MARION DROBIG

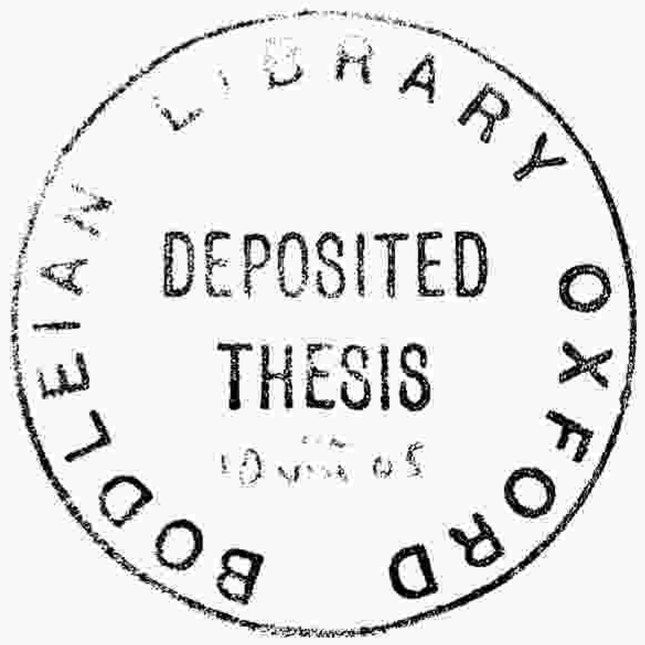
THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

AND

THE DISCLOSURE OF BEING

Karl Barth's Christology And Martin Heidegger's Question Of Being

D.Phil. Thesis and Abstract



Pembroke College, Michaelmas Term 2004 [ie 2005]

Short Abstract Of D.Phil. Thesis

The Christian Life And The Disclosure of Being.

Karl Barth's Christology And Martin Heidegger's Question Of Being

By Marion Drobig, Pembroke College, Michaelmas Term 2004 [i.e. 2005]

The aim of this thesis is to explore the ethical dimensions of both Barth's and Heidegger's works, and to present them as the unifying element of their diverse publications. This ethical dimension can be best described as their concern that human beings conceal ultimate reality by way of their existence, and thus as the imperative to exist in a way that allows reality to reveal itself, unhindered by the projections of human worldviews.

For Barth, the proper way of existence, through which we disclose our present situation under God's Lordship, consists in prayer. Yet prayer involves, for Barth, both anticipation and remembrance of the history of the covenant. The exposition of the meaning of prayer therefore leads to a consideration of the history of the covenant, according to its biblical witnesses. The thesis therefore explores Barth's exegetical interpretation of the two main perspectives of the history of the covenant in the New Testament, and reconstructs Barth's understanding of the covenant-history as the hermeneutical framework of the disclosure of our present situation under the Lordship of God. Next follows the exposition of our concrete ethical obligations within the hermeneutical framework of the covenant-history. This exposition proceeds via a comparative study of Barth's Münster ethics-lectures and his *Church Dogmatics*. Given that, for Barth, our concrete ethical obligations involve allowing ourselves to be challenged by a different perspective of reality, this thesis introduces Heidegger as a dialogue partner. The presented reading of Heidegger's major works and lecture-circles focuses on his understanding of the interrelation between human existence and the self-manifestation of being as the final paradigm of meaning and horizon of this existence.

The thesis concludes with a dialogue between Barth and Heidegger, which aims to create the space for a new self-manifestation of reality through the experience of a conflict between different perspectives of reality, and to translate Heidegger's perspective of reality into Barth's, in order to reconstruct Barth's perspective in a process in which reality can reveal itself anew.

Long Abstract

Of D.Phil. Thesis

The Christian Life And The Disclosure of Being.

Karl Barth's Christology And Martin Heidegger's Question Of Being

By Marion Drobig,
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The aim of this thesis is to explore the ethical dimensions of both Barth and Heidegger's works, and to consider whether once Barth's and Heidegger's ethical interest is taken seriously, this interest could reveal itself as the unifying element of their diverse works.

However, it is crucial to avoid measuring Barth and Heidegger by an arbitrarily adopted standard of ethics and human moral agency, but rather to explore the structure and inner logic of their texts in a close reading of their texts. Hence, this thesis follows the logical and structural development of Barth's and Heidegger's reasoning throughout the different stages of their work, in order to disclose, within these two immanent frameworks, the meaning of their question about the possibility and necessity of human responsibility and moral agency.

It emerges that the ethical dimension in both Barth and Heidegger's works can be best described as the concern regarding the fact that human beings conceal ultimate reality by means of their existence, and thus as the imperative to exist in a way that allows reality to reveal itself, unhindered by the projections of human worldviews.

The exploration of this concern, in the works of Barth, begins with an analysis of his early lectures on Calvin and the Reformed confessions. This analysis identifies prayer and prayerful Scripture reading as the existentiell locus in which the relation between the grace of God and human responsibility and free agency appears as non-competitive but mutually inclusive. The first chapter therefore explores the ethical meaning of prayer. It shows that Barth understands prayer as the necessary way of existence, through which we disclose our present situation under God's Lordship.

According to Barth, we pray in hopeful anticipation of the universal revelation of the consummated covenant in Jesus Christ, in faithful remembrance of the biblical witness of the history of its consummation, and thereby disclose the meaning of the present situation with respect to covenant-history. The exposition of the meaning of prayer therefore leads naturally to a consideration of the history of the covenant, according to its biblical witnesses.

The second chapter thus explores Barth's exegetical interpretation of the perspectives and structures of the New Testament as a witness of the covenant-history. It emerges that Barth identifies two contra-directed perspectives: The synoptic and the Pauline-Johannine witness. According to Barth, the synoptic perspective perceives *God* in Christ, and the history of the covenant accordingly as the history of the descent of God in His fight, which is aimed against the consequences of human sin and orientated towards His perfect victory and its universal revelation. The Pauline perspective, on the other hand, perceives the bodily risen man *Jesus of Nazareth* in his primordial unity with the eternal Father, and thus not only as the telos, but also, as such, as the origin of God's history with man. The Pauline-Johannine perspective consequently perceives the entire history of the covenant in the light of its telos, that is, in the light of Jesus Christ's final victory, and of its universal revelation.

For Barth, the reality of Jesus Christ, in His history of the consummation of the covenant, can manifest itself to us only if we firstly, together with the synoptic witnesses, follow God's descent in prayerful hope for the universal revelation of its telos, and if we secondly, together with the Pauline-Johannine witness, perceive this history of God's struggle again in the light of its telos, that is, under the presupposition that Jesus Christ, as the victor over sin and nothingness, and as the universal revealer of His victory, is, as the telos of all history, also its origin.

The thesis therefore reconstructs Barth's understanding of the covenant-history according to these two perspectives and shows how Barth was able to construct this history as the hermeneutical framework of the disclosure of our present situation under the Lordship of God. It shows that Barth achieved this by interpreting the wealth of Christian doctrines, and their different understandings by representatives of different denominations and ages, as moments of this history, perceived from the two contra-directed apostolic perspectives. This reconstruction of Barth's understanding of the covenant-history thus

shows the narrative unity between the various doctrines and their different denominational interpretations, and the inherent unity between Barth's dogmatic and ethical reasoning.

Hence, this thesis illustrates how Barth's understanding of the covenant history, according to the two apostolic perspectives, reveals the necessity and possibility of human ethical reasoning and moral agency, in so far as it points us to our ultimate reality in responsible unity with God and His creation in Christ, and provides theology with a framework to disclose this reality and the concrete ethical obligation it poses to us.

The exposition of the concrete ethical obligations of man, within the hermeneutical framework of the covenant-history, takes place in the third chapter. This exposition proceeds via a comparative study of Barth's interpretation of the command of God the creator in his Münster ethics-lectures and in KD III/4. It emerges from the comparative analysis that Barth's understanding of the history of the covenant, according to the contra-directed synoptic and Pauline-Johannine perspectives, plays a key role in his ethical reasoning – a key role that he affirmed theoretically in his Münster lectures but first applied fully in KD III/4 and IV/4.

The second part of the third chapter therefore reconstructs the Münster lecture-material on the command of God the reconciler and of God the redeemer within the hermeneutical framework of the covenant-history, as displayed throughout Barth's KD in relation to the two apostolic perspective, and with respect to the insights gained by the analyses of the way in which Barth had developed the command of God the creator in KD III/4.

The conclusion of chapter one to three can be summarised as follows: Barth understands ethics as a way of existence in hopeful anticipation of the universal revelation of the covenant-history, in faithful remembrance of its consummation, and thus within the responsibility to disclose the present situation as governed and determined by the history of the covenant.

However, the problem is, for Barth, that whilst human beings are responsible for the disclosure of the meaning of their present situation in relation to the history of the covenant, as the history of Jesus Christ, the fact is that, primarily, they do not perceive their present situation within this relation.

Hence, this thesis demonstrates how Barth understands human beings to continuously obscure and veil the reality under God's Lordship by the projection of their

conceptualisations of world, self, and God. The ethical task of the disclosure of our present situation under God's Lordship must therefore always present a critical challenge to our veiling preconceptions. An essential presupposition of such a critical challenge consists in a dialogue with other perspectives of reality. The fourth chapter therefore introduces Martin Heidegger as a dialogue partner.

The exposition of Heidegger in the fourth chapter challenges the widely accepted opinion that there is a break between Heidegger's early focus on human existence and resolute choice and his later focus on human responsiveness to the history of being. This thesis therefore demonstrate that while there are differences in perspective, emphasis, and terminology, the constructive unity between the thoughts of the early and of the later Heidegger becomes obvious if Heidegger's entire work is read with respect to the ethical question: *How do we have to exist in order to let being manifest itself as the final meaning and critical standard of our inter-relational existence within the world?*

The thesis therefore explores how, in his early phenomenological analysis of Christian existence, and in his following phenomenological analysis of our everyday existence in *Being and Time*, Heidegger discusses ways of existence that allow us to respond to, and become guided by, being's self-manifestation as the final paradigm of meaning and the horizon of our seeing, thinking, and acting.

Furthermore, the thesis shows that after *Being and Time*, Heidegger begins to articulate more thoroughly his vision of the *Ereignis*, of the historical event of being's self-manifestation and concealment. He argues that both authenticity and inauthenticity are responses to being: If we exist authentically, we respond to the historical movement of being itself, in so far as we allow being to withdraw itself in its present manifestation (in accepting anticipation of nothingness), and receive it in a new form in and through a questioning dialogue with the history of ideas, that is, of being's previous manifestations.

If we exist inauthentically, on the other hand, we also respond to being – but this time we do not respond to being's withdrawal, but to being's self-manifestation as ειδος. Inauthentic existence means that we have become dependent upon our reception of being in a particular form that gives meaning to our world and determines the way in which we see things and the other, and the way in which we subsequently act. If this paradigm and horizon of our being-in-the-world is challenged by being's very own withdrawal, we

experience fear and try to cling to the meaningful context of our world. As a result of this, our once genuinely disclosed world becomes concealed by a worldview.

The thesis thus explores the reason for Heidegger's claim that we are all prone to exist inauthentically – and indeed do so most of the time. It illustrates that the reason for this is that inauthenticity is a genuine human response to being's self-disclosure. As beings who have language, we already exist within a context of meaning. The withdrawal of this meaning therefore threatens our entire existence-in-the-world.

However, although confronted with the dilemma that human beings are prone to respond inauthentically to being's history of self-manifestation and self-withdrawal, Heidegger does not despair but retains hope.

This hope is grounded in Heidegger's conviction that the history of being is, although not independent of our attempts to affirm ourselves, ultimately beyond our control. Even the present situation of the concealment of being and of the other and of nature, in their inherent relation to the *Ereignis*, bears, for Heidegger, the promise of being. For the misery of the present situation can urge us into conversion: It can cause us to experience our words, thoughts and actions loosing sense, and raises the question of whether there might be a new context of meaning, to be explored by us in dialogue with our contemporaries and processors, and to be embodied by our actions and works, behind the veil of our present worldviews.

Hence, Heidegger instructs his readers about a way of existence that will lead to authenticity: To an existence that breaks through this veil in an act of self-sacrifice in the hope of becoming the place of being's new self-manifestation, and therefore the place in which the other and things can present themselves according to the character that they gain within the free historical play of the fourfold, uninterrupted by the projection of our worldviews.

Such a way of authentic existence consists, for Heidegger, in the anticipation of our death as the final encounter with nothingness as the withdrawal of being, and in our questioning encounter with the 'voice of our friend' as a witness of the *Ereignis*. Nietzsche and Hölderlin in particular, played this role of 'friend' for Heidegger. A dialogue with the writings of these two historical figures, shaped by an openness to the self-manifestation of

being, allowed Heidegger to develop his personal understanding of the meaning of being, and of the necessary human responses.

Heidegger's work confronts the reader with the question of whether he exists in such a way that allows beings - the other, nature, art, and the god – to present themselves according to their being as a free, responsive, yet also creative, part of the *Ereignis*, of the historical interplay of interpretation and embodiment of truth, and whether they respect being's self-presentation by entering this historical interplay by way of engaging in a questioning dialogue with the thoughts and poetic works of their processors.

It is this set of interrelated questions that guides the final chapter of this thesis. The final chapter discusses the possibilities, limits and guidelines of a dialogue between Barth and Heidegger that shares their experiences and expectations concerning the self-manifestation of ultimate reality and meaning, and concerning the corresponding human existence as the place where this self-disclosure can take place.

The dialogue between Barth and Heidegger proceeds under the presuppositions that only through the experience of a conflict between different perspectives of reality, can we gain the space in which a new self-manifestation of ultimate reality can take place, and that this new self-manifestation depends upon the translation of one perspective of reality into another, and upon its reconstruction within the framework of the other perspective.

The last chapter thus challenges our theological preconceptions of reality under God's Lordship and creates the space and the hermeneutical and material framework for a theological re-conceptualisation of this reality – by pointing out, and engaging with, the differences between Barth's and Heidegger's perspectives of reality.

