic features as crucial to his account of imagining: By the act-phase he means the intentional productive activity of the subject in the act of imagining, and by the object-phase he means the actual contents of what is imagined.

In his discussion of the act-phase Casey seeks to identify three distinct types — 'imaging', 'imagining-that', and 'imagining-how'. Seerveld, in his discussion of Casey's work, makes the following apposite remark: 'Casey's meticulous study succeeds with almost antiseptic precision, when it distinguishes 'imaging' from 'imagining', but Casey's analysis fails, I think, to differentiate (non-sensory) 'imagining' from *some form of conceptual intellection'.*[50]

Over against this and many other attempts to discuss the structural character of imagining, Seerveld claims that imagining is characterised by an 'as if' or 'let's pre-tend' which qualifies imagining primarily as an aesthetic subject function: This might be illustrated by a quote from Casey which occurs in his discussion of the relationship between perceiving and imagining. With reference to the example of 'seeing' a face in a flame, he writes:

'When I pick out a face in a fire, I am not misled into believing that an actual face is present before me. I know that the face I 'see' is only *suggested* by the fire. But I also

know that I am not merely imagining it as when I imaginatively project a face onto the blank surface of a wall: Rather, my imagination (if it is active at all here) takes its cue from perception — it is the fire as perceived that is the primary factor in the experience'.[51]

As far as Casey is concerned, the above example is only marginally concerned with imagining: Its point for him is that what is given perceptually is never confused with what is added imaginatively. For Seerveld, however, the above example is of the essence of what he considers imagining to be. The perceptual experience is given in a way that is rich with aesthetic object functions that, as far as their potential for 'fictions' are concerned, may be considered as 'imaginativables'. These are then woven into 'imaginata' — as the intentional subjective content in an aesthetic subject-object relation via the subjective activity of imagining.

Examples of the above kind mentioned by Casey may be multiplied many times. The shape and movement of clouds, the gnarled shapes of tree trunks, for example, are all imaginativables full of suggestion-rich properties capable of responses that could entail intentional subjective content in an aesthetic subject-object relation that is entailed in a 'fiction' or 'imaginata'.

From these kinds of examples Seerveld argues that imagining should be viewed fundamentally as an aesthetic subject function, articulating the basic qualification or core of its meaning as what is entailed with 'discovering resemblances of some odd appropriate sort that remain allusive but compel attention and elliptically present metaphoric insight'.[52]

In this light he then suggests that 'hypothetical or as-if thinking' summed up in what Casey calls 'imagining how' should be viewed as an aesthetic moment in thinking, and then goes on to suggest that all human activities should allow this imagining aesthetic moment to flower if it is to be authentically human.[53]

Whilst I am in thorough agreement with everything Seerveld says in this connection, I still have a doubt with regard to his basic thesis that *imagining* should be regarded as *primarily aesthetic* in its structural character.

For the purposes of the present essay I shall content myself with putting forth a counter-thesis, one that draws its main idea from Dooyeweerd's schematic anthropology.[54] This is that imagining, along with knowing and willing, are three intertwined faculties of the act-structure that have no specific modal qualification, but function in all aspects: I believe this approach includes everything that Seerveld brings to our attention with regard to *aesthetic* imagining, but it also enables us to talk with less confusion about other foci of imagining. In particular in my discussion of artistic activity I shall take this matter up in more detail, seeking to make a careful distinction between different types of 'world projections', all of which are characterised by imagining, but not all of which are primarily aesthetic.

The knowing activity of the human person is dependent upon an intuition of the given world that has no modal {17} qualification. There are important ways in which knowing activity has some specific orientations to both percipient and logical aspects. More fundamentally, how-ever, it is dependent upon intuitions that embrace all aspects in ways that are orientated to each of them in their own way. This does not make 'intuition' a supreme or infallible guide to knowing that may be quoted as

authoritative above the facts; it is simply the *ground* upon which the human act-structure has a basis in experience for the full breadth of the cosmos as it functions in its ordering and meaning under God.

The role of intuition in knowing might readily be compared with the role of 'intentionally going beyond the percipiently given' in imagining. The latter does not have a specific modal qualification, but takes on various modal qualifications depending upon the nature of the act concerned. Thus 'imaging' is a form of 'going beyond the perceptually given with respect to the percipient aspect. 'Fictions' and 'Imaginata' (to which we might also add 'Fantasy') are forms of 'going beyond the perceptually given' in the aesthetic aspect. Hypothetical, as-if arguments, entail forms of thinking and analysis that, even in ways that do not go beyond the concrete, are yet forms of 'intentionally going beyond the perceptually given' in the logical aspect, and these should not be confused with 'flashes of insight' or 'imaginative' contributions that involve a complex interweaving of intuition and aesthetic imagining in the act structure as it is logically qualified.

Cultural formation entails the human subjective forming of reality toward the realization of a free project. By its very nature, therefore, cultural formation *goes beyond* that which is perceptually given in human experience. As such it entails actual human formative power being brought to bear upon reality in a way that goes beyond what is presently given to *purposively envision new states of affairs,* by way of a free project: Whilst many such projects in an advanced state of technology involve rigorous planning, the specific features entailed in this part of the exercise such as plans, specifications, environmental impact reports are part of the actual *realisation* of the free project, rather than the subjective envisioning that *goes beyond the perceptually given* by way of *a cultural expression of the imaginative faculty* of the act-structure as it is intertwined with knowing and willing.

Finally, there is an important functioning of the imagination, in the above sense of going beyond the perceptually given, that discloses itself in the pistical or confessional aspect of human experience. As human beings, we are confronted with a whole variety of sources of meaning and order to human life. Many of these are closely bound to what is actually given perceptually in human experience. However, the ultimate sources of order and meaning and the source of the coherence of order and meaning are religious issues that go beyond what is perceptually given, and function in a particular way within the confessional aspect of human experience that is confessed in terms of the gods (or Cod!) whom we worship and serve. From a Scripturally-orientated point of view, the Lord God is present through His Word and Spirit in all that He does in ordering His creation and bringing it to its fulfilment in Christ: This confessional functioning of the imagination is well expressed in the following words from the gospel according to Luke:

> *'And his mercy is on those who fear*
> *him from generation to generation.*
> *He has shown strength with his arm,*
> *he has scattered the proud in the*
> imagination *of their hearts, he has put*
> *down the mighty from their thrones,*
> *exalted those of low degree.*[65]

The vanity and pride of resting and trusting and basing one's life on creaturely sources

of order and meaning as if they were ultimate is here described as the imagination of the heart. I would suggest that this is not in the first place something aesthetic, but is an attribution of the ultimate source of order and meaning to the perceptually given in human experience to something contingent and creaturely. In other words it is a function of imagining in the act-structure that counts as *a confessionally qualified* act.

Seerveld's contributions to the way in which the moments of the more specifically aesthetic side of imagining need to be realised in all aspects of human experience are excellent: However, without strongly objecting to this particular stance, I have tried to put forward the point of view that the basic structural character of imagining in human experience should be recognised as an *intentional going beyond that which is perceptually given,* being orientated to various modal qualifications.

3.6 The Aesthetic and the Artistic
At the end of Part Ill, based upon both a survey of our common experience of the realm of the aesthetic in everyday life and upon a survey of the history of aesthetic theorising, we singled out four basic problem areas for aesthetic theory The first two of these areas were identified as follows:

1. Both the natural world unaffected by human formation and also the world of human cultivating activity have aesthetic properties. Since Greek times this has, in the West, been identified with 'beauty' or 'harmony', but in recent centuries problems have been encountered concerning the notion of 'beauty' or 'harmony' as the kernel of the aesthetic. {18}

This raised two basic questions:

(i)In what ways are the aesthetic features of the natural and cultural worlds (a) similar, (b) different?