The final dialogue repeats the circles of thought of both Heidegger and Barth in such a way that the arising conflicts, questions, differences, but also similarities between their thoughts help us to gain a new understanding of the relation between our experience of reality in time, and our corresponding historical existence that incorporates these two perspectives in their – critical-constructive – difference. It reconsiders the presuppositions of Barth's understanding of Christian existence, and re-conceptualises it with regards to its intended subject matter, in so far as it appears anew through the dialogue with, and the transformation of, Heidegger's basic thoughts.

The resulting re-conceptualisation of Christian existence therefore draws together the insights gained throughout this study of Barth and Heidegger, and in this way presents

the Christian life as the openness in which the disclosure of God's Lordship, and of its actual implications for human moral agency, takes place.

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List Of Abbreviations

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Barth

I. Cor.	*Die Auferstehung der Toten. Eine akademische Vorlesung über 1. Kor. 15*, München 1926.
C	*Die Theologie Calvins*, ed. by H. Scholl, Zürich 1993.
CD	*Die Christliche Dogmatik im Entwurf, Band 1, Die Lehre vom Worte Gottes*, München 1927.
CL	*Das Christliche Leben. Die Kirchliche Dogmatik IV/4, Fragmente aus dem Nachlaß*, ed. by H.-A. Drewes and E. Jüngel, Zürich 1976.
E	*Ethik*, ed. by D. Braun, Zürich 1973.
ET	*Evangelische Theologie im 19. Jahrhundert*, in: Theologische Studien, ed. by K. Barth u. M. Geiger, Zürich 1957.
J	*Erklärung des Johannes-Evangeliums (Kapitel 1 - 8)*, ed. by W. Fürst, Zürich 1976.

KD *Kirchliche Dogmatik*, Zürich 1932-1967.

LZ *Letzte Zeugnisse*, Zürich 1970 (second edition).

P *Erklärung des Phillipperbriefes*, München 1928.

PT *Die Protestantische Theologie im 19. Jahrhundert. Ihre Vorgeschichte und ihre Geschichte*, Zürich 1994 (6th ed.).

PTE *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century. Its Background and History*, London 1972.

PP *Prayer And Preaching*, London 1964.

RII *Der Römerbrief*, second Edition, Zurich 1947 (8th ed.).

TR *Die Theologie der reformierten Bekenntnisschriften*, ed. by E. Busch, Zürich 1998.

URI *Unterricht in der Christlichen Religion*, vol. 1, Prolegomena, ed. by H. Reiffen, Zürich 1985.

URII *Unterricht in der Christlichen Religion*, vol. 2, Die Lehre von Gott, die Lehre vom Menschen, ed. by H. Stoevesandt, Zürich 1990.

Heidegger

Gesamtausgabe (GA)

GA 39 *Hölderlins Hymnen "Germanien" Und "Der Rhein"*, ed. by S. Ziegler, Frankfurt am Main 1980.

GA 46 *Zur Auslegung von Nietzsches II. Unzeitgemäßer Betrachtung "Vom Nutzen und Nachteil der Historie für das Leben"*, ed. by H.-J. Friedrich, Frankfurt am Main 2003.

GA 52 *Hölderlins Hymne "Andenken"*, ed. by C. Ochwadt, Frankfurt am Main 1982.

GA 60 *Phänomenologie des religiösen Lebens*, ed. by C. Strube, Frankfurt am Main 1995.

GA 61 *Phänomenologische Interpretation zu Aristoteles*, Frankfurt/Main 1994 (2nd ed.).

GA 65 *Beiträge zur Philosophie. Vom Ereignis*, ed. by F.-W. von Herrmann, Frankfurt am Main 1989.

Separate Works

BT *Being And Time*, translated by John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson, Oxford 1962.

E *Erläuterungen zu Hölderlins Dichtung*, Frankfurt am Main 1996 (6th ed.).

EM *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, Tübingen 1998 (6th ed.).

HW	*Holzwege*, Frankfurt am Main 1963.
NI	*Nietzsche*, vol. 1, Pfullingen 1961 (1st ed.), Stuttgart 1998 (6th ed.).
NII	*Nietzsche*, vol. 2, Pfullingen 1961 (1st ed.), Stuttgart 1998 (6th ed.).
PT	*Phenomenology And Theology*, in: Pathmarks, Cambridge 1998.
R	*Das Rektorat 1933/34. Tatsachen und Gedanken*, ed. by H. Heidegger, Frankfurt am Main 1983.
SZ	*Sein und Zeit*, Tübingen 1993 (17th ed.).
US	*Unterwegs zur Sprache*, Stuttgart 2001 (12th ed.).
VA	*Vorträge und Aufsätze*, Stuttgart 1997 (8th ed.).
WHD	*Was heißt Denken?* Tübingen 1997 (5th ed.).
WIM	*Was ist Metaphysik?*, Frankfurt am Main 1975 (11th ed.).
WM	*Wegmarken*, Frankfurt am Main 1967.

Other works

I	Calvin, Jean, *Institutes of the Christian religion*, ed. by J. T. McNeill, Philadelphia 1960.

Introduction

Karl Barth and Martin Heidegger share the common fate that their works are very often received as indifferent or even hostile with regards to the question of ethics and human moral agency. They also share the common fate that much scholarship has been devoted to identifying and contra-posing different phases within their works. It is the aim of this thesis to explore the ethical dimensions of both Barth's and Heidegger's works, and to consider whether once Barth's and Heidegger's ethical interest is taken seriously, this interest could reveal itself as a red thread that runs through and unites manifold, and at first sight even contradictory, aspects of their work.

In the first instance then it is crucial to avoid measuring Barth and Heidegger by an arbitrarily adopted standard of ethics and human moral agency, but rather to explore the structure and inner logic of their texts in a close reading of their texts. Hence, this thesis will follow the logical and structural development of Barth's and Heidegger's reasoning throughout the different stages of their work, in order to disclose, within these two immanent frameworks, the meaning of their question about the possibility and necessity of human responsibility and moral agency.

It emerges that the ethical dimension in both Barth and Heidegger's works can be best described as the concern regarding the fact that human beings conceal ultimate reality by means of their existence, and thus as the imperative to exist in a way that allows ultimate reality to reveal itself, unhindered by the projections of human world-views.

The exploration of this concern, in the works of Barth, begins with an analysis of his early lectures on Calvin and the Reformed confessions. This analysis will identify prayer and prayerful Scripture reading as the existentiell locus in which the relation between the grace of God and human responsibility and free agency appears as non-competitive but mutually inclusive. The first chapter therefore will explore the ethical meaning of prayer. It will show that Barth understands prayer as the necessary way of existence, by means of which we disclose our present situation under God's Lordship. According to Barth, we pray in hopeful anticipation of the universal revelation of the consummated covenant in Jesus Christ, in faithful remembrance of the biblical witness of this history of the consummation of the covenant, and thereby disclose the meaning of the present situation with respect to

covenant-history. The exposition of the meaning of prayer will lead naturally to a consideration of the history of the covenant.

The second chapter will therefore explore Barth's exegetical interpretation of the perspectives and structures of the New Testament as a witness of the covenant-history. It will emerge that Barth has identified two counter-posed perspectives: the synoptic and the Pauline-Johannine witness. I will therefore reconstruct Barth's understanding of the covenant-history according to these two perspectives and show how Barth was able to construct this history as the hermeneutical framework of the disclosure of our present situation under the Lordship of God. He achieved this by interpreting the wealth of Christian doctrines and their different understandings by representatives of different denominations and ages as moments of this history, perceived from the two counter-posed apostolic perspectives. This reconstruction of Barth's understanding of the covenant-history intends therefore to show the narrative unity between the different doctrines and their denominational interpretations, and the inherent unity between his dogmatic and ethical reasoning. Hence, I intend to show how Barth's understanding of the covenant history, according to the two apostolic perspectives, reveals the necessity and possibility of human ethical reasoning and moral agency, in so far as it discloses man's ultimate reality in responsible unity with God and His creation in Christ, and provides theology with a framework to disclose this reality and the concrete ethical obligation it poses to man.

The exposition of the concrete ethical obligations of man within the hermeneutical framework of the covenant-history will take place in the third chapter. This exposition will proceed via a comparative study of Barth's interpretation of the command of God the creator in his Münster ethics-lectures and KD III/4. It will emerge from the comparative analysis that Barth's understanding of the history of the covenant, according to the two apostolic perspectives, plays a key role in his ethical reasoning – a key role that he affirmed theoretically in his Münster lectures but first applied fully in KD III/4 and IV/4. In the second part of this chapter, I will intend to reconstruct the Münster lecture-material on the command of God the reconciler and of God the redeemer within the hermeneutical framework of the covenant-history, and with respect to the insights gained by the analyses of the way in which Barth had developed the command of God the creator in KD III/4.

The conclusion of chapter one to three can be summarised as follows: Barth understands ethics as a way of existence in hopeful anticipation of the universal revelation of the covenant-history, in faithful remembrance of its consummation, and thus within the responsibility to disclose the present situation as governed and determined by the history of the covenant.

However, the problem is, for Barth, that whilst human beings are made responsible for the disclosure of the meaning of our present situation in relation to the history of the covenant, as the history of Jesus Christ, fact is that, primarily, they do not perceive our present situation within this relation. Hence, I will demonstrate within this thesis how Barth understands us to continuously obscure and veil our reality under God's Lordship by the projection of our conceptualisations of world, self, and God.

The ethical task of the disclosure of our present situation under God's Lordship must therefore always present a critical challenge to our veiling preconceptions. An essential presupposition of such a critical challenge consists in a dialogue with other perspectives of reality. The fourth chapter therefore introduces Martin Heidegger as a dialogue partner.

The exposition of Heidegger in the fourth chapter intends to challenge the widely accepted opinion that there is a break between Heidegger's early focus on human existence and resolute choice and his later focus on human responsiveness to the history of being. I intend to show that while there are differences in perspective, emphasis, and terminology, the constructive unity between the thoughts of the early and of the later Heidegger becomes obvious if Heidegger's entire work is read with respect to the ethical question: "*How do we have to exist in order to let being manifest itself as the final meaning and critical standard of our inter-relational existence within the world?*"

The fifth and final chapter will explore the possibilities and limits for a dialogue between Barth and Heidegger. It intends to challenge theological preconceptions of reality under God's Lordship and to create, via a discourse between different perspectives of reality, the room and the hermeneutical and material framework for a theological re-conceptualisation of this reality.

Chapter I

The Meaning and the Importance of Prayer in the Theology of Karl Barth and Its Ethical, Ontic, and Noetic Implications

Karl Barth's complete theological work describes God as the sovereign Lord who in His divine freedom has determined Himself to be for and with man in Jesus Christ. Yet this focus on God's action does not negate human moral agency: while we cannot enter communion with God by our own means, God calls us into His covenant with humankind, which He has consummated once and for all in His Son Jesus Christ. He so calls us to be freely and consciously what we already are by His grace: children of God. The appropriate way in which we enact our child-right consists for Barth in invoking our Father in perfect confidence that He receives our prayer.[1]

For a precise understanding of the meaning of prayer in Barth's theology and its implications for a perceptive and obedient existence within the world, before God and with fellow human beings, I will firstly look at the continuous dominant role prayer plays within Barth's overall work as the locus of a mutual relationship between God and man. Secondly, I will explore the meaning of prayer in its specific locus within the liturgy of the Sabbath. Thirdly, I will explore the ontic dimension of prayer in relation to sin and nothingness, and finally its noetic power as a presupposition for a responsible human life in the ministry of the Kingdom of God. I intend to show thereby that the theology of Karl Barth acknowledges prayer as the human act by which proper theology becomes *both* an ontic and noetic *possibility* and *necessity* for man's responsible existence over and against God and the other within his world.

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[1] For a thorough account of the meaning of prayer in Barth's KD see Webster, 1995, 76-80; 175-213.

Part I
Prayer as the locus of a mutual relationship between God and man

Barth's theology originates from the fundamental question that the Reformed posed during their discussion with Catholicism and Lutheranism: "How can we as human beings speak, at once, and without loss on either side, of both the majesty and unlimited free grace of the sovereign God, *and* also of His becoming fully human, of His total revelation within the contingency of creation, and of His becoming *our* God so that we shall be His justified and sanctified people, freed by God for the service of His will by our own free, responsible acts in and for the world?"

To work toward an answer to this question, Barth firstly returns to Calvin (C) (1922) and to the Reformed Confessions (TR) (1923).[2] Here Barth finds two principles of his theology. He firstly discovers the ethical dimension of the Reformed Scripture-principle: the prayerful hearing of the Word of God within the apostolic witness turns man into the right relation to God and his fellow human beings.[3] And he secondly comes to see ethics as essential to Reformed doctrine as such. Its centrepiece consists "in the acknowledgement of the *claim* on man, which has its ground in the thankfulness against God's inexpressible goodness"[4]. God's grace grants us the freedom to act in correspondence to His will. So states Calvin in his *Confessio Helvetica Posterior*: "Man must know that by grace he is placed on his feet in order to *walk*"[5]. Yet we "must not try to bind God" by our works. Proper Christian obedience is therefore exercised for Calvin in *prayer*.[6]

In Barth's wrestling with the question about the proper relation between God and man, in which neither the superiority of God's free grace should swallow up the importance of man's free service, nor human words and deeds bind God, prayer emerges as the pivotal centre of Christian thinking and acting. Already addressed by God through His Word in Scripture, we acknowledge our responsibility before God by praying for the coming of the

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[2] For an analysis of Barth's lectures on Reformed theology, see Freudenberg, 1997.
[3] It is obvious how deeply rooted the methodology of Barth's Anselm-book is in his analysis of the Reformed Scripture-principle according to the 37th and 38th chapter of the Berner Synodus.
[4] Ibid, 144.
[5] Ibid, 145.
[6] C, 379.

Holy Spirit to bring us into a new understanding of the will and works of the living God and to liberate us for a life "disposed to his service"[7] in true human freedom.

Prayer therefore plays a central role within the covenantal theology of Barth's *Kirchliche Dogmatik*. In Jesus Christ's reconciling work, in His death and resurrection, God has consummated and revealed His eternal predestination in time: His self-election of grace to be "God with us"[8] so that we become exalted into the true freedom of His witnesses, that is, into the act of prayer: "Der ewige Wille Gottes ist der Mensch, der ganz und gar Zeuge von Gottes Reich und der eben als solcher königlich frei ist.... Der ewige Wille Gottes ist der Akt des Gebets..., in welchem Erkenntnis und Handlung gewagt werden darf und muß"[9].

Because God's free decision to be God for and with us is the reason for our freedom for Him, no tension emerges between the omnipotence of God and the freedom of human beings. The latter is grounded in God's merciful call to play an active cooperative part within the coming of His Kingdom[10] by witnessing to the world that we are indeed reconciled with God in and through Jesus Christ. As the active witnesses of Jesus Christ, we follow God's call to be His partner and friend. The locus of the enactment of this specific relation of man to God is *prayer*. As we acknowledge the kingship of God, surrender our own sovereignty, and request everything from God alone, our existence is brought into correspondence to God's existence. For it is Jesus Christ, who - "as ... the hearing *God*" and also "as ... the pleading *man*"[11] - calls us to join His invocation of the Father for the sake of the world.

Hence, prayer is for Barth no private task of elevation: we are called into the prayer of Jesus *on behalf of the world* for which He has given up His life. In prayer, we are freed to serve the coming Kingdom of God[12], which is not merely religious but "also political, social, scientific, aesthetic"[13]. As servants of the coming Kingdom, which transforms the whole world, we must learn to read the signs of God's reign within the worldly realm, to distinguish the will and work of God from the demands and mechanisms of the lordless powers, the dynamic manifestations of sin. One learns this by praying the Word of God to teach him about the way and purpose of God's government: "Er muß hier mit dem Leben und

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[7] I, ii, 2.
[8] IV/1, 3.
[9] II/2, 197.
[10] III/3, 47.
[11] III/3, 311.
[12] III/3, 290.
[13] III/3, 291.

Walten des Heiligen Geistes im Worte Gottes vertraut werden, schon um ihn dort von allerlei anderen Geistern mindestens einigermaßen unterscheiden zu können"[14].

In praying for the *coming* of God's Kingdom, we acknowledge that God *is already* the ruler of human history, as it has been revealed once and for all in Jesus Christ. We acknowledge this revelation by asking God to use us as ministers and witnesses of His Kingdom, and by following His invitation to become His friends and partners. Our Christian conduct, while being and remaining a creaturely movement, receives "a *share in God's world-dominion*": "Gott will die Welt ... nicht so ... regieren, daß er nicht auf sie hörte, daß er sich, indem er allein Alles bestimmt, nicht auch durch sie bestimmen ließe"[15]. God in his almighty sovereignty is so gracious to man, "that he ...appoints him to the confidentiality and boldness of the friend, to the side of his throne, to his own side"[16]. He calls us to partake in the kingly office of the exalted man Jesus Christ by joining His intercessions.

To sum up: Barth understands prayer to be the prime locus of the mutual interaction between God and human beings as well as between the church and the world.

Part II

The meaning of prayer in its specific locus within the liturgy of the Sabbath

Barth perceives prayer as the unifying centre of the Sabbath-worship, which opens the church's worship of God to the world. The meaning of prayer can therefore be explicated further by a reflection of the liturgy of the Sabbath-worship.

Barth's perception of the Sabbath as the fulfilment of creation in the "joyful readiness, in which the creator and the creature ... are together and look forward to the beginning common history"[17] is of primary importance. On the Sabbath, we are therefore called to rest in the "freedom, celebration and joy of God"[18], to remember His history with humankind, and to follow Him into our common future.

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[14] Ibid.
[15] III/3, 323.
[16] Ibid.
[17] III/1, 197.
[18] III/1, 246.

The liturgy of the Sabbath consists of confession, Scripture readings, preaching, hymns of praise, the Lord's Supper and - as the integrating act of proper liturgy which also opens the service of God to the world – prayer. For Barth, the congregation is foremost a communion of *confession and testimony*. In the power of the Holy Spirit each member of the congregation witnesses the works of God before the church and the world. His words of testimony have the character of a real "act", as the one "who speaks them, makes himself liable" for them. He must make their meaning visible in his personal conduct and take upon himself "the consequences"[19].

However, this *Bekenntnisgemeinde* exists for Barth solely in so far as she listens "sincerely always anew" to "Scripture in its entirety"[20]. Because God is a living God, any knowledge of Him derived from the hearing of the Apostolic witness "cannot ... be confirmed, without being simultaneously founded and won anew, as it happens in prayer"[21]. *Prayer* is thus the precondition for the *hearing of the Word* of God as His actual concrete command. As for Barth its explication is the prophetic task of *the sermon*, the latter has its grounding in prayer: there is "no proclamation ..., which does not come out of prayer and leads back into prayer"[22].[23]

Furthermore, Barth perceives prayer as a form of proper *worship and praise*. Our invocation of God is for Barth "the highest honour, which God demands of human beings and which human beings can offer Him": that we seek and want to receive everything that we need from God[24]. Hence, prayer is "decisively petition"[25]. If we turn with empty hands towards God, beseeching Him for everything we need, we denounce "all high-handedness" but acknowledge God as our gracious Lord. Thus, true praying expresses adequately "gratefulness", "penitence", and "adoration"[26].

For Barth then, proper worship demands that we invoke God as "*Our* Father": as the Father of the congregation as the one body of Christ, and of the world that has been

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[19] III/4, 92f.
[20] III/4, 91.
[21] III/4, 96.
[22] Ibid.
[23] For Barth himself "gehört es zur Vorbereitung einer Predigt, seit Jahren schon, daß ich zu der Predigt auch ein Anfangsgebet und ein Schlußgebet schreibe" (BB, 118).
[24] III/4, 95.
[25] III/4, 106.
[26] III/4, 107; 111.

reconciled with God in Jesus Christ. In true prayer, we therefore turn to God in responsibility for our neighbours. Hence, prayer essentially relates to the *Lord's Supper*. Here Jesus Christ unites Himself with the members of the congregation, and thereby unites them to be His body in their task of witnessing Him to the world in their words and deeds as His "partners, made alive by Him"[27]. Out of the gracious unity that Jesus Christ establishes with us in the Eucharist, He calls us into the movement of His own prayer, which has been received by the Father, as the resurrection as the exaltation of the humanity of Jesus Christ reveals[28]. We can therefore be confident about the "acceptance and inclusion of the human petitions into God's plan and will"[29]. Actually elevated at God's side in His Son[30], we are called by the omnipotent God to beseech Him "to take an interest in our cause, to ask him to participate actively in it"[31].

Consequently, we must remember that in prayer we are exalted into a life of service to God's will, to be God for His whole creation. Neither the church nor the Christians are ends in themselves but exist for the world that God loves. Barth therefore demands the church to denounce "all quietism" and to acknowledge her obligations to the world[32]. Yet the church can work for a better future of the world solely if she lets her hands be filled by God, if she prays for all she needs in her mission: "Immer nur die *ecclesia orans* kann und wird die *ecclesia effaciter laborans*, die ihrer Verantwortlichkeit wirklich entsprechende Gemeinde sein" [33]. In prayer on behalf of the world, everything will be given to her in order to be passed on to the people[34]. Every member of the body of Christ will receive his specific task and gift "so that ... everyone at his place and in his way, but all ... in mutual agreement", acts responsibly for the congregation and the world[35].

To sum up: it is Barth's concern to re-establish prayer as the central human act of liturgy and Christian life. He sees prayer not as a mere recreational "elevation of hearts"[36] but

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[27] IV/3, 623.
[28] III/4, 117.
[29] Ibid.
[30] III/4, 119.
[31] III/4, 115.
[32] IV/3, 889.
[33] Ibid.
[34] IV/3, 891.
[35] IV/3, 894.
[36] IV/3, 1011.

"as a movement, in which all Christians find themselves *continuously* and t*ogether*"[37]. In prayer, "the congregation claims ... God's promise of His faithfulness", and confidently "initiates ... the intercourse established by God" as His covenant-partner. Prayer therefore constitutes a testimony of the covenant within the world[38]. As an "*integrating* moment of the liturgical action"[39], it creates the necessary "flinging open of [the congregation's] doors and windows"[40] [41] [42].

Part III

The ontic dimension of prayer

According to Barth, human beings are created to exist *in analogy* to God. Analogy is then for Barth a thoroughly practical, an ethical term[43]: the creature is a parable of God's

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[37] Ibid.
[38] IV/3, 1013.
[39] Ibid.
[40] IV/3, 1014.
[41] Barth's emphasis of prayer as a response to the concrete command of God provokes J. Kelsay to characterise Barth as an "act-deontologist" (Kelsay, 1989, 176) who has "little to say concerning the cultivation of certain dispositions that are part of the life of faith" through regular prayer (178). Yet Barth's respect for prayer within the liturgical context shows that prayer is for Barth a Christian exercise that must be regularly consummated and learned (Jesus Christ instructs us in the power of his Spirit through the apostolic witness and through "old texts" of the church (BB, 118)). Yet the commanded development of Christian prayer-praxis is for Barth not a pious private exercise for the development of the Christian character but directed toward the world as the Christian learns to understand the God-created reality and to act within it according to God's will.
[42] The meaning of prayer within liturgy might be best perceived by one of the prayers Barth has prepared for his service, printed in *Selected Prayers*, 53.
[43]Eberhard Jüngel has already aimed to rule out a static notion of Barth's tern "analogy" in the mathematical form of "x is to y as a is to b". He states in contrast: "Indem Gott Ja zu etwas sagt, schafft er eine Beziehung zu dem Bejahten und damit dieses selbst" (Jüngel, 1982, 226). Jüngel stresses here that neither the relation between God and that which he constitutes to be in an analogical relation to him, nor the constituted creature itself, exist outside the divine act of constitution. But this concept of analogy is too abstract in its tight focus on language. God's yes is for Barth never a plain yes: It always bears the form of a concrete command. It confirms our existence only in so far as it confirms our specific *agency* within salvation-history, i.e. in so far it calls us to move actively towards Him in prayer.

It seems that Jüngel sees the *total existence* of man as an "answer" to God's speaking, but his rhetoric might cause the misunderstanding (as is the case with Wolfhard Pannenberg; cf. Pannenberg, 1988, 248f; 258f) that Barth focuses solely on divine communication as a rather pious experience, but is uninterested in the concrete historical acts of God and in human ethical, social, and cultural conduct. We must therefore note that prayer, as the prime ethical task, is for Barth no private pious experience, but a way of responsible existence in an active relation to the natural and cultural world. Understood as the exaltation into Jesus Christ's kingly

being in His acts solely "in the *event* of her *collaboration* for the good, for which she is called, authorized, and enabled by Him"[44]. However, God's very own fight against human sin in the death of Jesus Christ reveals that human beings deliberately turn away from their proper existence in the right order over and against God. Because Jesus Christ has victoriously fought human sin on the cross and established His right order between God and ourselves, as well as between ourselves and our fellow human beings, once and for all, we cannot cease to be that which we therefore are in relation to God and fellow human beings. Yet we nevertheless continuously try to contradict our existence within that proper relation. Therefore we call forth the "lordless powers": "Die Denaturierung der Menschlichkeit und Mitmenschlichkeit seiner eigenen Existenz, die darin besteht, daß er ... herrenlos zu denken, zu reden und zu handeln und also zu existieren beginnt"[45].

In the light of Jesus Christ's victory on the cross, the realm of the lordless powers appears solely as "pseudo-absolute being" – yet within the limits set by Jesus Christ's victory, our creation of the lordless powers has nevertheless "catastrophic consequences" for our temporal existence[46]. Instead of becoming the master of our existence, we lose the freedom which consists in our obedience to God[47] as we disrupt and disorder our relation to God and fellow human beings.[48] To lose sight of God as the Lord of our existence is, for Barth, to lose "all clearness and security in the praxis of life" and "in the perception of [our] historical responsibility"[49]. This inhuman existence in turn makes the right relationship to God impossible.[50]

The person who, in her arrogance and laziness, turns away from God and refuses to live according to His gracious command is, for Barth, an active wrongdoer. Nevertheless, as

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office, prayer demands an interest in one's socio-cultural context, and commands us to perceive the meaning of the events of world-history with respect to its relation to salvation-history as its inner ground.

Yet what Barth distinguishes from Pannenberg's notion of history as revelation is the fact that God's omnipotent ruling of the world, in which he allows us to share in prayer, is not perceivable from the innerworldly standpoint of sinful man. That does not mean that it is not perceivable at all – scepticism is for Barth a form of escapism from the concrete call of God. But it demands praying for the coming of the Holy Spirit who teaches us about the will and history of God through the apostolic witness and thus opens our eyes to distinguish God's ruling salvation-history from the events of human sin and nothingness.

[44] III/1, 60.
[45] CL, 364.
[46] Ibid.
[47] CL, 365.
[48] IV/2, 473.
[49] Ibid.
[50] IV/2, 498.

such she has created an objectively perverted situation: "humankind's misery"[51]. "Humankind's misery" is the world constituted by our lordless world-views[52], as we choose to flee from the commands of the living God that meet us in creation by constructing our personal ideas of their meaning[53]. The Word of God is thereby rendered into a "perceivable picture" and placed within an overall context constructed by us, in order that it cannot challenge us anymore[54]. Yet while we continuously project world-views in our escape from God's actual command, we too find ourselves already entangled in them. As they distract us from focusing on the particular relation between "God, fellow human beings, and self"[55] by involving us into an endless blinding monologue, they are a hindrance to our encounter with God's call.[56] Thus, we cannot escape the lordless-powers we have called: we have to live in our "obscured picture", "provoked by [our] lie[s]".[57] [58]

Caught up in our world-views, we lose sight of God's actual commandment in our "historical reality" and of our "own place and task within its ... context".[59] This leads to the dissolution of our genuine "being-with" into a final "against-each-other"[60], which is characterised by "the problematic of human speech".[61] Where we turn truth into lie by the production of our world-views, created reality can no longer "come to speech".[62] Instead, we produce and are caught up in misunderstandings, bringing forth not light but darkness. The basic mood of human beings is therefore angst[63]: as we desire to be our own Lord and to live according to our self-created reality, we experience the disintegration of our human existence.