(ii)What is the kernel of the aesthetic aspect of reality?

2: Since the beginnings of theorising with the Greeks, the world of human cultivating activity has been loosely referred to as 'techne' or, from its Latin equivalent, 'ars', 'the arts'. Amongst these Aristotle distinguished 'the Imitative Arts', the basic idea of which provided the point of departure for the eighteenth century recognition of 'the fine arts'.

In this light much theoretical reflection in recent centuries upon aesthetics has been restricted to a theory of 'the artistic'. Following Dooyeweerd and Seerveld I have suggested that the aesthetic is concerned with a fundamental aspect and mode of meaning and ordering of the cosmos of which we humans are part. Further, not only is this mode of functioning intrinsic to those aspects of creation that are prior to the human cultivation and forming of it, it is also true that all human formative activity has an aesthetic side to it. Whether it be houses, homes, food, clothes, gardens, cities, roads, parks, zoos, toys, cars, trains, cutlery, horse and cart, sports or other forms of recreation, *all* are undertaken in a way that involves a question of *style,* and, as this is a formative activity involving suggestive, nanceful and imaginative features it is aesthetic in character.

This recognition gives rise to the following basic question: if *all* human activity has an aesthetic side to it (one that we should all be taking more seriously) what is it that

distinguishes 'the arts', in the sense of 'fine arts' from other human cultivating activity?

My method in dealing with these problems has been to review critically the contributions to the developing reformational reflection upon art and aesthetics as it has been articulated by Dooyeweerd, Vollenhoven, Rookmaaker, Seerveld and Wolterstorff in particular. Whilst I have generally followed Seerveld in his criticism of Dooyeweerd's more specific proposals for aesthetic theory, I have suggested an alternative positioning of the aesthetic aspect in the modal order, ironically one that is very much indebted to Dooyeweerd's insights concerning the logical subject-object relation.

It is my claim that in doing so we have a much better account of the aesthetic functioning of natural creation. The latter is rich with nuances, in the shapes of trees, in the awesomeness of vistas, in the sound of waterfalls, creeks and raging storms, in the movements of birds, not to mention the smells, odours and tastes of all manner of things, the tender touch of a hand, and the visual effects of colour and shape. As such these nuances are an integral part of the functioning of natural creation as it is ordered in the coherence of all its different modes of meaning under the ordering hand of God's Word and Spirit.

Of course the givenness of these natural nuances does not exhaust the aesthetic features of creation, any more than the occurrence of natural shapes exhausts the possibilities of shapes. The cultivating hand of man as an aesthetic subject can form and uncover all manner of nuances in the natural and the cultural aspects of reality. However, aesthetic object functions, including the functioning of the aesthetic properties of natural signs such as the sounds of screams, laughter and crying, are anchored in the ordering of creation that is unaffected by human cultural formation. Hence, even those nuances which result from cultural formation, as in the sounds of music, the colours and shapes in painting, and the movements of dance and mime — are objectively related to the ordering of creation that is unaffected by human cultural formation. This provides an effective basis to head off the problems of subjectivism and relativism.

It is in these general terms that the above basic questions concerning the aesthetic functioning of creation may begin to be dealt with.

Whilst conventional wisdom persists, according to which art is considered to be the supreme expression of the aesthetic, and art is moreover considered to be very much the subjective expression of the artist, it is little wonder that the more general sense of the aesthetic as an aspect of *all* human formative activity, can get lost, particularly as its object functions affect a whole range of environmental factors. Much of modern Western culture has all but lost a sense of the normativity of the aesthetic, particularly in the way in which the natural aesthetic functions in rocks, trees, flowers, earth and birds should blend with the humanly formed aesthetic functions in houses, cities and landscapes. Utilitarian concerns always seem to get the upper hand, as a glance at much of modern city landscapes will testify.

The fundamental answer to this problem is to recognise that the task of stewarding the earth given to *all* humankind is one that has a normative aesthetic side to it, and the positive realisation of objective aesthetic norms in the design of gardens, cities, landscapes, buildings and their interlacements is a very important part of developing a sense of well-being in human relationships.[56] This particular feature of aesthetic life is

not primarily artistic in the sense that what is entailed is fine art in the stricter sense of the term. It is nonetheless very definitely aesthetic: Further, none of mankind's cultivating activity can neglect the aesthetic side of life.

What then distinguishes *art* from this more general sense of the aesthetic aspect realised in all things and human cultural activity in particular? In answer to this question I follow Seerveld in his suggestion that the developments in the theory of art by such figures as {19} Hegel, Cassirer, Dufrenne and Langer provide the most helpful direction in which secular scholarship is dealing with this question.[57] However, too much is packed into their key concept, variously objectified by the terms 'symbolic', 'expressive form', as well as 'expressivity'. He further suggests that whilst they are correct in recognising something symbolic typifying the *artistic,* thus distinguishing the latter from the more general sense of the aesthetic already considered, their discussions nonetheless lack the tools to give their idea of symbolic the needed precision of meaning in regard to artistic activity: Art involves symbolising in a particular way, one that is qualified by the aesthetic aspect. It is this feature that distinguishes it from other kinds of symbolising.

Thus art is concerned with *symbolising,* but with symbolising in a manner that is fully in tune with the aesthetic aspect of reality: imaginatively opening up and utilising its aesthetic object functions to shape and style cultural objects that nuancefully and allusively reveal and expose the deeper and fuller meanings of everyday life. For this aesthetic mode of symbolising Seerveld has coined the word 'symbolify'[58] and it would seem to me that what he seeks to connote by the term is *the qualifying and leading function of the artistic,* thus enabling us to distinguish it from the aesthetic in the broader sense.

The following example seeks to illustrate what is involved with "symbolifying".

I recently saw a film about the early life of Friedrich Engels. One of the episodes related to his relationship with a brother and sister who were both accomplished pianists. The sister was in the process of developing a career as a concert pianist, and Engels fell in love with her. She contracted tuberculosis and went to a country sanatorium for treatment. These unfortunate events were kept from Engels (and from the viewers of the film). The young lady simply said that she was going to spend a long time in Paris. We, the viewers of the film, together with Engels, begin to learn of the real situation from a letter from the brother. Engels rides a horse to the sanatorium. There we hear the piano playing; we see the young lady's packed bags: Then we see it is the brother playing the piano, and the film ends with the closing of the piano lid.

This sequence of events on film symbolises that Engel's loved one had died of consumption. However, it is not told in a clinical fashion; it is *artistically* portrayed in that the symbolisation involved employs aesthetic nuances that poignantly suggest that conclusion. In other words it was symbolised in a way that realised the aesthetic moment in the lingual aspect, thus "symbolifying" it.