Yet with respect to the reconciling work of Jesus Christ on the cross and His ongoing fight against the human works of darkness in His continuous self-proclamation, it must be said that the process of human self-destruction is indeed limited by God. We are therefore called to join God's fight against the human production of darkness in prayer: "Darauf darf

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[51] IV/2, 546.
[52] IV/3, 293.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.
[56] IV/3, 295.
[57] IV/3, 540.
[58] Ibid.
[59] IV/3, 520.
[60] IV/3, 541.
[61] IV/3, 544.
[62] Ibid.
[63] IV/3, 770.

und soll man denn auch deshalb beständig beten, weil die Wirklichkeit Gottes und des Menschen in Jesus Christus der Pseudowirklichkeit ...überlegen und ihr gegenüber ... in überlegenem Angriff begriffen ist".[64]

Hence, Barth perceives prayer as the "revolt" against "the *disorder*, which penetrates, intoxicates and ruins ... all human relationships".[65] We join this positive revolt by stepping back into our right relationship with God, prepared for us by the reconciling work of Jesus Christ: by being children of God. By invoking Him, we affirm Him as our Father and take ourselves seriously as His children.[66] We give up our desire to create and rule creation if we pray to God: "Your Kingdom come!"[67] Yet being directed towards a right relation to God, we already become responsible for, and capable of, a true and proper ministry of the coming Kingdom in our own human works: "In dieser Bitte ausgerichtet auf das Kommen des Reiches und insofern zu "Reichsgenossen" gemacht, können es die Christen unmöglich unterlassen, ... dem kommenden Reich Gottes entgegen zu gehen, die vorläufig ... sich bietenden Möglichkeiten ... *menschlicher Gerechtigkeit* und Ordnung zu sehen".[68]

The disclosure of creaturely possibilities of justice as a witness to God's coming Kingdom requires us to challenge the seemingly absolute domination of lordless world-views[69] (for example, 'reality is' that there *is* a scarcity of resources). This challenge occurs if we turn towards God in prayer and listen to His history in, with, and for the world, and discern, in the light of this history, the actual meaning of our worldly context.

To sum up: we have been created to respond towards God as our gracious Lord in responsibility and love for His creation. Yet we rebel against this Lordship and against the orders of creaturely relations under this Lordship by turning away from God as the focus and horizon of our existence, and by reordering the creaturely relations in which we find ourselves according to our individual interests and world-views. This disorder of creaturely relations according to our individual world-views brings forth the disintegration of our

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[64] IV/3, 549.
[65] CL, 358.
[66] CL, 75.
[67] CL, 361.
[68] CL, 362; cf. also 454-457.
[69] CL, 372f.

human existence and establishes a world under the dominion of our lordless interests and world-views, as they gain a seemingly absolute status.

Yet this absolute status of our world under the dominion of the lordless powers is radically challenged and overcome by Jesus Christ's death and resurrection as the perfect consummation of the covenant between God and His redeemed creation. Prayer is the human act in which we acknowledge this challenge and exist in correspondence to the reality of the covenant. Existing in *analogia relationis* to the reality of the covenant in Christ in prayer, we live according to the promise of our creation, to our eternal existence before the eyes of God[70]. We thereby break through the dominion of the lordless powers and re-establish our true existence over and against God and our fellow human beings within God's very good creation. Hence, prayer has, as the true way of human existence, an *ontic* dimension (at least from a human perspective, as our self-created sham-reality is a non-eternal, non-created reality).

Part IV

The noetic dimension of prayer

We have seen how Barth perceives the projection of world-views as our attempt to escape from an encounter with the command of the living God, by establishing a counter-reality in which His Lordship does not challenge us. For Barth, the worst world-views are those Christian theologies that aim to establish an *ambivalent* knowledge of God in order to

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[70] Okko Herlyn understands prayer therefore as man's actualisaition of his reality according to the divine address (Herlyn, 1979, 103). Yet Herlyn neglects that this actualisation must involve a witness of one's prayer that consists in service of the world. Herlyn's account of prayer is too narrow as it focuses mainly on human self-realisation within a closed relation between God and the individual. I further disagree with Herlyn's notion that "Gott erhört das Gebet, indem er zuvor dem "entspricht", was das Gebet allenfalls hernach zur Sprache bringen kann" (97). This notion leaves no room for prayer as a responsive yet self-responsible human act. This contradicts Barth's focus on the actuality of both the command of God and the invocation of man. While the prayer for God's command and God's answer derive from God's One Word, they are part of a mutual discourse between the living God and man as an active agent within God's history of salvation and are thus always urgent and new, spontaneous acts.

For more clarity on this point see also the reading of John Webster: "What is most striking here ...is that prayer is a real movement from humanity to God. Clearly, it is a movement whose ultimate origins lie beyond the human agent in the gracious provision of God; we do not pray in our name. Yet the expectation of hearing presupposes that we are not only recipients, but those who call, and whose calling is not in vain because it evokes the action of the divine Father" (Webster, 1995, 189).

disguise human error and wrongdoing.[71] Hence, it is important to note that Barth's dominant focus on the freedom and sovereignty of the living God must not be rendered into scepticism. By His free grace, God proclaims his own being, work, and eternal will in Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit through the apostolic witness.

Prayer can therefore overcome the sham-reality of the dominion of the lordless powers precisely because it is the proper locus in which to search actively for the knowledge of God. Following the call of Jesus Christ into the movement of His own prayer as the exalted man to His Father, we step into the free, mutual encounter with God, opened up by God himself. By standing here, we are exalted above the dilemma of either falling prone to a theory of *a deus absconditus*, which leaves us with a mere formal relation to God as our sovereign but unknown ruler[72], or rendering the will of the living God into a "card index".[73]

Hence, Barth's ethics stand above the traditional decision for either a formal or a material theological principle. He instead receives each principle from the one ontic and noetic ground on which he builds his whole KD: Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ as the history of the encounter between God and humankind is Himself the formal principle of Christian ethics. Into this encounter, He calls us in the power of His Spirit. Moreover, He calls us not into an empty space, but into His own history with the Father and ourselves, as witnessed by Scripture. In its function of directing us straight into this history, Barth perceives Scripture as the material principle of ethics – or more precisely: the history between God and humankind in Jesus Christ is the formal and the material principle, which is witnessed by Scripture.[74]

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[71] CL, 243.

[72] I therefore disagree with the recent interest in interpreting Barth as a "nonfoundational" and "postmodern" theologian whose perception of God as an "unfathomable mystery" may lead to an "open-ended ethics of otherness" that is solely formal and lacks due to a "foundational" knowledge of the will of God any genuine Christian material content (cf. Johnson, 1997, esp. 1; 162; 173).

[73] II/2, 787f.

[74] I am concerned that the following statement of Eberhard Jüngel causes the misunderstanding that Barth neglects any form of formal or material ethics. Jüngel is right that Barth's ethics is neither "concerned with the purely formal structure" (Jüngel, 1982, 158) nor with "grounding a material ethics of value" (158), but moves "beyond these alternatives" (158) into an ethics based on "analogy" (158) between human and divine acts and on "the immediacy of the intercourse of the human person with God" (159). Yet as I have argued above, analogy is for Barth a concept that includes obedience over against the *concrete* command of God as it is communicated through the apostolic witness. Scripture in its function as the witness of the history of Jesus Christ is therefore also a material principle for Barth.

Obedience to God's concrete command primarily means for Barth that Christians must do everything "in the invocation of God".[75] They thus accept that their sanctification is solely God's work, but also their own responsibility for requesting their sanctification by asking Him wholeheartedly: "What shall we do?"[76] However, the Christian fellowship of God in prayer will always happen "within the limits of human knowledge, will, judgement, and desire".[77] God's reception of our prayer will therefore take a form, which shows that He has understood our prayer "infinitively better than we ourselves".[78] We therefore see that even our prayer, our question for the command of God, is in need of "correction" and "transformation" by Him.[79]

Since it is our responsibility to vouch for our prayer in our corresponding words and acts, we must listen to God's answer, to the concrete command, which He gives us when He turns us towards a new hearing of His Word in prayer, and allow it to reshape our distorted categories by which we perceive the world and form our petitions and our expectations of their reception. Prayer demands that we understand what we pray for – and it is itself the primary means by which this critical new understanding of God's will for His creation can come about as it liberates us for an obedient hearing of God's Word in Scripture. In so far as the latter witnesses God's "erecting, sustaining, and confirming of his covenant of grace", Scripture tells us God's concrete command and thus must be acknowledged as the judge of the categories in which we pray, think, and act: "Nicht als Zettelkasten, ... sondern gerade in der geschichtlichen Einheit ihres Inhalts ist die Bibel Quelle, Norm und Richter materieller Ethik, ist ihr Wort als Befehlsausgabe zu verstehen und zu würdigen"[80] [81].

To sum up: Barth contradicts theological scepticism for ethical reasons. He sees the importance of a practical knowledge of God for a life as His witness. This practical knowledge is acquired in prayer. An existence in prayer therefore overcomes the traditional chasm between formal and material ethics, as it leads us not only into an appropriate existence with God and fellow human beings, but also into an obedient listening to the

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[75] CL, 76.
[76] II/2, 718.
[77] CL, 174.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Ibid.
[80] II/2, 787f.
[81] For a very perceptive analysis of Barth's exegetical method see Cunningham, 1995.

history of God's history with humankind as the hermeneutical framework in which to disclose God's actual command and to witness to it in our relation to the other.

Part V

The possibilities, demands, and methodological guidelines posed by Barth's notion of prayer to the task of theology, theological anthropology, and ethics

Over the previous sections, we have seen how, according to Barth, our pre-understanding of the world and our personal interests influence the way in which we formulate our prayer, anticipate God's reception, and expect to witness His perfect deeds. The "instruction in the art of proper asking for God's will and in the open hearing of His command"[82] in prayer is therefore a necessary yet difficult and daunting task of theology. It is difficult and daunting, because of the "pouring of the human, wrong and bigoted into our prayer"[83]. Our "disordered" state of existence over and against God and His creation disables us to perceive God's government over His creation. This state of disorder that cuts off our noetic possibilities is perpetuated by our production of world-views, which derive, for Barth, from the genuine urge to escape God's command.

So far I have attempted to hint at the fact that Barth, who understands theology as an existential, practical task, which has its locus in prayer, wants to investigate two things: on an ontological level, Barth is firstly interested in the "moral field"[84] between the commanding God and the responsible human being within covenant-history, which makes up meaningful reality. However, his concern is that this meaningful reality is "obscured". Human beings have created a counter sham-reality by their deliberate fall out of the right covenantal-order. While this sham-reality is for Barth already powerfully negated and overcome by God in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and thus not to be considered as a last order, it nevertheless determines and threatens human reality. Prayer is thus the essential act for Barth in which God has liberated us to turn in the right direction towards Him and so to

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[82] CL, 52.
[83] III/4, 111.
[84] The term "moral field" has been coined by J. Webster. He understands it as "the space within which moral agents act" in a specific "shape given above all by the fact that their acts take place in the history of the encounter between God as prime agent and themselves as those called to act in correspondence to the grace of God" (Webster, 1995, 4), i.e. as a "morally textured reality" (216).

accommodate the place in the reality-giving covenant-history that God has established for us in Jesus Christ. In this sense, prayer is of ontic importance.

Yet the ontic dimension of prayer demands and enables its noetic perception. Barth's Dogmatics as the receptive and understanding demonstration of the covenant-history of God and humankind in Jesus Christ therefore also convey an epistemological interest. Theodor Vogel conceives rightly: "Auch die Wirklichkeit ist verborgen-offenbar. Man muß oft eine besondere Perspektive wählen, damit man etwas sieht, was an sich alle sehen könnten, was aber faktisch nicht immer und nicht von jedem gesehen wird. "Die Geschichte des Gnadenbundes" ist der der christlichen Gemeinde angewiesene Ort ihrer Perspektive"[85]. He therefore perceives a "moment of critique" in Barth's ethics: "Wirklichkeit ist immer schon ausgelegte Wirklichkeit, und jeder, der sich ihr nähern will, muß sich mit ihren Auslegungen auseinandersetzen, um "falsches Bewußtsein" zu durchschauen. Barths ethische Argumentation ist vom gleichen Ansatz her eminent ideologiekritisch"[86].

For Barth, we have lost the right perspective towards created reality. We can only regain this right perspective if we follow God's gracious call into His covenant-history. As this history is the history of Jesus Christ, who testifies to Himself through the apostolic witness in the power of His Spirit, it is our responsibility to pray for the coming of His Spirit as the doctor ecclesiae in order to teach us about our proper place, and how to perceive from this point our historical context under Jesus Christ's actual command. This concrete command cannot be deduced in a Biblicist manner from Scripture – this is the "strand of theological voluntarism" (as critics have called it) in Barth's ethics.[87]

Nonetheless, we can learn from Scripture as the witness of God's will and acts within covenant-history "how one has to think and speak if confronted with [Jesus Christ]".[88] We can study the "way-of-thought" that prevails in Scripture and is thus the proper way to disclose reality, which is always defined by the command of the living God and thus cannot be grasped by human world-views but solely by a confrontation with Jesus Christ Himself in His self-proclamation through Scripture. This requires a proper spiritual but no less

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[85] Vogel 1988, 132.
[86] Ibid., 132.
[87] For an evaluation of the charge that Barth's ethics features an irrational voluntarism – brought forth e.g. by R. Willis, R. Niebuhr, and J. M. Gustafson – see Biggar, 1993, esp. 7-45. Nigel Biggar replies to this charge: "Special ethics as Barth conceives it is [...] not a closed system. But it is, nevertheless, systematic. The history of God's covenant of Grace with humankind provides its organizing principle" (31).
[88] IV/3, 106.

exegetically and dogmatically informed reading of Scripture, directed by the question how Scripture understands the field of reality opened up by the encounter between God and humankind.[89] This task remains within the limits of human sinful existence; yet as such it is for Barth a task commanded by God and thus to be carried out confidently.[90]

I will consequently attempt, within the next two chapters, to explore Bath's understanding of the "biblical thought-forms" and the connections he draws between these thought-forms, dogmatic reasoning about God's history in relation to man, and human existence in prayer.