3.7 Elements of a theory of the artistic
In his book "Art in Action" Nicholas Wolterstorff relates the incident of a conversation with a museum director in which the latter remarked that the American pioneers travelling westward across the prairies had no art, since they lacked leisure.[59] Wolterstorff's response is that in all likelihood they had work songs and voyage songs, music for which the last thing needed was leisure.[60] One could also make the point

that the American Negro in his condition of slavery, had even less time for leisure but cultivated song, dance and story-telling in a manner that might be described as both rich and impoverished. It was rich in nuance, style and real life experience, but lacking in sophistication. Sophistication, leisure, detachment and aesthetic contemplation are all features of the ideals inspiring the styles of the Western High Art tradition we inherit from the 18th century. Embued with this conception of the arts the estimation of the art of the American Negro and the American pioneer was deemed to have had little or no artistic life and little or no art to bequeathe to the Concert Hall or the Art Gallery:

However the truth is that the arts are universal to humankind — the life and experience of humankind from the earliest records to the present day have engaged in music-making, fiction and poetry, dance, role-playing and visual depiction. As the anthropologist, Raymond Firth, asserts:

"It is commonly held that economic activity is a necessity, but that art is a luxury. Yet we can assert empirically the universality of art in a man's social history. Paleolithic man ten thousand years ago or more had his statuettes and his cave-paintings, of which some still preserved for us are of such aesthetic mastery and dynamic skill that they evoke the admiration of modern artists. Even in the hardest natural environments, art has been produced It is easy, then to refute the idea that at the primitive stages of man's existence the theme of subsistence dominated his life to the exclusion of the arts'.[61]

In striving for an adequate theory of the artistic we may not limit ourselves to the view of the arts promoted by 'the Western Institution of High Art' as this has flourished since the 18th century. Moreover, insofar as Wolterstorff's critique of the idolatrous character of this tradition might be thought to apply to Dooyeweerd's theory of art, then that theory is in further need of reformation. It is claimed here that, just as the aesthetic dimension of life may not be limited to the artistic, so the artistic may not be limited to any one social function, and certainly not to that of aesthetic contemplation as this has been discussed by Wolterstorff in his "Art in Action'.

Artistic activity has many *social* purposes, from bed-time stories, children's songs, and nursery rhymes to work songs, Scottish and other forms of national folk dancing, to prison songs, hymns, Negro Spirituals, plays, to cave paintings, ritual dancing and music making, to B'rer Rabbit and Winni the Pooh stories, Bach's B Minor Mass and Peter Brook's film of Mahabarata! {20}

However, if we grant the points that artistic activity (1) may not be isolated from *some* social context and (2) that works of art serve *a diversity* of social purposes, then it is clear that artistic activity and art works are *not* primarily characterised by their social function. To put it another *way:* to speak of art means that we speak of things and activities having a structural character that, whilst not able to be isolated from *some social* context, are *yet not* characterised *qua art* by any such social context. Bearing all this in mind I put forward the following summary definition of an art work in the context of artistic activity:

An art-work involves *an action of aesthetic world projection* that involves the treatment of *a subject* in *a contextual perspective* that is *aesthetically crafted* in *a particular medium* that *stylistically symbolifies* within *a culturally formed social context.*

I claim that this definition is broad enough to include the bed time story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears', Aesop's Fables, Nursery Rhymes, children's songs, work songs and sea shanties; heroic tales, epics and myths, ritual dancing and singing, Negro Spirituals, Lutheran Chorales and Wesleyan Hymns; Shakespeare's plays, Beethoven's Symphonies, Mozart's Operas, and Bach's Cantatas and Passions; as well as Michelangelo's 'David', cave-paintings and Peter Brook's film of 'Mahabarata'.

All these examples may be characterised as *an action of aesthetic world projection* that involves a *subject* being treated in *a contextual perspective* as it is *aesthetically crafted in a medium.* There are of course a variety of *dissimilar* media in which this may be achieved, but all are treated in ways that seek to realise the aesthetic nuances of the medium concerned. Further, all involve the utilisation of the aesthetic nuances of the medium for the purpose of *stylistically symbolifying* in a way that is suited to *a social context* that has been culturally formed, with this end being able to be achieved in a whole variety of ways.

In terms of modal theory, a work of art is *founded* in *the aesthetic retrocipatory moment of the technico-cultural* aspect of reality (and is therefore concerned foundationally with matters aesthetic via *style)* and is led and *qualified* by the *aesthetic retrocipation of the symbolic aspect of reality* (expressed in the word *'symbolify')* in a way that *serves some social purpose.*

In what follows I shall attempt to give a short sketch as to the way in which each of these major features may be developed in the light of the aesthetic theory being developed here. I shall do this briefly under five headings:

(i)Aesthetic action of world projection.

(ii)Subject and contextual perspective.

(iii)Aesthetic crafting in various media.

(iv) Styled symbolifying.

(v)Culturally formed social context:

(i) Aesthetic Action of World Projection
In his books 'Art in Action and 'Works and Worlds of Art[62] Nicholas Wolterstorff develops the idea of 'the action of world projection; as a leading feature of his theory of art. Building upon what he has done I would like to take up this idea in a somewhat different way, developing the ideas concerning the structure of imagining considered above.

In 'Art in Action', Wolterstorff introduces the idea of 'the action of world-projection' with reference to Hume's comment about poets: that "tho' they be liars by profession they always endeavour to give an air of truth to their fictions"[63] and then Sir Philip Sydney's comments concerning the beasts in Aesop's stories in similar vein, but concluding that: 'he who thinks Aesop wrote them purporting them to be actually true is worthy of having his name chronicled among the beasts of which Aesop wrote'.[64]

The truth of the matter is, of course, that both the artist in general and the writer of

---

fiction in particular, is not presenting us with a news bulletin, a documentary or a work of scientific or philosophical theory. At the same time he or she is not presenting us with lies and false-hoods. With this in mind Wolterstorff remarks that:

'What makes fiction as we know it possible is not our human ability to make claims about the actual world but rather our ability) imagine *a world distinct from the actual world,* and then to project that world fictionally for the consideration id benefit of our fellows'.[65]

However, there are two important points that need to be made with regard to the idea of 'the action of world projection' as it relates to art and artistic activity, and whilst both are referred to by Wolterstorff[66], I am not at all sure that his theory deals with them adequately.

The first point is that the idea of world projection is not confined to fiction, and indeed is not even confined to the artistic. The tellers of myths the world over undoubtedly have told them in a way that envisaged the gods and spirits, together with their magic powers as part and parcel of the actual world of our experience. The same basic claim might be made of the world of Ideas of Plato and of Lucretius' 'De Rerum Natura'. Moreover, travellers from far away places (in ages less accustomed to Jet Setting and Apollo Missions witnessed via T.V. in the living room) in tellng their stories of the people, lands and events they visited were engaging in an action of world projection, at least as far as their listeners were concerned. The latter were called to an exercise of their imaginations to envisage things that went well beyond the world of their immediate {21} experience. Once this is appreciated then the very action of relating events of any kind that are unfamiliar has to be admitted as that of an action of world-projection. The character of the action of world projection, in other words, is centrally concerned with our ability to imagine things, events and places that are able to differ quite profoundly from those of our immediate experience. This ability can apply to either the one *telling* or the one *told* the story.

The second point is that although *a fictional* world projection is not to be confused with making false claims about the actual world, it is nonetheless the case that, by way of fictional world projection, it is possible to make profound and real claims about our actual world. Thus, whilst the parable of 'the Good Samaritan' is not a description of an actual state of affairs 'in which the names of the man, the thieves, the Levite, the priest and the Samaritan have been suppressed', it is a description of *a possible* state of affairs in the social world of its time in which the character in the story who illustrates what it means 'to love one's neighbour', was cast in a role that would have made listeners to the story acutely aware of their own prejudice and failure: Jews had no dealings with Samaritans. It is precisely for this reason that the fictional world projection, in this case in the form of a parable, is able to speak so powerfully about the real conditions of the actual world.

The basic point made here, of course, could be multi-plied many times, and be seen to apply to a very large volume of works of art: We may summarise the implications of the above points as follows:

(i)Whilst all actions of world projection involve an exercise of imagination, at least on the part of the listener or observer, and possibly also by the teller, painter or per-former, not all actions of world projection are artistic:

(ii)Whilst it is a characteristic feature of artistic actions of world projection that they involve elements that are not true of the specific details of the actual world, they are nonetheless able to speak truthfully about the more general conditions of the actual world.[67]

In terms of developing a theory of the artistic, therefore, the central problem with which we are confronted is:

What specific mode of imagining makes an action of world projection artistic and how does its mode of operation enable it to relate truthfully to the actual world as distinct from the projected world?