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[89] This task contradicts with Bultmann's understanding of theology. Bultmann criticised that Barth's *Christliche Dogmatik*, "works with the uncritically adopted terms of an old ontology" (letter from 8.6.1928). Yet Barth is not uncritical. With Bultmann, he shares the aim to hear the proclamation of the Gospel – unobscured by concepts of an alien ontology. However, Barth does not want to trade in one ontology for another. He rather tries to gain the meaning of our "existential-ontological terms" (Bultmann) directly from Scripture in a *critical dia*logue with philosophy.

John Webster describes Barth's intention therefore as follows: "Over against Bultmann, Barth presses the point that what matters is not that – in apologetic fashion – Jesus' history be made meaningful in our history (as if there were any real human history *extra Christum*), but the opposite: what matters is our being drawn into his sphere, which is in truth the sphere in which alone we may properly be said to exist" (Webster, 1995, 93) – and consequently to understand and express our existence properly.

[90] III/4, 111.

Chapter II
Karl Barth's Christology in its twofold form according to the Synoptic and Pauline-Johannine Witness

The outline, method, and goal of the argument

So far, we have seen that Barth's understanding of prayer urges us to inquire as to the meaning of our historical existence. As we have to witness to God's consummation of His saving will in history according to our prayers, we have to know God's will within the particular situation in which we are called to exist as His witnesses. Yet we have also seen that prayer does not only demand, but also enables, an understanding of God's will and of the history of its consummation. Since prayer re-orders our relation to God, we are brought into the hearing of God's Word. The question is therefore: "What do we hear in this confrontation with God's Word?" According to Barth, we hear Jesus Christ who proclaims Himself in the power of His Spirit. We hear Him witnessing to His history, in which He has consummated and revealed the will of the Father once and for all. Yet it is important to note Barth's concern that we have to listen to Jesus Christ's self-proclamation as those taught in the *school of the apostles*. The apostles have to teach us "how one has to think and speak if confronted with [Jesus Christ]"[91].

This chapter therefore intends to demonstrate how Barth identifies, within his early exegetical and dogmatic work, two basic "thought-forms" of the New Testament and how he uses them as methodological instruments for the construction of his KD. These two thought-forms are the synoptic and the Pauline-Johannine perspective of the history of Jesus Christ. The synoptic perspective stresses that *God* was in Jesus; the Pauline-Johannine perspective on the other hand stresses that the historical Jesus of Nazareth was in the beginning with God. From these two basic apostolic perspectives of the concrete history of Jesus of Nazareth, Barth perceives the entire history of God with humankind.

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[91] IV/3, 100.

Barth therefore characterises this history firstly as the descent of God in the *Seinsweise* of the Son in order to consummate the covenant between God and humankind. Yet according to the Pauline-Johannine perspective, which perceives the crucified and bodily risen Jesus as the one who exists eternally in union with God Father, he perceives the entire history of God with humankind also under the presupposition that the reality of the consummated covenant is the ultimate meaning and origin of God's history with humankind. From the synoptic perspective, the history of God with humankind therefore appears as a *Kampfgeschichte*, yet from the Pauline-Johannine perspective, the same history appears as *Offenbarungsgeschichte*.

Next I intend to show how, (on the basis of these two basic perspectives,) Barth develops the history of the covenant by including and reinterpreting the wealth of Christian doctrines and their different interpretations by representatives of different denominations and ages, as descriptions of different moments of history perceived from one of the two basic apostolic perspectives. The reconstruction of Barth's understanding of the covenant-history will show thereby that Barth perceives man as being primordially responsible for the affirmation and disclosure of this history.

The following chapter has therefore a threefold aim. It intends firstly to analyse a main unifying structure within Barth's work, and to show the role it plays with respect to the translation and reinterpretation of the Christian dogmatic tradition. It intends secondly to show how Barth's dogmatic establishes the necessity and possibility of human responsibility for the covenant-history and of moral agency within this history. And finally, it intends to reconstruct Barth's conception of this history as the hermeneutical framework for actual ethical decision-making of the individual Christian within this history.

Part I

The analysis and exposition of the two apostolic perspectives

According to Barth, dogmatic as well as ethical reasoning requires the identification and application of the *thought-forms* of the apostolic witness. Barth therefore identifies two distinct but mutually interrelated thought-forms or "types of christological statements in the

New Testament"[92]: a catabasic thought-form, which he identifies with the synoptic tradition, and an anabasic thought-form, which he identifies with the Johannine-Pauline tradition.

Both thought-forms perceive the one history of Jesus Christ, but from different perspectives. The synoptic thought-form sees "in Jesus *God*"[93]. Consequently, it perceives the history of Jesus Christ as the gracious descent of the free and sovereign God in the *Seinsweise* of the Son into the situation of fallen humanity in order to judge and exalt His elected creation by His existence in the flesh, in death, and in His bodily resurrection. The Pauline-Johannine thought-form perceives the same history of Jesus Christ under the presupposition that the telos of God's descent, His existence, death, and resurrection as the exalted man Jesus, is – due to once-and-for-all-character of an act of the eternal and sovereign God – already the origin of God's history with man. The Pauline-Johannine Christology thus proclaims, in Barth's eyes, a "*Jesus*evangelium"[94], which states that the Word of God "and thus God Himself" does not exist outside of the incarnate Word: solely in the man Jesus, "in the crib and on the cross", "here and only here is God's Word"[95].

This means that Jesus Christ, as the incarnate Word, in His historically defined character as the victor over sin and nothingness on the cross, was already in the beginning with God: "Dieser, Jesus, ... war im Anfang"[96]. While the synoptic catabasic perspective perceives the descent of God as a true battle-story of God with sin and nothingness, which has its victorious telos in the event of the cross and the resurrection, the Pauline-Johannine anabasic perspective perceives the entire history of God with humankind under the "*presupposition*": "Jesus is victor"[97], and, as such, the author and subject of the entire history between God and humankind.

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[92] I/2, 18.
[93] I/1, 424.
[94] I/2, 20.
[95] I/2, 188.
[96] II/2, 105.
[97] IV/3, 192.

The importance of Barth's early exegetical work

Barth already paid attention to this twofold structure of the history of Jesus Christ in his exegesis of Romans, I. Corinthians, John, and Philippians. In RII, Barth perceives the particular history of Jesus Christ as a history of universal judgement. This line of his commentary has gained particular attention. But there are at least two further statements of equal importance. Firstly, Barth perceives the universal crisis of the cross as the consummation of the new relation between God and humankind. And secondly, Barth understands this new historical event of the cross to determine the eternal existence of God and His relation to humankind: Jesus Christ is in His historical particularity the full revelation of "God's existentiality"[98]. He is, in His death and resurrection, "the ultimate word, which explains and expresses most clearly all others"[99]. As God's ultimate Word, He is already His first Word. Jesus' temporal life marked by His death and resurrection consummates the original union between God and humanity. But because Jesus Christ is of the "eternal Kingdom of the eternal world of the *beginning* [italics M.D.] and end"[100], He is in His historical consummation of His work of reconciliation above, and thus determinative for, all times: He is thus from the beginning of all times "very God and very man"[101], the "primordial" "unity of God and humankind, which cannot be lost"[102].

Barth hears the same Pauline message about Jesus Christ in I. Corinthians. Here Paul describes Jesus Christ as "end and beginning, as limit and origin"[103]. The final Word of God, that is, the history of Jesus Christ, His death, His resurrection, and our resurrection in Him "must be understood so much as final word, that it is understood as first word, the history of the end as such as the history of the beginning"[104]. Thus, Paul perceives Jesus Christ as God's final and therefore first decisive Word about Himself and His creation: "[C]reation, Christ's resurrection, and the end of all things ... as one single event[105]. The bodily risen crucified Jesus is as "the incarnate Logos" "the last Adam, who is truly the first"[106]; He is "the original-

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[98] RII, 259.
[99] RII, 71.
[100] RII, 260.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Ibid.
[103] I Cor, 81.
[104] I. Cor, 60.
[105] I. Cor, 119.
[106] I. Cor, 119.

finite creature"[107], the content of God's eternal Word through and in accordance to which the world was created. Hence, the final resurrection of humankind in Jesus Christ is, as a thoroughly eschatological event, the origin and hidden meaning of our history.

Barth also identifies this Pauline concept of the eternal, pre-temporal character of Jesus Christ as the incarnate, crucified, and bodily risen Son, in the Gospel of John. He does understand the prologue of John to state firstly the free descent of the logos asarkos into the flesh. However, he is also convinced that John presents Jesus of Nazareth, the telos of the descent of the eternal Logos, as the *incarnate* Logos, who was "in the beginning, because He belongs as such legitimately to God"[108]. He thus reveals "the communion between God and world, which is primordial and has not been merely consummated later and ad hoc for the purpose of redemption"[109]. The consummated covenant between God and world in Jesus Christ is thus (according to the first perspective) the *telos* of the incarnation, death, and resurrection of the Logos, but, as such, (according to the second perspective) also the origin and hidden meaning of creation.

Barth perceives this twofold testimony of Jesus Christ again in Paul's letter to the Philippians. Here (2,6ff), Paul describes Jesus Christ's history in the form of a (graphic) parable: as the self-humiliating descent of the Son in which He gives up His "God-form" and takes on "servant-form" as Jesus of Nazareth, and, simultaneously, as the exaltation of Jesus' human existence. It is thereby important for Barth that Jesus Christ is at the beginning and at the end of this twofold way "like God"[110]. Jesus Christ's twofold history has thus its sole origin in the free and sovereign "*kenosis*" of the Son[111], who is its sole subject.

Jesus Christ is the descending Son and therefore, as the "humiliated one" who dies on the cross, "also the exalted one"[112]. Because the eternal God is in the *Seinsweise* of the Son the sole subject of Jesus Christ's existence as the humiliated Son and as the exalted man, the priority of the Son in His *kenosis* implies *no temporal* "after"[113] concerning the exaltation of the

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[107] Ibid.
[108] J, 35.
[109] J, 38.
[110] P, 54.
[111] P, 56f.
[112] P, 60.
[113] P, 61.

man Jesus. The "humiliated one" was for Barth the "exalted one" from all eternity: "Einen anderen Christus gibt es nicht, als diesen Gottgleichen und Menschgewordenen"[114].

The importance of Reformed and Lutheran theology

It is notable that all of Barth's commentaries belong to the Pauline-Johannine tradition, which emphasises the primordial existence of the incarnate and exalted Jesus Christ, the eternal personal identity of the divine Logos with the man Jesus. However, we must also note that Barth considers this particular Pauline-Johannine statement as the *consequence* of the necessary prior statement about the sovereign God in the *Seinsweise* of the Son, who is and remains eternally the free origin and subject of the existence of the exalted man Jesus.

An explanation for this differentiated sight seems to be Barth's simultaneous intense study of the Reformed tradition. Whilst lecturing on Calvin and the Reformed Confessions, Barth became aware of the particular Calvinistic interest in the superiority of the *logos asarkos* as it found its doctrinal expression in the Calvinistic extra. Barth perceives this Calvinistic interest as a dogmatic expression of the synoptic tradition, for it focuses on the priority and sovereign freedom of God in the *Seinsweise* of the Son in relation to His incarnate being. As Barth understands both traditions of the New Testament as witnessing to the same history of Jesus Christ, he intends to perceive them in their differentiation but not in abstraction from their inherent unity.

Hence, he hears the synoptic-Calvinistic voice in his commentaries on Paul and John, and critically questions the abstraction of the Calvinistic tradition from the Pauline-Johannine perception of the eternal character of Jesus Christ as the incarnate Word in his works on Reformed doctrine. Thus Barth seeks in his lectures on Calvin and on the Reformed Confessions (including his Gifford's Lectures on the Scottish Confession), and equally his three Reformed Dogmatics[115], a biblical orientation that allows for a differentiated

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[114] Ibid.
[115] UR, CD, KD.

but first and foremost inclusive dialogue with the theological traditions of both Calvin and Luther[116].[117]

It is very important for Barth that while the one reality of Jesus Christ can be perceived solely in the two distinct thought-forms of a "catabasis, which starts at the divine mission" and an "anabasis, which starts at the man Jesus"[118], these two thought-forms must not be abstracted – neither from each other nor from their single and simple object, Jesus Christ. Barth therefore asks: "Was bedeutet denn der erste Schritt auf einem Wege, an dessen Ende ein Mensch mit *Gott* gleichgesetzt wird und was der erste Schritt auf dem anderen Wege, an dessen Ende Gott ein *Mensch* ist? Kann dies das Ende eines Weges sein, dessen Anfang es nicht schon war?"[119].[120] Each biblical tradition, in its pointing into the opposite direction of thought, therefore witnesses to "Jesus Christ's single and unique reality", which must be perceived as follows: "Es wurde das Wort oder Sohn Gottes ein Mensch und hieß Jesus von Nazareth; es war also dieser Mensch Jesus von Nazareth Gottes Wort oder Gottes Sohn"[121].

The Pauline-Johannine and the Synoptic perspectives are thus antithetical but not mutually exclusive. They rather presuppose each other. The Pauline-Johannine tradition is the necessary conclusion of the synoptic tradition and the synoptic tradition is the necessary condition of the Pauline-Johannine tradition: "Weder wird hier [in John and Paul] ein Jesusevangelium verkündigt, das nicht auch – ja das nicht als solches Christusevangelium wäre, noch gibt es im Neuen Testament ein Christusevangelium, das nicht gerade als solches Jesusevangelium wäre. Wir sahen, daß die Dinge vielmehr so ineinandergreifen, daß man hier wie dort, indem man das Eine wollte, das andere erst recht tun mußte"[122].