I shall seek to answer this question with (a) reference to the types of imagining acts considered in the earlier section[68] and (b) with regard to the theory of what I shall call 'aesthetic imagining'.[69]

Earlier I discussed some of the differing ways in which the activity of imagining may go beyond that which is given to us in the form of sensory images. In particular I discussed the types of imagining acts under the categories of sensory acts, aesthetic acts, logical acts, acts preliminary to and thus envisioning culturally formative acts, as well as confessional acts. I suggest that the differing kinds of actions of world projection may be distinguished and illustrated with reference to these types of imagining acts.

When witnesses are called upon to relate the events pertaining to an accident they have witnessed they draw upon their memory of the sense impressions of the events concerned. However, as far as the others in the courtroom are concerned the witness is engaging in a kind of world-projection — one that calls them to imagine the world-projection as it concerns the events related by the witness — as an account of what happened in the actual world that may be either true or false.

As far as the court is concerned this kind of world-projection is supposed to be an account of what took place in the actual world. As such it is supposed to concern the sensory acts of the events as these have been recorded in the memory of the witness. Events that are an imagined variation are to be excluded. However, it is well recognised that human beings are able to engage in that kind of world projection that we call lying, and it is the task of the opposing barrister to cross examine the witness with a view to testing the validity of the world projection placed before the court by the witness:

Until very recently it has not been possible for us humans to form actual perceptual images of the far side of the moon. However, in this, as well as in other examples, it is possible to fill out those details missing from the perceptual image with the aid of conjectural imaginative images. This too involves imagining in the sense of the 'replica' of a sensory image that, as in the case cited, may eventually be able to be checked out against the actual sensory objective image.

In this case the action of world projection involves the activity of sensory imagining — imaging — on the part of both the 'teller' as well as the 'listener', whereas in the previous case involving the witness the latter may either have been giving an accurate account of events as he remembered them, or he may have been allowing an activity of sensory imagining — imaging — to interfere with the testimony — a case of

intentional or perhaps unintentional lying. Hence the Humean connection of poetry with deceit:

Further, whilst it is possible to engage in the kind of 'sensory hypothesising' envisaged in the example concerning the images of the far side of the moon, without actually engaging in logical analysis, it can equally be the case that the latter serves as an aid to the logical function of imagining in which the logical consequences of an hypothesis, that go well beyond the facts presented by way of sensory images, are explored. In cases in {22} which this functions concretely rather then abstractly it is often accompanied by the exercise of 'imaging' in the sense discussed above — illustrated, for example, in detective work. When it functions abstractly, however, as in theoretical scientific work, the sensory imaging function of imagining is left behind, leaving the logical activity of imagining functioning abstractly, formulating hypotheses that go well beyond the given facts and then considering their implications.

In both these cases — in detective work and in theoretical science — we have examples of actions of world projection. Like the previous examples we have so far considered the acts of imagining involved in these world projections are related to the actual world, and are to be tested by it in terms of the details of its truth claims. Our next examples involve some important differences in this respect.

If someone wishes to build a dam, develop a property site, propose a vision for a new society or a new artistic style, then this will entail the exercise of *imagining in the form of a prelude to a technico- cultural act — one* that envisions going beyond the present world of sensory experience to one that involves transformation of the latter using the free formative power of human beings with the possible aid of tools. This vision for the new music, the new city, the new society, the new dam is a further example of an activity of world projection involving imagining. This time, however, its truthfulness is not tested with reference to sensory images of the actual world as it is presently given. People may wish to test *the feasibility* or *the wisdom* of the world projection, but no one would dream of testing its validity simply with reference to the sensory images of the actual world as it is presently given to us. To do so would contradict the very nature of the action of world projection as a vision for technico-cultural innovation.

I have further suggested that the basic character of myth be viewed as resulting from *acts of imagining* that are in the first place *confessional* in character. As such, features of the detailed order and meaning of the cosmos are attributed to gods and spirits as its immediate ultimate sources, entering into relationship with the fortunes of human beings, affecting matters of fertility, weather, wars, disease etc.

This involves acts of imagining that go beyond the objectively given sensory images to their envisaged ultimate source of order and meaning: to the gods and spirits of the tribal or national grouping concerned. As this confronts the religious ground of ultimate certainty of the lives of the people concerned, it is unusual to ask for these aspects of imagined world projections present in myth to be tested in the ways already discussed. At the same time, however, the tellers of these various myths within their original pagan contexts had little doubt that they were telling stories about the actual world of our experience, and that the gods and spirits actually possessed the kinds of powers envisaged in the myths.[70]

Thus far I have refrained from a consideration of the action of aesthetic imagining. In so doing I do not wish to imply that there can be no element of aesthetic imagining present in the kinds of activities so far considered. The major point is that all the actions of world projection so far considered are such that the relation between the contents of the actual world and the envisaged world are *direct* and one-to-one. This is quite clear as far as 'imaging' and logical 'imagining' and/or 'hypothesising' goes. In the case of the world projection envisioning the development of a technico-cultural free formative project the connection between the actual world and the projected world is that the actual world be transformed into the envisaged world via the exercise of human free formative power.

In the case of the confessional world-projection, whether it involves the myths of pagan deities and spirits or the Biblical revelation of the Lord Yahweh, *the envisaged world is simply the actual world writ large*. It is assumed that reality is not limited to what can be grasped via sensory images; it involves ultimate sources of order and meaning that transcend sensory experience.[71] These are envisaged in that mode of imagining activity that I have here described as *confessional*. It may well involve the use of metaphor and other devices of the aesthetic activity of imagining, but it is to be distinguished from the latter in that it seeks 'to go beyond that which is given in sensory images' to the ultimate sources that give the latter order and meaning: The latter belong *literally* to the actual world, and are not to be conceived aesthetically by way of metaphors, symbols and the like — at least in the first instance.

The first feature that characterises *the aesthetic act of imagining* is that the contents of an action of world projection associated with it are *not* envisaged in some kind of one-to-one literal relationship with the actual world. The second is that whilst the aesthetic activity of imagining *does* take its starting point from the actual world as it is given to us in sensory images, it selects and reconstructs from that world with an artistic and/or aesthetic purpose in view: Thus, in the aesthetic functioning of creation there are a vast fund of 'imaginativables' — aesthetic object functions that are suggestive of all manner of deeper and broader meanings as to the functioning of the world in all its meaning and order under God: From this fund of 'imaginativables' we are all capable of envisaging either a 'fictional' or a 'fantasy' world-projection that involves elements of the actual world that are recast and reshaped into a form that no longer purports to be a literal projection of that world. Rather it purports to be a reflection of that world, a reflection in which the mirror may take many varieties of curves and shapes. However, whilst fleeting 'fictions' and 'fantasies' are open to us all, the actual presentation of a {23} projected-world in artistic form requires the craftsmanship and artistic skill of one who is able to cast and shape the 'imaginativables' in their relation to 'fictions' or 'fantasies' into an appropriate artistic medium that others may share in a more permanent form.

A 'fictional' world-projection is one that, at least for the greater part, could take place within the actual world, whereas a 'fantasy' world-projection is one that, because of the kinds of envisaged creatures and their modes of operating, could not take place within the actual world. Whilst the line between fiction and fantasy is not always sharp, it is generally possible to cast a given world projection as a whole into one or other category, even though it may contain elements of both. Thus, we would probably call 'Superman' fiction rather than fantasy (some might simply call it rubbish!) even though Superman and his ilk (Batman, Spiderman, etc.) do not belong to our actual world. The Narnia stories, by C.S. Lewis, on the other hand are fantasy, despite the fact that on this side of the wardrobe they are fiction rather than fantasy.

Whilst the purpose of some aesthetic world-projections may be to offer a temporary escape from the realities of life, I suggest that from a Christian perspective their basic purpose should be one of encouraging us to con-front and deal with these realities in and through the grace of God, rather than ignore or run from them. It is precisely in this way that the parables — as aesthetic world — projections — are able to make such profound, truthful comment upon our actual world, despite the fact that they do not purport to be literally true of any particular circumstances in it.

One final point. Stories of a mythical, magical character have their origin in a pagan confessional exercise of imagining. This does not mean they are incapable of reformation. However, it does mean that the religious and confessional features need to be carefully borne in mind, and carefully distinguished from aesthetic imagining in the senses discussed here.[72]

From a Christian point of view the religious issues of both paganism and secularism need to be dealt with, whilst simultaneously encouraging the flowering of the aesthetic action of world projection, imaginatively pointing to the reality of God's coming Kingdom in the humble, ordinary things of life, by way of parable and other kinds of aesthetic world projection:

(ii) Subject and Contextual Perspective
Aesthetic imagining — the subject functioning embodied in the 'let's pretend' of aesthetic world projection — has been identified as 'aesthetic' because of its character in bringing together and utilising aesthetic objective nuances — in the play, fantasy and art of aesthetic world projection just discussed. As discussed above, aesthetic imagining is to be carefully distinguished from confessional imagining. The latter may or may not involve aesthetic features. Indeed aesthetic imagining may not be present in the other types of world projection considered above.

However, it is not possible for the confessional function of imagining to be absent in the other imagining acts that have been cited. The significance of religion, as the living human response to life, following the attribution of ultimate source(s) of order and meaning to the cosmos of our experience to the way imagining functions in human experience, is very profound. Imagining goes beyond the images of the sensory object functions of the things and events of human experience to their interpretation and/or potential modification through the exercise of human free formative power: Central to the latter is the role of religion in envisioning the way the cosmos is ordered and given meaning, thus envisioning the role that humankind has in the transformation/stewardship/rape of the natural and social environments.

Further, the mythical character of consciousness that attributes the detailed order and meaning of the cosmos to gods and spirits as the immediate ultimate sources that figure in its fertility, its weather, its wars and conflicts etc., is the product of an imagination that goes beyond the objectively given sensory images to their interpretation in the form of gods and spirits whose activities in relation to each other and the cosmos, including humankind, are then woven into stories that have the character of myth. Religion thus plays an important role in the shaping of worldviews, directing the commonsense beliefs that people have about everyday life by their views of the ultimate sources of order and meaning. Whilst the confessional aspect of life may not be identified with the religious — the latter involves the ultimate source and coherence of all aspects of order and meaning in human life — it nonetheless figures

prominently in the worldview of a people in a particular cultural, historical and geographical set of circumstances.

Hence worldviews function significantly in providing the beliefs for the *contextual perspective* shaping the aesthetic world projection of a work of art: Whilst the subject of the latter is the more immediate focus of attention, the treatment of the subject is deeply indebted to its contextual perspective. This was illustrated in part I of the present essay when we examined the influence of differing contextual perspectives upon the story of "Orfeo and Euridice", upon the treatment of the nude female figure in painting and upon the biography of the Trapp Family. These examples are cited here again to illustrate the ways in which the envisioning of the imagination, rooted in religion and worldview, shape the content of the work of art by way of the contextual perspective shaping the subject. It is exactly in this context that the roots of Christian religion, as the redemptive coming of the {24} Kingdom into a sinful and idolatrous world, should be allowed to shape the contextual perspective of art.

However, worldviews influence artistic life not only with reference to the *content;* they also influence the way in which art functions *socially* within a culture, and this too was illustrated in Part I.

(iii) Aesthetic Crafting in Various Media
A work of art not only involves the aesthetic imagining action of world projection, it also requires that the action be publicly objectified or symbolised aesthetically in a particular medium. Fundamentally this involves an appreciation of the aesthetic nuances involved in the various kinds of aesthetic object functions that are associated with the various media in which artistic symbolisation is possible.

Thus painting is a medium which has the restrictions of a two dimensional representation of a world projection utilising the nuances of shape and colour: There is also a limitation imposed by the requirement to realise this projection in a single instant of time.

Music is a medium in which the restrictions are limited to the nuances of sound as these may be explored in a temporal sequence in spatial arrangement. Natural sounds may certainly function in the realisation of the world projection, but to qualify as music the overall 'sound-picture' must entail an element of human formative power that enables the result to be experienced as the symbolification of a world projection. Thus, with respect to the controversial ideas of John Cage this would imply that there is no problem with the idea of involving natural sound into the realm of music. However, in respect to his idea of effectively treating the composer as superfluous, and allowing music to be considered as arising from any and every sound from our environment he is quite mistaken.[73]

Whilst sound is founded in the physical aspect of reality, aural experience is orientated toward a subject-object relationship in the percipient aspect. The aesthetic nuances of sound likewise have a physical foundation, but are to be appreciated as aesthetic retrocipations in the percipient aspect of reality. Musical instruments are therefore designed to be able to produce sounds with certain kinds of aesthetic nuance, it being recognised that the physical mode of producing and amplifying them is foundational to the aural effect of the nuances.

Mime, of course, is orientated to those nuances of movement that belong to body

movement and gesture. Dance involves the much broader exploration of body movement, particularly as this is allied with a rhythmic sense of time flow, whether or not it is articulated overtly in sound. Sculpture, film, drama, poetry, novel, short story as well as other possible media, may be considered in similar vein.

A work of art involves an aesthetic action of world projection being crafted in a medium, with the crafting involved being primarily of an aesthetic character, utilising the aesthetic object functions of the medium, so that the action of world projection is allusively and nuancefully realised as an action of world projection in the form of a work of art.

(iv) Styled Symbolifying
As has been discussed already, insofar as the aesthetic aspect of reality involves the exercise of human formative power, then there is always a question *of style* involved. This is as true of clothes, of food, of interior and exterior house design, as it is of art. It is a term that may relate to a whole culture at a certain time of its history, the Victorian style, for example. It is also a term that may be used of the manner in which a particular *person* does a whole range of activities, from gardening, to house design, to cooking, to marriage and family relationships and business dealings. As such it is a difficult word to define: It is simply summed up with reference to the major overall aesthetic features of a way of exercising cultural formative power. Insofar as this relates to art, a particular style relates to *all* the specific aesthetic features of the medium in which the world-projection is realised, but usually may be analysed into the specific technical aesthetic features of the medium concerned.

However, whilst the more specific features of style belong to the more specific and technical aesthetic features of the particular medium in question, there are nonetheless general features of style that are common to the various media. The contrasts between 'heavy' and 'light', between 'calm' and 'agitated', between 'simple' and 'delicate', between 'pungent' and 'bland', between 'relaxed' and 'tense', between 'graceful' and 'rough', for example, would be ways of describing certain features of style in a whole range of media, but the more technical specifics of the ways these would relate to the specifics of music, painting, literature, sculpture, film, and dance need to be related to the specifics of the natural and culturally formed nuances involved in the various specific features of these media.