I therefore conclude that the formation of Barth's theological thoughts in his opus magnum, the *Kirchliche Dogmatik*, occurred partly in the form of a mutual interaction between his exegesis and his study of the protestant tradition. The KD can thus be perceived as an explication of his previous research. It follows the one history of Jesus Christ by elaborating

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[116] I/2, 181.
[117] Barth quotes Luther's expression: "[W]o du mir Gott hinsetzest, da mußt du mir die Menschheit mithinsetzen" (I/2 181).
[118] CD, 249.
[119] I/1, 425.
[120] Cf. UR I, 142; CD, 249.
[121] I/2, 15.
[122] I/2, 27.

the different theological loci along the lines of the counter-posed yet interrelated synoptic and Pauline-Johannine perspectives, in a dialogue with both Calvin and Luther, and the wider history of the church and her actual questions.

This is not, of course, Barth's *sole* interest. While we have here one major interest and structure of Barth's KD in front of us, it is important to stress that many other discussions surround the KD, and that at times Barth works with the help of different structures, sometimes without any, save the guidance of the *Sache* itself: God's revelation in Jesus Christ according to Scripture. To reduce such a rich and abundant theological work as the KD to one sole structural principle always bears risk.

The question about a structural element by which to read Barth's opus magnum is, however, not new in Barth-scholarship. Recent answers include the paradigm of veiling and revealing, a dialectical method (followed or not followed by a method of analogy), and the Chalcedonian formula of the personal unity of two natures. But any such approach that involves reading Barth according to a structural principle rightly attracts suspicions of over-simplification. Submitting Barth's complex work, its different views, methods and themes, to the rule of one structural principle is unwise. I am therefore reluctant to claim that there might be a singular principle or motive by which to read the KD – any reader of the KD should be attentive to the text in its unique richness and follow its curvy paths in order to perceive its *Sache* from as many perspectives as possible.

However, as with any text, the KD can be read under different *Fragestellungen* – historical, generic, metaphysical, political etc. – with each respectively providing different answers. My reading of the KD follows its own particular question arising from Barth's understanding of prayer; hence, it proceeds under the guidelines of a particular pre-understanding and with a particular aim in mind. Naturally, this causes me to emphasise particular thoughts of Barth and to neglect others.

The result will therefore be a *particular* answer of the text to a *particular* question posed, that is: "How do we have to understand the history of God with man so that this understanding brings us into a corresponding *critical* and *differentiated* understanding of world and self, which enables responsible prayer?". However, it is also clear that the question, which my proposed reading intends to answer, is not arbitrarily adopted, but arose from the KD itself. The KD is challenged to give an answer to a question it has raised itself.

This hermeneutical circle ensures that should a *particular* view emerge, this particular view must be able to prove its *coherence* with other readings of Barth's KD, under different but genuine, that is, text-generated, questions and perspectives.

If now I return to the question of a structural principle in Barth's work, I therefore do so under five presuppositions.

Such a structural principle must firstly be the answer to a particular question, which arises from the KD itself, and acknowledge that the KD is free to give different answers to different questions. The conception of the two apostolic perspectives intends therefore to be nothing more than a structural tool for a reading of Barth's theology that answers the particular question of responsible existence in prayer.

Secondly, such a structural principle must not endanger the freedom in which Barth selected his theological loci and the variety of discourses he had with the theological tradition, with respect to the different actual questions of the church. The concept of the two apostolic perspectives allows for a differentiated but inclusive dialogue with the protestant tradition: their different perceptions of the relation of Jesus Christ's humanity to His divinity represent for Barth the major characteristics of Lutheran and Calvinistic Christology. For whilst the Johannine perspective led to the formulation of the Lutheran dogma "of the being of the Word in Christ's humanity alone", the synoptic perspective led to the contrary dogma of the Calvinistic extra, stating: "[I]ndem das Wort Fleisch ist, ist und bleibt es auch, was es an sich ist, existiert es auch außerhalb (extra) des Fleisches"[123].

Barth therefore perceives in both positions a particular truth but also an illegitimate abstraction. He concludes that theology has to listen to each position, although in the order of the apostolic witnesses. Thus, "priority" must be given to "the perception of revelation as a divine act"[124]. The Lutheran position must accordingly be heard in its particular truth, expressing the Johannine witness, but "within the limits of a superior systematic of a theology of divine action"[125] as expressed primarily by the synoptic tradition and dogmatically enfolded by Calvin.

The twofold apostolic witness in its unity in the name Jesus Christ is thus the standard by which the conflicts between the "Alexandrian and the Antiochian" and between

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[123] I/2, 184.
[124] I/2, 187.
[125] Ibid.

the "*Lutheran* and the *Calvinist* Christology" must be judged and resolved: "In der Linie des johanneischen Typus haben wir ja offenbar das Christusverständnis des *Eutyches* und später das *Luthers* zu suchen, in der Linie des synoptischen Typus das des *Nestorius* und *Calvins* [...] Daß im Neuen Testament der Name Jesus Christus Anfang, Mitte und Ende ist, in welchem sich die verschiedenen Hinweise auf die Wirklichkeit der Offenbarung sammeln, ... [d]aran wird sich ... jede Stellungnahme zu orientieren und zu messen haben"[126] [127].

Barth's Christology therefore ascribes itself the task "to hear, not within a system, but on a path of thought, in both the one"[128], and thus to pay reference to the New Testament[129]. Barth intends to read the history of the doctrine of Jesus Christ in the light of the twofold way of Jesus Christ as witnessed by the synoptic and Pauline-Johannine tradition. As such, he can evaluate the truth but also criticise the shortcomings of the Alexandrian and the Lutheran, and of the Antiochian and Calvinistic tradition. In this way he can develop a Christology that bears witness to the whole reality of Jesus Christ on a path of thought, which follows Jesus Christ on His way, on which He has consummated the will of God once and for all, according to the two biblical perspectives.

Thirdly, such a structural principle must be able to accommodate most other perceptions of Barth's formal method that arose from different questions. This presupposition applies to the concept of a twofold biblical perspective, as it is indeed compatible with many other suggested structures, for example:

a) The paradigm of veiling and unveiling (as identified by Bruce McCormack in Barth's early work). This figure is consciously described by Barth as shorthand for the synoptic tradition. For the Synoptics, in the light of the bodily resurrection of Jesus, is the "revelation of the Son of God in the ... man Jesus of Nazareth ... the solved problem"[130]. "Darum ist ihre ganze Darstellung ein dauerndes Aufstellen und Auflösen von Rätseln. Das aufgegebene Rätsel (das ihnen doch keines mehr ist ...) ist die *Menschheit*, die Auflösung (die doch immer wieder vollzogen werden muß...) ist die *Gottheit* Jesu Christi"[131]. The form of the

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[126] I/2, 27.
[127] Charles Waldrop's attempt to "demonstrate that Barth's Christology is predominantly Alexandrian rather that Antiochian in character" is therefore in danger to contradict Barth's inclusive approach to Christology and its historical development (Waldrop, 1984, 1).
[128] I/2, 27
[129] Ibid.
[130] I/2, 24.
[131] I/2, 25.

synoptic witness is thus that of "veiling" and "unveiling"[132]. If we see the paradigm of veiling and unveiling within the wider context of the twofold biblical witness, it shows that this paradigm is not a heteronomously adopted philosophical principle but captures only one aspect of Barth's work as it is unaware of the Pauline-Johannine perspective.

b) The dialectical character of Barth's work. The dialectical appearance of Barth's work also stems to some extent from the *dialectical* "relation between the synoptic and Johannine tradition with respect to the humanity and divinity of Jesus Christ"[133]: "Daß die johanneische Tradition sich gerade gegen die synoptische wendet, das ist eine theologisch gar nicht üble historische Hypothese mancher neuer Forscher. Man kann das nicht zusammen hören: Jesus von Nazareth ist *Gottes Sohn* und: Gottes Sohn ist *Jesus von Nazareth*"[134].

c) The analogical character of Barth's theology. This aspect of Barth's dogmatic work can be perceived as being particularly affiliated with his adoption of the Johannine perspective, through which he perceives Jesus Christ as the eternal unity of God and creation as the Word through which the world was created, and thus as the inner "standard" and structure of creation, which is itself a prefiguration and analogon of Jesus Christ. In the context of the twofold biblical witness it shows that dialectic and analogy have their particular place in Barth's theology (in all stages of its development), and are not mutually exclusive but rather presuppose each other.

d) The Chalcedonian formula. The twofold witness of the one history of Jesus Christ seems to be the basis upon which Barth tries to understand the Chalcedonian formula. Uniquely then Barth conceives both God's divinity and his humanity within the context of His history, under the presupposition that this history has its free origin in God (Synoptics), and that therefore its particular character gained in the incarnation, death, and bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ has eternal relevance and reality.

The Synoptic tradition stresses thereby that Jesus Christ's human nature is not an adopted "second reality beside him, but his own work on himself" (I/2, 164). The Johannine tradition on the other hand stresses that this particular human character of God's free self-definition is not a contingent but eternal predicate of God in the *Seinsweise* of the Son. Hence,

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[132] Ibid.
[133] I/2, 188.
[134] Ibid.

Barth concludes: "*Egeneto*, das Ereignis der Fleischwerdung des Wortes, ... ist als ein *vollendetes* Geschehen, aber eben als ein vollendetes *Geschehen* zu verstehen"[135].

The first perspective is that of the "Pauline-Johannine Christology", which witnesses to the "perfect factuality" of the humanity of Jesus Christ. The second perspective is "the answer to the problem of the Synoptics", who were concerned "that this human being had his existence and power from nowhere than the Word of God"[136]. The unity of both perspectives lies in the eternal history of Jesus Christ Himself, in his free "act"[137]. Barth focused on the relation between the two biblical thought-forms of the catabasis and anabasis of Jesus Christ and the Chalcedonian formula in a very detailed way again in IV/2. To this discussion, I will return in the next paragraph.

Fourthly, such a structural principle must respect Barth's ultimate rule, that in listening to the theological tradition and to the world, theology must always be guided by Jesus Christ's self-proclamation in Scripture. I have therefore shown how my suggestion that Barth perceives the history of Jesus Christ alongside two different but mutually inclusive perspectives, stems from an engagement with Barth's early exegesis. There we can see how Barth perceives two different perspectives within Scripture on one history of Jesus Christ, and how - from UR onwards - he allows them to guide his own doctrinal thinking in its engagement with ecclesiastical tradition.

Finally, such a structural principle must not claim to accommodate Barth's entire work.

Part II

An analysis of the doctrine of incarnation according to the two apostolic perspectives

Barth discusses the whole history of God with humankind, and consequently reinterprets to a large degree the Christian doctrinal tradition, in the light of the particular history of Jesus Christ as perceived by the synoptic and Pauline-Johannine perspective. I will therefore begin my analysis of Barth's entire KD by first turning to Barth's discussion of the

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[135] I/2, 180.
[136] I/2, 183.
[137] I/2, 184.

doctrine of incarnation in IV/2. This discussion of the meaning of the historical existence of Jesus Christ can be perceived in its microcosmic character as a discussion of the twofold structure of the entire history of God with man in its all encompassing character, and can therefore serve as a good preparation for the task of the next part of this chapter, which will consist of an analysis of each major theological loci of the history of God with man in Jesus Christ (the doctrines of Trinity, election (or predestination), nothingness and sin, creation, providence, incarnation, redemption and eschatology), firstly with respect to the synoptic, and secondly with respect to the Pauline-Johannine perspective.

Barth elaborates in I/2 on his understanding of the existence of Jesus Christ in a dialogue with the synoptic and the Pauline-Johannine tradition, and with the corresponding Calvinistic and Lutheran tradition about the meaning of the Chalcedonic formula. Barth argues that the particular historical existence of Jesus Christ must be perceived under three presuppositions: it must firstly be confirmed that Jesus Christ's "human being has its existence and power from nowhere than from God's"[138]. The humanity of Jesus Christ can be understood solely within the framework of the history of the Son of God as the only subject of the history of Jesus Christ. Yet it is equally important to confirm the "perfect factuality" of the incarnation. The humanity of Jesus Christ is – as the act of God in the *Seinsweise* of the Son – God's *eternal* self-predication. Hence, Barth concludes that these two perspectives of the historical existence of Jesus Christ can only be held together if the historical existence of Jesus Christ is considered as a free act of God, bringing forth a once and for all valid objective reality, which does not – in its perfect state - lose its character as a free event of divine self-definition. The incarnation, the particular historical existence of the Son in the flesh, must therefore be understood "as a *perfect* event, yet as a perfect *event*"[139].

The particular historical existence of Jesus Christ is to be understood *firstly* based on, and within, the theological framework of a history of divine action and being: Jesus Christ in His humanity must be perceived as the particular *Seinsweise* of the Son in His act of self-humiliation. However, because the particular historical *Seinsweise* of the Son in the flesh manifests His eternal existence, we need not only to understand the humanity of Jesus Christ based on His divinity, but we need also to understand His divinity on the basis and

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[138] I/2, 183.
[139] I/2, 180.

within the framework of Jesus Christ's humanity. Hence, Barth characterises Jesus Christ's *humanity* as a *divine Seinsweise*, and consequently perceives the *eternal divinity of the Son* within the *particular, earthly existence of Jesus*.

This conceptual guideline of Barth finds a detailed explication in IV/1 and IV/2. The prominent framework of divine action is thereby perceived according to the synoptic perspective as the descent of God in the *Seinsweise* of the Son into the situation of fallen man under the heading "The Lord as Servant". Under the heading "The Servant as Lord", Barth discusses the consequent human existence of Jesus as a free manifestation of God's divinity and thus as the exaltation of the man Jesus into the union with God, which, according to the Pauline-Johannine perspective, determines God's eternal divinity as the Father.

Barth therefore perceives the one historical existence of Jesus Christ along two "movements": firstly, as a "mighty movement *from above to below*, i.e. from God to man"[140], and secondly as a "movement from below to above", "from reconciled man to God "[141]. The catabasic movement has its sole origin in the free and divine self-election of God as Immanuel, God for us, and is teleologically oriented towards "the restoration and renewal of the covenant between God and man"[142]. The telos of the self-humiliation of God in which He becomes God for us is the exaltation of humankind into the covenant with God. The telos of the catabasic movement of God is thus the anabasic movement of reconciled humanity to God.

However, because this anabasic movement is the manifestation of the divine self-humiliation of *God*, it is important to perceive the entire history of reconciliation again under the presupposition that the telos of the divine descent is already the origin and inner meaning of the history of salvation. The anabasic perspective of the existence of Jesus as the exalted man is thus grounded in the catabasic movement of God, in the "in Jesus Christ consummated divine *humiliation*"[143]. This divine act of self-humiliation establishes "a *perfectum*, behind which ... we cannot go back"[144]. The telos of God's descent must therefore constitute

[140] IV/2, 2.
[141] IV/2, 4.
[142] IV/2, 2.
[143] IV/2, 45.
[144] IV/2, 48.

the genuine beginning of Christian thought[145]; yet without oblivion of its "event-character"[146].

According to his perception of the history of Jesus Christ as God's free descent, which is as such the exaltation of man into the covenant with God, Barth interprets a large area of the Christological tradition, holding together the Synoptics and Paul and John, Nestorius and Eutyches, and Calvin and Luther and their schools. He so perceives the "*unio hypostatica*" of Jesus Christ within the framework of the doctrine of the *An-* and *Enhypostasis* of the person Jesus. For Barth, God Himself is the sole subject of the existence of Jesus Christ and consequently its "human subject"[147]. Jesus Christ's existence is not the result of a unification of God with an in and for itself existing human person, but of God's self-determination to exist as man in communion with Himself, in a repetition of His divine existence in the flesh.

Consequently, the doctrine of the two natures does not say, for Barth, that Jesus Christ exists due to a secondary fusion of two self-existent natures.[148] Rather, He exists as *verus Deus et verus homo* in the course of the covenant-history: the history "in which God Himself became in His Son Jesus of Nazareth" so that "human nature" became exalted in Him.[149] For Barth, the Chalcedonic formula is solely a "commentary" on the history of the one living Jesus Christ in its catabasic and anabasic movement. Each side of the formula must be perceived in its eternal truth, yet as one of the *two movements* of Jesus Christ's eternal *history* in their particular *irreversible order* and *sequence*.

Thus, Barth criticises the Lutheran elaboration of Chalcedon along the lines of a reciprocal *communio naturarum*. The twofold historical existence of Jesus Christ does not imply "that human nature ...became ... divine"[150]. The descent of God into the flesh is the *irreversible* moment of Jesus Christ's existence. Hence, the re-evaluation of salvation history in the light of the anabasic movement must perceive this history not as an infinite regress, but as the descent of the God who has determined Himself to be human once and for all in Jesus Christ.

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[145] Ibid.
[146] IV/2, 49.
[147] IV/2, 54.
[148] IV/2, 69.
[149] IV/2, 74.
[150] IV/2, 77.

For Barth, the danger of the Lutheran doctrine is that the communication of Jesus Christ's divine nature to His human nature implies that God "has undone his humiliation as Son"[151]. Yet the humanity of Jesus is as God's self-determination for all times - it determines God's entire history with humankind from its beginning. Jesus Christ is as the *incarnate* Son, in His anabasic movement the Word through which the world was created and is sustained. He exists before, above, and after time like God Himself[152], omnipotent in His concrete historical character.

We therefore see that while Barth rules out the doctrine of the *communio naturarum*, he affirms, through reinterpretation, the particular truth of the doctrine of the *communio idiomatum*. He further explores this issue by stating that if we perceive the two movements of Jesus Christ's history in their differentiated and particularly ordered relation to each other, we see that the *communio idiomatum* causes each way of Jesus Christ's historical existence to gain its determination in confrontation with its opposite.[153] The divine catabasic movement is consequently determined by its telos, the consummation of the covenant and thus the exaltation of the man Jesus, while the anabasic movement is determined by its being the consequence of the divine descent. Jesus' (and in Him our own) humanity thus has its existence and determination solely in and through "God's electing grace"[154].

Hence, it is most natural for Jesus Christ in His humanity to exist simply in "agreement with the divine will", in the "service of the divine work", and in "correspondence to God's grace"[155]. He simply *is* in His anabasic movement corresponding to the catabasic movement of God. The human existence of Jesus thud consists in the "exaltation of His human freedom into its truth, that is, into the *obedience*, in consummation of which ... she becomes *proper human* freedom"[156]. This is for Barth the genuine meaning of the doctrine of the *communicatio gratiarum*. The communicated grace of the man Jesus is the execution of His "human power in order to show [serve, and consummate] His divine power conclusively"[157].

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[151] IV/2, 78.
[152] IV/2, 81.
[153] IV/2, 75.
[154] IV/2, 99.
[155] IV/2, 101.
[156] Ibid.
[157] IV/2, 107.

We have seen that Barth reinterpreted the doctrine of incarnation within the framework of the twofold history according to the two "directions" in which the apostolic witness describes "what has happened in Jesus Christ for the reconciliation of the world with God"[158]. "Das Neue Testament redet von Jesus Christus bekanntlich in diesen beiden Aussagen: die eine gewissermaßen von oben nach unten, die andere von unten nach oben blickend und zielend. [...] Beide sind notwendig. Keine von beiden kann für sich Bestand haben und verstanden werden"[159].

The name Jesus Christ witnesses to the entire reality of His single history. Yet the latter can be perceived solely by following the two oppositely directed lines of thought of the apostolic witness. We can perceive the one history of Jesus Christ solely by firstly following God's descent, and secondly, by perceiving this divine descent again from its very first moment in its meaning as the exaltation of man, as determined throughout by its telos. The actualisation of this doctrine of incarnation and of the traditional doctrine of the two natures expresses for Barth the proper explication and application of the doctrine of the *communicatio operationum*: Jesus Christ "is in this *operatio*" of His divine descent and human exaltation our living Lord.[160]

This means, that we have to perceive the entire history of God with humankind from beginning to end as the history of Jesus Christ and His consummation of the covenant according to the counter-posed catabasic and anabasic movements as depicted from the synoptic and Pauline-Johannine perspectives.

I will therefore proceed by interpreting Barth's doctrines of Trinity, election, nothingness and sin, creation, providence, reconciliation, and eschatology, following these two antithetical thought-forms, and paying attention to the different aspects of the history of God with humankind which thereby arise. According to Barth's perception of the superiority of the free descent of God, I will begin with an interpretation along the lines of the synoptic perspective.

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[158] IV/2, 145.
[159] IV/2, 148.
[160] IV/2, 199; 122.

Part III

The descent of the Son according to the synoptic perspective

Trinity

Along the synoptic, catabasic line of thought, Barth perceives God Father as the free and sovereign origin of His existence and works *ad intra et ad extra*. He is the *fons deitatis*, the "author of His other *Seinsweisen*"[161]. Barth perceives the sovereignty of God Father in His "freedom ... to exist as the only God exactly by differentiating Himself so incomprehensibly profoundly from Himself, that He is not only God Father, but also ... God Son"[162]. This focus on God's eternal self-differentiation stresses God's eternal freedom for mutual love, and highlights the sheer grace by which He elects Himself to exist also as God for us.[163]

Election

The doctrine of Trinity provides in this way the possibility to think of God's election of grace, in which God in the *Seinsweise* of the Son "wills and sets something *different* ... from Himself as His creature"[164]. God is free to manifest Himself in the *Seinsweise* of the Son in Jesus Christ not only as the divine other, but even as the first creature[165]. He thereby makes Himself *in His own existence* liable and responsible for His elected creation. This implies that creation is essentially dependent upon and directed towards God's grace.

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[161] I/1, 414.
[162] I/1, 337f.
[163] If one perceives solely Barth's statements about the eternal trinity according to the synoptic perspective, one could gain the impression that Barth is a modalist: that God's original existence is singular rather than triune. For this kind of critique see e.g. A. J. Torrance, 1996 and Jürgen Moltmann, 1980. It is thus crucial to remember that these sentences must not be judged in abstraction from Barth's assessments of the Trinity with respect to the Pauline-Johannine witness.
[164] II/2, 130.
[165] II/2, 130.

Barth's theology stresses the gracious character of God's election even further by insisting that God's eternal self-election, as God for humankind in the exalted man Jesus, causes – due to the power of God's simultaneously effective rejecting will – the threat of the negating force of nothingness. God's eternal election means accordingly that God determines Himself to protect and save His eternally elected creation from the threat of nothingness by descending Himself into the situation of His creation and thereby entering the confrontation with nothingness, which His creation cannot handle on its own. God therefore elects to descend Himself into His yet-to-be-created world, and to make Himself in His own existence liable for the consequences of its sinful submission to the seductions of nothingness. He decided to make its just "rejection to His own cause", "because He identifies the reason of the existence ... and power of Satan ... in the negative force of His own counsel and will"[166]. God determines therefore the telos of His descent from eternity as His own "rejection ... and ... death"[167] in order to conquer sin and nothingness, to establish His Kingdom "as the fulfilment" of all His ways and works[168], and to exalt His creation into the kingly freedom *from* the threats of nothingness *for* God.[169]

God's *Kampfgeschichte* against nothingness thud intends "that the one elected by Him may and will in turn elect Him"[170] and thereby proves his election[171] as the free witness of God's Kingdom in his free "act of prayer"[172]. Our exaltation therefore takes, for Barth, the form of an active human witness of God's victory. We are elected to testify to God's perfect victory by demonstrating our freedom to confidently join God's ongoing battle against the shadows of nothingness, which still distract us from understanding God's perfect work on Golgotha.

The doctrine of election, perceived from the catabasic perspective, shows that the dominant character of the history of God with humankind is that of a teleologically orientated *Kampfgeschichte* of God Father in and through the Son against the threat of nothingness and sin for the sake of His creation, which He has elected and loved from eternity in the exalted man Jesus, in the victorious telos of His own descent and self-

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[166] II/2, 133.
[167] II/2, 177.
[168] II/2 135.
[169] II/2, 177.
[170] II/2 197.
[171] II/2 194.
[172] II/2, 197.

humiliation. This *Kampfgeschichte* has its eternal origin in God's free self-election, its high peak in His victorious battle over sin and nothingness on the cross and in His resurrection, and its telos in the election of humankind by the universal revelation of this work in its perfect once-and-for-all-character in His final return.

I will look now at the different theological loci of Barth's KD as moments of this *Kampfgeschichte.*

Nothingness

If we look at the telos of God's free descent, His death on the cross in the *Seinsweise* of the incarnate Son, the real character of nothingness "as the enemy ..., as the evil, deadly, destructive factor, which in actuality *uncannily* opposes creature and its creator"[173] is obvious. God's personal struggle against nothingness reveals its reality and seriousness[174], and that it can be a characteristic neither of God Himself nor of His elected creation. Neither can nothingness be understood as a genuine anti-God once we acknowledge God in Jesus Christ - who is victor over nothingness in His resurrection - as the creator and Lord of everything that is. Barth therefore concludes that nothingness has its ontological foundation in God's eternal election of grace.[175]

Nothingness has therefore "no power, which was not given by God "[176]. It has reality solely as the result of God's negating will – and therefore the character of a disruptive and annihilating contradiction of God's will and His works of grace.[177] God therefore knows that the power of nothingness is superior to His creature. Hence, He has "sworn loyalty to His threatened creature", and "taken upon Himself the burden and sorrow of its confrontation

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[173] III/3, 355.

[174] Cf. also III/3, 402. Gerrit Berkouver saw Barth's theology governed by the principle of the "Triumph of Grace" – which, in his eyes, diminishes the threat of nothingness to God and His creation and leads to a mere "mock fight" (Berkouver, 1956). For Barth's reply see KD IV/3, 197-206. I think it is important to see that while God in Jesus Christ is once and for all victor over nothingness in His death and resurrection, He is so for Barth in the once and for all character of His *history*. There is thus a real threat of nothingness, a real fight of God, and a – not at all cheap – final victory. And it will consequently be also on man to follow Jesus Christ into His battle against nothingness, liberated for this real fight just by the confidence in the superiority of his triumphant Lord Jesus Christ.

[175] III/3, 405.

[176] III/3, 405.

[177] III/3, 406.

with nothingness"[178] by becoming Himself "such a creature" in Jesus[179]. God's descent is therefore from its very beginning a *Kampfgeschichte* against death and nothingness. While God's descent is directed toward His final victory over nothingness, it is above all a real fight, originating in His self-election to be with and for His creation in Jesus Christ, and continuing in His work of creation, in which He divides and guards His creation from chaos and continuously overcomes darkness with light, as signified by the establishment of the continuous sequence of day, night, and a new morning.

Creation and Providence

These two loci appear from this catabasic, teleologically oriented perspective as the preparation of the telos of God's descent, as the *external foundation* of the history of the consummation of His covenant. Again, we will see how Barth perceives these two loci along this line of thought as a victorious *concursus* of God against the chaotic powers of nothingness in His history of creation and man's sinful confusion of the 'impossible possibilities' of nothingness with the possibilities of God's good creation in the history of His providence. Under the governance of the sovereign God, world-history becomes, from creation onwards, a history consisting in the judgement of God, which is finally consummated in God's death on the cross. Yet astonishingly, God as the judge of nothingness and human sin overcomes both by allowing Himself to be judged, to be put to death in our place so that we may live in and through the bodily resurrected Jesus Christ.