Furthermore, these features apply as much to the aesthetic side of human cultural work that is *not* primarily artistic. The feature that qualifies artistic work is the way in which matters of style are crafted in relation to symbolification. Very often, for example, artists have a concern to find an effective way of making some kind of statement. They wish to make this statement in an artistic or aesthetic manner — one that involves suggestion, allusiveness and nuance and thus evokes rather than proclaims. The existing styles and forms are sometimes judged as quite inadequate for the purpose they have in view, and this leads them on to the task of finding a new style, one that aesthetically realises their aims more effectively. In other words, it enables them to symbolify more authentically. {25}

Then, in the light of these stylistic innovations, other artists follow, making their own contributions and innovations to the development of artistic style. The latter, of course, are almost always related to other aspects of culture, and the styles that are realised in them.

(v) Culturally Formed Social Context

The point has already been made that artistic activity may not be properly appreciated outside of its social context. To this extent it is important to realise that the social contexts of human life are humanly formed structures that are ordered and meaningful by virtue of the activity of God's Word and Spirit present in the ordering of the whole of creation, but in particular in the ordering of the normative structural principles of human social order as these are given concrete form by the cultivating and shaping work of humankind.

Central to the humanly formed character of social contexts is the effective religious orientation that shapes and directs the course of human life in its entirety. The confessional character of this religious direction is usually effectively realised within the sphere of cultic life. These days, for example, J. S. Bach's 'St. Matthew Passion' generally receives its most effective renderings in performances in the concert hall whilst the major initiatives with respect to music for church tend to come from sources that have taken their lead from pop or popular developments.

However, the original social context of Bach's 'St. Matthew's Passion' was not in the vein of 'a performance' in a concert hall. It was one within the believing expression of a confessional life that was part of a rich and deep Christian cultural tradition. The latter included a Passion Music that was able to nurture and foster a community in which a musical work such as Bach's 'St. Matthew' could be loved and appreciated as a contribution to the shared musical expression of that authentic confessional life — one that, for example, implied that all the people would sing all the chorales in the work.

The religious and musical character of this socially formed context that enabled Lutheran Church music to flourish and develop differs in important ways from the corresponding social contexts of the Christian churches today. Both such contexts, however, would need to be carefully distinguished from the context which nurtured the music and dancing associated with the hula. The pagan character of the latter has important consequences for the nature of the humanly formed social context in which the music and dance associated with the religious meaning of the social context in its entirety, functioned.

However, although the central religious issues affect the whole of life, not all social activities are overtly confessional in character. Bed-time stories and other children's stories, not to mention children's songs and nurseryrhymes have their own social character — one that links home and school with general culture and with the fun, exuberance and venturesomeness of simply being young people together exploring the world:

Family gatherings, gatherings of friends and other informal occasions can all be much enriched by artistic activity, especially if people take the trouble to do some-thing original and appropriate for the occasion. Appropriate music, poetry, painting, mime or dance orientated to weddings, birthdays and other such occasions can be blessings of God for all concerned:

It is in such contexts that the contextual perspectives shaping our corporate life come to the fore. A good example is provided by the problem of bridging the gap between the pious sanctimoniousness of the Church wedding and the shallow, pop, bawdy humour of the wedding reception in much of modern life. This folk-art context calls

for a more authentic Christian contextual perspective to be brought to bear upon both life and art in a prophetic way in *both* social contexts.

To realise something artistic for the celebration of a marriage is a real challenge for Christian artists today. To do so requires the genuine celebration of trothfulness within a human context that appreciates joy and humour – including that associated with sexuality, but in a way that does not cheapen it. It should also bear witness to the problems and realities of married life, as well as the hopes and joys that are involved: The 17th century cantata 'Freue Dich' by Heinrich Schutz is an admirable example of what this form of art might be. The music is a rich, strong and tender treatment of the following words from Proverbs:

'Rejoice with the wife of your youth.
Let her be as the loving hind and
graceful deer;
Let her breasts satisfy you always;
May you be ever captivated
by her love.'

(Prov. 5:18-19)

Then, of course, there is the prophetic task. Taking our cue from the Old Testament Prophet and the New Testament parable — orientated to the dilemmas and problems of modern life — there are many rich possibilities for artistic work, most of which are being explored by artists from non-Biblical perspectives. However, we could mention 'Truth is Fallen' by Dave Brubeck, a cantata that was written within the social context of the United States of America of Watergate, the Viet-Namwar and the Counterculture. The text draws from the book of Isaiah, and seeks to expose the way in which truth and justice have been trampled in the street. The {26} songs of Bob Dylan within the same social context are another example of prophetic art in the modern context.

Plays also constitute an excellent medium for this artistic end, and within an Australian social context one can mention the play 'Hate' by Stephen Sewell, written especially for the bicentennial year. Its subject is a family meeting at Easter. The father is a successful politician; the mother is a person who has devoted her life to looking after the material needs of her children. The three children variously exemplify the quest for power and prestige, the quest for understanding and wisdom as to what life is about, and a quest to be loved. The action of the play takes place between two members of the family at a time and painstakingly reveals the emptiness of the family life.

During the course of the play the father dies, and Sewell reserves his most potent statement for the final scene: It is a year later and the father's bronze memorial bust is about to be unveiled. The son who epitomises the quest for power now eulogises his father and draws the play to a close with the words:

'But what he was most, and what I'm
sure he would like to be remembered
as, was an Australian':

The play is prophetic in that it seeks to expose the soul — or perhaps in many ways

the lack of it — of contemporary Australia and the West in general. However, although one reviewer ventures the thesis that the play sets forth the obverse of the Christian trinity[74], not only did this conclusion require much reflection, but there is also little or no effective positive artistic witness to the grace of God and the hope of the gospel to this dilemma of modern Australia presented in this play.

The social context of much modern performing art is via the Television Screen. As such the creative and effective use of this medium presents many challenges and opportunities for the kind of Christian artistic task discussed in the present essay. However, it by no means should be viewed as *the* artistic medium of the age. It is but one of many, and all the social spheres of life cited here are capable of being enriched by the appropriate form of artistic witness to the many-fold character of the Kingdom of God.

Within this latter context art has a diversity of social callings — within the family, amongst friends, in social communities, church communities, work-related communities, as well as the wider community as it may be served by specialized music, art and other artistic societies. In all such situations art has the calling to enhance ordinary life, bringing its meanings more profoundly, prophetically and joyfully to the fore, utilising all the gifts, skills and insights so richly given to us by God,
redemptively wrought and angled so that they bespeak the reality of a sin-torn world reclaimed by the Servant King as their underlying contextual perspective. This should stand in stark contrast to the secularist idea of art for art's sake, dedicated to the secular god of aesthetic contemplation in special halls and museums erected for the purpose. It should also stand in stark contrast to the commercialism of 'pop' art, and to the pagan quest for transcendent meaning emerging within the context of many currents of modern culture.

4. CONCLUDING POSTSCRIPT
The first three parts of this essay were devoted to a consideration of problems that arise from the history of Western culture with a bearing upon aesthetic theory:

(a)spiritual influences upon contextual perspectives shaping Western art in various phases of its history.

(b)the significance of the ancient problem of the conflict between poetry and philosophy for the many facets of the problem relating 'reason' to the 'imagination' in modern Western culture, one being the character and place of the discipline of theology.

(c)an historical and empirical survey considering the problem of 'the zone of the aesthetic'.

With regard to (c) some tentative conclusions were drawn concerning the foundational problems that any theory of the aesthetic needed to face: These were:

 (i)to describe and conceptualise the kernel of the zone of the aesthetic.

(ii)to conceptualise the distinction between the artistic and the aesthetic in the broader sense.

(iii)what are the subjective processes and the objective ends involved with artistic activity?

(iv)how does religiousness function in art and aesthetic theory?

In Part IV of this essay the attempt has been made to develop main lines of argument in the giving of answers to these questions. In this respect the discussion has been with particular reference to the twentieth century contributions of Reformational Philosophy to Aesthetic Theory.

In this respect the theoretical position developed in this Part of the essay has been concerned to give answers to the kinds of problems raised in Parts I,II and Ill. The key ideas in this respect are as follows: {27}

In answer to the fourth foundational question *religiousness is* the inescapable root of human existence. As such human life is always lived out in relation to a presumed source or sources of ultimate order and meaning of the cosmos we experience.

In this sense religiousness provides the core of the net-work of beliefs by which people, both individually and communally live out their daily lives.

The ancient Greek quarrel between Poetry and Philosophy was a conflict between different fields of legitimate human endeavour, but appealed to as *different* ultimate sources of wisdom within the context of a pagan religiousness.

The modern version of this conflict, purportedly solved by Immanuel Kant, also acknowledged two or more fields of legitimate endeavour. In his case he appealed to them as different ultimate sources of wisdom within a common *secular* religiousness that yet opened up windows to a Transcendent that, in many ways, made both ethicised and aestheticised meaning into the ultimate sources of an 'unknown god'. This has had many consequences in the development of modern Western culture.

The movement for Reformational Philosophy attempts to recognise the many different fundamental facets of order and meaning in the created cosmos, but subjects them all to the one sovereign ultimate source of all order and meaning: the LORD YAHWEH, the creator of heaven and earth. This essay has been concerned with working through the implications of this standpoint with particular reference to matters that relate directly or indirectly to art and aesthetics.

In answer to the first foundational question on aesthetic theory the attempt has been made to rework the idea of the kernel of the aesthetic as developed by Dooyeweerd and Seerveld. Whilst following Seerveld in reworking the basic idea of the kernel of the aesthetic as 'suggestion', 'allusiveness' or 'nuancefulness', I have endeavoured to work systematically through the implications of a re-location of the aesthetic aspect into a prelogical, pre-technico-cultural position in the modal order:

I have also suggested that the idea of 'beauty' be reworked in terms of 'normative aesthetic conditions' that apply to creation both as it is, and *is not* affected by human cultivation. The 'ugly' is, of course, the factual failure of these normative conditions to be realised. However, 'beauty' within the context of a fallen creation in the process of being redeemed is not something that simply cancels out, overlooks or ignores the 'ugly'. By the grace of God, there are many areas of creation that are only minimally

affected by the fall, and we are all able to respond with exclamation 'isn't it beautiful!': Those areas that are more severely affected by the fall stand in need of transformation.

The idea of beauty as normative aesthetic conditions for creation suggested here is one that needs to come to terms with the religious contours of the redemption of a good but fallen creation. It is not a transcendent ideal, but a normative condition, and the latter cannot hide from or ignore the reality of the ugly:

In answer to the second of the foundational questions on aesthetic theory, the attempt has been made to recognise that *all* human formative activity has an aesthetic side to it, one that needs due consideration along with all the other aspects involved in the responsible shaping of creation. What distinguishes *artistic* activity is the way in which aesthetic styling is led by *symbolification* - the aesthetic retrocipation in the lingual or symbolic aspect.

In answer to the third foundational question the attempt has been made to develop a theory of imagining based upon Dooyeweerd's view of imagining as one of the three intertwined features of the human act structure that have *no* specific modal qualification, but can take upon various kinds of modal characteristics depending upon the ways in which the human intentionality involved in various acts goes beyond that which is given in sense perception.

In this respect I have recast Seerveld's idea of imagining as *primarily* aesthetic in terms of an *aesthetic* imagining that is aesthetically qualified, but yet seeks to allow for 'imaging', 'hypothesising', 'envisioning a new cultural project' and 'confessional imagining' as types of imagining that are primarily *percipient, logical, technico-cultural* and *confessional* respectively.

Aesthetic imagining involves an aesthetic subject taking up 'imaginativables' as aesthetic object functions within creation, subjectively shaping and weaving them into the coherence of an aesthetic world projection that functions in relation to the structures of perceivable reality. As cultural objects works of art require subjective aesthetic imagining as just discussed if they are to come into existence. However, it is not this exercise of subjective aesthetic imaginativity that constitutes the work of art. The latter simply leads the skilful subjective crafting of an aesthetic world projection that is wrought in a particular medium.

The symbolification involved with such crafting involves the treatment of a subject from a certain contextual perspective that is shaped in important ways by some form of religiousness.

These ideas are put forward as a fallible attempt to further the calling of the Christian reformation of scholarship, and of aesthetic theory in particular: As such I look forward to their being critically evaluated by other scholars. {28}

NOTES

[1] edited by C. T. McIntyre, 1985, University Press of America, pp. 41-79.

[2] 'Modern Art and the Death of a Culture' IVP, 1970, and 'Synthesist Art Theories', Swets and Zeitlinger, 1972.

[3] 'A Christian Critique of Art and Literature', Guardian, Ontario, 1968, and 'Rainbows for a Fallen World', Tuppence, Ontario, 1980.

[4] 'Art in Action', Eerdmans, 1980, and 'Works and Worlds of Art', Clarendon Press, 1980.

[5] Dooyeweerd uses the term 'historical' to refer to the cultural mode of meaning, whereby human formative power is brought to bear upon creation: In this sense he virtually uses the terms 'historical' and 'cultural' inter-changeably. Partly because of the problems associated with this others have preferred to use the word 'technico-cultural' to refer to that aspect of meaning wherein human formative power is brought to bear upon creation in an innovative manner. I shall follow this usage of the term technico-cultural to denote the aspect of reality of human formation. Refer to my discussion of this in 'A Christian Philosophy of Culture', published by Potchefstroom University.

[6] Refer to 'The New Critique of Theoretical Thought', Vol. II pp: 379-381. (Hereafter this will be referred to as NC).

[7] Refer to NC Vol. III pp. 104-105; 112-116.

[8] Ibid Vol. III pp. 113-116; 119-120.

[9] H. Dooyeweerd, 'Thirty-two Propositions on Anthropology', Mimeograph, p.4.

[10] NC Vol. II pp. 414-425, esp. p. 425.

[11] Refer, 'A Christian Critique of Art and Literature', pp. 32-35 and 'Rainbows for a Fallen World', pp. 116-125.

[12] Refer 'A Christian Critique of Art and Literature' p. 83, and 'Dooyeweerd's Legacy for Aesthetics' in 'The Legacy of Herman Dooyeweerd' op. cit. p.79.

[13] 'Dooyeweerd's Legacy for Aesthetics' op. cit. p. 66.

[14] 'Faith and Philosophy'. Vol. 4, No. 1, January, 1987.

[15] Ibid p. 47, esp. the footnote 20 discussed on p.57.

[16] 'Dooyeweerd's Legacy for Aesthetics', op cit. p. 67.

[17] Ibid p. 67.

[18] Ibid p. 67.

[19] NC Vol. 11 p. 380; emphasis added.

[20] Ibid p. 381; emphasis added.

[21] Dooyeweerd appears to use the two terms inter-changeably on p. 376 of Vol II of NC, contrasting what they both connote as the lingual object in relation to acts of subjective signifying. Generally, however, he uses the term 'symbol' for this purpose, but his usage of this term includes what I want to distinguish in this essay as a 'sign'. Dooyeweerd, on the other hand, tends to use the term 'sign' only rarely, and his discussion of it appears to be heavily influenced by his unfavourable view of the distinction between natural and arbitrary signs as used by Occam. Refer to NC Vol III p.45. It is this usage of the term 'sign' that is no doubt the occasion for Seerveld's criticisms referred to above.

[22] NC Vol III, p.37, emphasis added. See also NC Vol. II p.100 and Vol: III p.46.

[23] NC Vol. II p.380.

[24] Refer, for example, to 'Modern Art and the Death of a Culture', IVP, 1970, and 'Art and the Public Today', Pasmans, 's Gravenhage, 1969.

[25] I would also like to record my thanks to my friend and colleague Stuart Fowler, both for his encouragement to work in this area, and also for the many conversations in which our thinking has been stimulated, criticised and developed. These have assisted the present essay in all manner of ways. The critical comments on earlier drafts by Peter Simons, the editor of 'Issues', have also been most helpful in the development of the ideas as they are presented here.

[26] Refer, for example, to J. M. Spier, 'An introduction to Christian Philosophy', Chapter Two, pp. 30-130, Craig Press, New Jersey, 1966, and to L. Kalsbeek, to 'Contours of a Christian Philosophy', Chapter Seven, pp. 72-75, Wedge, Toronto, 1975.

[27] 'Issues No. 4', entitled 'Law and Miracle'. Refer also to the critical discussion on the views of H. Diemer in Chris Gousmett's article in the same issue.

[28] The distinction between sign and symbol discussed here owes a lot to Susanne Langer's 'Philosophy in a New Key', esp. pp. 26-78, Harvard Paperback, 1971. However, it is certainly not to

be identified with her way of drawing the distinction.

[29] In this connection it is interesting to note the discussion of the magical, the symbolical and the signified in respect of the 'Dividing Line Between Magic and Christian Mystery' in the mass as discussed by the modern Roman Catholic author J.L. Segundo, S. J. in his book 'The Community Called Church', Maryknoll, N.Y., 1973, pp. 37-40.

[30] Ibid pp. 37-38.

[31] Ibid p. 39.

[32] 'New Critique', Vol. lI, p. 381.

[33] This particular part of my proposal is not original. It derives from a suggestion of Stuart Fowler, who, in turn derived it from a conversation with W. J. Ouweneel (see his book 'De Leer van de Mens' Amsterdam, 1986). In turn Ouweneel may have been influenced by H. van Riessen's 'Wijsbegeerte', Kampen, 1970, where, on p.186 he suggests the possibility of more modalities being involved in the psychic modality.

[34] L.P. Zuidevaart 'Kant's Critique of Beauty and Taste: Explorations into a Philosophical Aesthetics' M. Phil. Foundations Thesis, Institute for Christian Studies, 1977, p: 11.

[35] Ibid p. 11; emphasis added.

[36] Ibid p. 11

[37] Refer NC Vol. 11, p. 370ff.

[38] Op. Cit. 'Faith and Philosophy', Vol. 4 No. 1, January 1987.

[39] Ibid, p. 49.

[40] Ibid p. 54.

[41] Ibid p. 54.

[42] Refer to NC Vol. II, pp. 370-371

[43] Refer NC Vol. II, p. 389.

[44] Ibid p. 389, emphasis his.

[45] This point was made by J. D. Dengerink in Philosophia Reformata Vol. 42, 1977, 1st and 2nd Kw. 'Ontisch of Intentioneel?' pp 13-49.

[46] 'Imaginativity', p.55; refer also to footnote 20 on p.57.

[47] Ibid, pp 43-55.

[48] Edward S. Casey, 'Imagining': a phenomenological study, Indiana Press, Bloomington and London, 1976.

[49] ibid pp. 38-60.

[50] Seerveld, p. 46, emphasis his, with a footnote that Casey himself is aware of the problem , Casey, op. cit. pp. 40-48, esp. p. 43, p. 8 and p. 227.

[51] Casey, 'Imagining' p. 151, emphasis his.

[52] Seerveld, 'Imaginativity', op. cit. p. 50.

[53] Ibid. p. 56.

[54] Thirty-two Theses on Anthropology, op. cit.

[55] Luke 1: 50-52, Revised Standard Version, emphasis added.

[56] The use of the term 'objective' here is meant in the sense of 'aesthetic object functions'. As such the emphasis is not on the problem of the intra-subjective validity of aesthetic judgements, but on the fact that we are dealing with the object side of the aesthetic functioning of reality, particularly as it is shaped and formed by humankind in the ongoing task of human stewardship.

[57] Seerveld, 'Rainbows' p. 132.

[58] Ibid, p. 132

[59] 'Art in Action', op. cit. p. 4.

[60] Ibid. p. 4.

[61] Raymond Firth, 'The Social Framework of Primitive Art', in Douglas Fraser ed., 'The Many Faces of Primitive Art', New York, Prentice-Hall, 1966, p. 12. Quoted in Wolterstorff, ibid p. 4.

[62] Wolterstorff, op. cit.

[63] David Hume Treatise I, (iii), 10.

[64] 'Art in Action', op. cit. p: 123.

[65] Ibid p. 123, emphasis added.

[66] Ibid pp. 124-125.

[67] The above example is fictional, but I would also want to include the category of fantasy.

[68] Refer to section 3.5, 'The Structural Character of Imagining', above.

[69] Although he does not use this term, it is what I here call 'aesthetic imagining' that Calvin Seerveld discusses in his paper 'Imaginativity', op. cit.

[70] Under the influence of what I have described as Kant's solution to 'the ancient quarrel between poetry and philosophy', there have been many attempts to construe 'myth' as, in effect, an act of 'aesthetic imagining', simply subsuming the act of 'confessional imagining' in attributing the ultimate sources of order and meaning to the various gods and spirits that personify the sources of the order and meaning of everyday events as a species of 'aesthetic imagining'. The example of Ernst Cassirer's 'The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms', and his influence upon Susanne Langer's 'Philosophy in a New Key' may be cited as a case in point. Another is that attitude which, in the first instance would seek to view the mythical content of 'The Vedas' via a combination of the mystical and aesthetic imagining. (Refer, for example, to F. Capra's discussion of Eastern mysticism in his influential 'The Tao of Physics', Bantam New Age Books, 1988, pp. 75-113.) The historical foundations of this tradition in the Vedic writings are confessional in character, viewing the ultimate sources of order and meaning in the cosmos of daily experience as a panoply of gods and spirits active in the world. Only in later developments in this tradition did the mystical and philosophical quest for 'the One' become central, and the matter of aesthetic imagining related to it, via story-telling. Refer, for example, to W. McNeill, 'The Rise of the West', University of Chicago, 1963, pp. 170-188.

[71] It is for *this* reason more than any other that secularism treats both pagan and theistic confessional imagining as a category of 'aesthetic imagining'. Secularism effectively denies that the sources of ultimate meaning and order are to be found *transcending* sensory images and what can be analysed in relation to them. Upon this confessional ground of ultimate certitude, it does _not_ wish to grant God, gods or spirits an actual and effective transcendent reality. It therefore resolves the problem by treating what I have described as 'confessional imagining' within a pagan or theistic context as a species of 'aesthetic imagining'. It should not be over-looked, however, that by its very character this species of aesthetic imagining has a secular confessional character, and is closely related to the Kantian solution of the ancient quarrel between poetry and philosophy discussed in Part II of the present essay.

[72] It would seem to me that this is the major weakness in the otherwise excellent essay by J. R. R. Tolkien that touches upon Myth, Faerie and Magic, entitled 'On Fairy Stories', in 'Essays Presented to Charles Williams', ed. by C. S. Lewis, Oxford University Press, London, 1947.

[73] Refer, for example, to John Cage, 'Silence', M. I. T. Press, 1966, pp. 83-84.

[74] Jeremy Eccles, 'The Bulletin', Dec. 6, 1988, p.149.