Let us now look at these two loci in more detail. When Barth perceives *creation* from the perspective of God's teleological *Kampfgeschichte* as the first work of God's descent, he describes it as the "technical facilitation"[180] of God's consummation of the covenant in Jesus Christ's death and resurrection. Creation appears from this perspective as the "external foundation of the covenant", for it facilitates "the history of God's covenant with huamnkind"[181]. While the covenant is "the *goal* of creation", creation leads to it.[182] By being

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[178] III/3, 413.
[179] III/3, 414.
[180] III/1, 107.
[181] III/1, 44.

directed towards its fulfilment in the consummated covenant, creation stands under the *promise* of its fulfilment, yet still in a *dialectical* relation with it. From this perspective, the 'not yet' character of creation appears in contrast to its promised telos: "Die Schöpfung ist eine einzige Bereitstellung und also das Wesen und die Existenz des Geschöpfs eine einzige Bereitschaft für das, was Gott in der Geschichte des Bundes mit ihm wollen und tun wird [...] Seine Geschöpflichkeit ist lauter Verheißung, Erwartung und Weissagung dessen, was Gott in seiner Gnade ... mit dem Menschen vorhat"[183].

The catabasic perspective on creation is affiliated for Barth particularly with the *priestly* creation tradition. The priestly account of creation firstly shows how God created the world *for* the history of His covenant with humankind and *therefore* human beings as man *and* woman: human beings are created themselves as covenant-partners. Barth is eager to state that we are not created as natural covenant partners of God but as natural covenant partners of a member of the opposite sex and are therefore created *capable of* and destined for *becoming* covenant partners of *God*:[184] "[D]as Geschöpf [ist] kraft seines Daseins und Soseins dazu bestimmt, zubereitet und ausgerüstet ..., Partner dieses Bundes zu sein"[185].

Yet the history in which human beings are meant to become God's covenant-partners in Jesus Christ is from its very beginning characterized by the priestly account as a – though victorious – *Kampfgeschichte*. As Gen 1, 3-5 states, the first work of God's Word has been "the light in its separation from darkness"[186]. Barth perceives light hereby as the "announcement of life and therewith negatively: the defeat ... and expulsion of this other reality, which God does not want"[187]. By dividing light from darkness, God creates that which He wills from that which He rejects.

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[182] III/1, 106.
[183] III/1, 261.
[184] Barth works along the line of this teleological perspective on creation with the concept of an *analogia relationis* (cf. III/1, 207): Looking backwards he perceives man's created relational existence as an *analogon* of the triune existence of God Himself. Yet looking forward towards Jesus Christ as the consummation of the covenant, towards the man who truly exists as the head of the congregation as man and woman, this analogical existence appears as a *promise* and a *presupposition* of man's telos. Barth therefore still perceives the analogous relation from this perspective in an even greater dissimilarity.

We will have to see how Barth's concept of analogy changes when he perceives creation under the presupposition that Jesus Christ as the head of the church is as man's promise already his origin, sustainer and governor.
[185] III/1, 106.
[186] III/1, 130.
[187] Ibid.

Hence, the history of creation bears already from its beginning the "law"[188] of God's successively victoriously overcoming of nothingness, and thereby the character of an ongoing revelation of this divine fight. Time as it is created by God as the sequence of day, night, and dawn is therefore itself a sign of its "own *Eschaton*"[189]. As Barth perceives God as a God who stands within this fight, and who calls us to join Him in His fight, he finds the fulfilment of God's work of creation in God's becoming Himself worldly and human in order to co-exist His creation: "Es gehört zur Wirklichkeit des Geschöpfs konstitutiv ..., daß Gott ihm *koexistieren* wollte und daß er sich selbst ... in jenem geschichtlichen Ereignis des siebenten Tages als den ihm koexistierenden Gott eingesetzt hat. Im Blick auf dieses Ereignis ... ist es sinnvoll, von einer *Weltimmanenz* Gottes zu reden. Denn in diesem die Schöpfung vollziehenden Werk ... hat Gott ... sich selber *weltlich* und *menschlich* gemacht"[190]. In a historical act, God has determined Himself to sustain His creation in a fight against nothingness, which He leads by *becoming* inner-worldly Himself. He thus rules His creation by descending into His creation and actively leading it towards its telos, the consummation of the covenant, against all contradictions of nothingness and human sin.

Like creation, Barth perceives also God's *providence*, His sustaining and ruling of creation, as the "external foundation of covenant-history"[191]. The possibility of perceiving God's providence lies for Barth in our remembrance of the consummation of the covenant in Jesus Christ's death and resurrection, and of the history of the covenant between JHWH and His chosen people Israel (if interpreted in the light of Jesus Christ). Here we see in particular how God rules over historical events and uses the free acts of man whatever their intentions to serve His ends. In faith in Jesus Christ as the exalted "*covenant-man*", we ought to trust that world-history, in general, stands under divine providence and is therefore teleologically directed towards the consummation of the covenant in Jesus Christ. As Jesus Christ, under God's providence, was handed over to the consummation of the covenant in His death by His elected disciple, the Jews, and the heathen, the history of the church and of all nations stands under the promise that it leads toward the final universal revelation of the meaning and reality of this inclusive covenant.

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[188] III/1, 133.
[189] III/1, 147.
[190] III/1, 244.
[191] III/3, 53.

However, if we look at the particular history of the final consummation of the covenant-history through the expulsion of Jesus Christ, we see that while God's providence is victoriously leading world-history to its gracious end, it has the character of a *concursus* with nothingness and human evil intentions: while human beings toil in degenerated freedom against God, God guides their steps to the service of His salvation-history.

Providence thus appears from the teleological synoptic perspective as "*concursus*": God rules and determines history – in and through the free decisions of human beings but nevertheless *against* their own intentions and judgements (we see Calvin in the background): "Gottes „Konkurrieren" mit seinem Geschöpf ... bedeutet, daß sein Wirken das seines Geschöpfes ganz und gar bestimmt, daß im Wirken des Geschöpfes ... indem Gottes Wirken ihm vorangeht, es begleitet, ihm nachfolgt, etwas Anderes als der Wille Gottes nicht geschehen kann"[192]. God's reign "*praecurrit*", "*concurrit*," and "*succurit*" the actions of human beings, so that "*in, with,* and *above* human works His own work takes place"[193]. It is thus "not upon the creature to decide about the character, size, meaning and impact of its work "but upon God alone.[194] He directs the effects of human evil intended acts towards the telos of His salvation history: towards the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and towards the universal revelation of this event.[195]

World-history is thus for Barth governed and limited by the covenant-history and must be correspondingly perceived as a (*positive or negative*) sign of the covenant-history: "Die Heilsgeschichte ist ... die eigentliche Geschichte, in der alle andere Geschichte beschlossen ist, zu der sie gehört, sofern sich nämlich die Heilsgeschichte mit Zeichen, Vor- und Nachbildern, Beispielen und Gegenbeispielen begleitet"[196].

Noteworthy is Barth's claim that, under God's providence, world-history can also become a "counter-example" of the history of the covenant. We therefore see that Barth pays, from this teleological perspective, earnest tribute to the encounter of God's providence with the "*alien element*" of nothingness. From this point of view, world-history is sharply distinct from salvation- and revelation-history. Not only because God's Lordship is "hidden", but

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[192] III/3, 127.
[193] III/3, 150.
[194] III/3, 173.
[195] III/3, 190.
[196] III/3, 64.

foremost because world-history consists of, and reveals, "a dark stream of disaster"[197]. God's providence is therefore perceived by Barth as a concursus with disaster as the result of man's confusion of the possibilities of God's good creation with the impossible possibilities of nothingness. Hence, world-history appears, from the synoptic perspective, as a history of God's "judgement" over man's confusion.[198] The *concursus* of God's providence with humankind's confusion brings forth a situation in which God uses human actions to serve His covenant-history. This situation displays the character of God's judgement. Yet if we see how God consummates His final judgement in becoming the judged one Himself for the sake of our justification and sanctification, we cannot expect this understanding of providence, as a pre-figuration of judgement, to be a *final* word – but it constitutes that which must be said first.

To sum up: from the teleological synoptic perspective that perceives the history of God with man as a *Kampfgeschichte*, creation and providence appear as the preparation of the covenant and as having the character of struggle. They are the manifestations of God's successive overcoming of nothingness as the manifestation of His negating will and of His labour to bring forth the final aim of His eternal self-election, to exist among, with, and for His creation: sovereign and free, yet worldly and even human Himself. However, from this synoptic perspective, creation and God's Kingdom, the covenantal unity between God and His redeemed creation in Jesus Christ, appear as two distinctly different, even antagonistic, moments.

Incarnation and Reconciliation

These two doctrines focus on the *concrete history* of God in the *flesh*, on His way from Bethlehem to Golgotha. This particular finite history has its origin in God's free election of grace and is directed towards the justifying and sanctifying judgement of humankind in the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The first moment of Jesus Christ's history must

[197] III/3, 786.
[198] IV/3 801.

therefore be seen as the "condescension, in which God adopts humankind in Jesus Christ"[199]. In IV/1, Barth again asserts that the focus on the divine origin and mystery of the historical existence of the man Jesus is characteristic for the Synoptics: "Die neutestamentliche Überlieferung – ... am deutlichsten die in den sogenannten synoptischen Evangelien dokumentierte – ist sich darin einig, daß gerade in dem Menschen Jesus von Nazareth als solchem ... ein allen anderen menschlichen Individuen gegenüber qualitativ Anderer auf dem Plan ... sei"[200].

The Synoptics witness Jesus from the presupposition: "God was in Christ"[201]. They perceive "God's Word" as the "secret behind His existence"[202]. The astonishing fact of this biblical line is, though, that it testifies to the Son of God as "obedient"[203] to the will of the Father, even as "God's suffering servant"[204]. The Synoptics witness to Jesus as the one who is the Christ in so far as He steps "under God's wrath and judgement"[205] in His death on the cross in utter alienation from His Father. "Daß Gott als Gott zu solcher Herablassung, zu solcher Erniedrigung seiner selbst fähig, willig und bereit ist: das ist ... das Geheimnis der „*Gottheit Christi*""[206]. That the man who dies on the cross is God Himself, in the *Seinsweise* of the Son, is the mystery of his existence – but a mystery that is revealed by the Father in his resurrection. Jesus' way to the cross is God's very own way – not in order to forsake humankind but for humankind's reconciliation with God in His repudiated Son, who in His death bears the sins of the world and thereby liberates human beings of all ages and nations from sin's destructive force. Jesus Christ's resurrection is thus the final "declaration and consummation of God's *judgement* over the way he had taken"[207]. God judges it as "*valid*" "for our *salvation*"[208].

To sum up: we can see here again the chronological, teleological structure of the synoptic perspective. The covenant becomes consummated only in so far as Jesus Christ

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[199] IV/1, 172.
[200] IV/1, 174.
[201] IV/1, 217.
[202] IV/1, 178.
[203] IV/1, 179.
[204] IV/1, 180.
[205] IV/1, 191.
[206] IV/1, 193.
[207] IV/1, 336.
[208] IV/1, 337.

proves His divinity in His obedient self-humiliation, and in so far as the Father affirms His divinity in His resurrection. In line with the general appearance of the covenant-history as a *Kampfgeschichte* from the synoptic perspective, the death of Jesus Christ is seen predominantly as a work of atonement and as a conquest of human sin for the sake of humankind.

In the light of the divine origin of Jesus' historical existence, as revealed in the resurrection, the Synoptics perceive His entire history as the history of the Son of God who proves His divinity on His way into the misery of fallen humanity in obedience to His heavenly Father, who has sent Him to consummate His eternal will by stepping into our place of sinful humanity and by judging us in His own death in our place for our salvation. The divine meaning of the history of Jesus Christ is expressed by the synoptic gospels in four steps: by narrating the history of Jesus Christ firstly as originating from the wonder of the virgin birth, secondly, as the life of the kingly man who came to judge and to call others into a definite decision over and against Himself, thirdly, as the history of His passion and death as the judge who has come "as one, who let himself be judged in the consummation of His judgement"[209], and finally as the history of the 40 days of the revealed presence and glory of God amongst His chosen people, which opens up the horizon of a new history between God and humankind – the once more teleologically orientated *Kampfgeschichte* of Jesus Christ as prophet in His fight against the last shadows of nothingness.

The wonder of the virgin birth

Following the synoptic perspective on God's free descent into the situation of fallen humanity, we see how the Synoptics "narrate a story" about the way in which it has become "true, that God adopted man, by becoming human Himself"[210]. The Synoptics' narrative of God's descent into the flesh focuses thereby on the fact "that this human being has its existence and power from nowhere else than God's Word"[211]: "Das Wunder der Fleischwerdung wird unter diesem Aspekt darin gesehen werden, daß es das Wort Gottes in

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[209] IV/1, 249.
[210] I/2, 183.
[211] Ibid.

der Freiheit, Majestät und Herrlichkeit seiner Gottheit war, das sich zu uns herabgelassen [hat]"[212].

From the synoptic perspective, the incarnation is the consummation of God's self-humiliation. Accordingly, the humanity of Jesus appears solely as God's very own human mode of being in the *Seinsweise* of the Son; God alone is the "ontological premise" of Jesus of Nazareth[213]: "Jetzt ist es am Platz, mit dem größten Nachdruck von dem *Majestätsakt Gottes* zu reden, der ... die Wahrheit dieses Geschehens und also des menschlich zeitlichen Seins Jesu Christi ist"[214]. The incarnation appears from this perspective as a *new* deed of God, which brings forth the most astonishing *unprecedented* reality: "God man"![215]

To sum up: from the synoptic perspective, the incarnation appears as an unprecedented historical act of God that brings forth a totally new reality: God becoming human himself in the *Seinsweise* of the Son.

Jesus' proclamation of God's judgement and His call of man into decision

"Auf der beherrschenden Hauptlinie [„der evangelischen Geschichte ..., speziell in der Gestalt, in der sie sich in den synoptischen Evangelien darstellt"[216]] ... ist das Bild, das jener erste große Teil der evangelischen Bücher bildet, ... zweifellos die Bestätigung eben des harten Bildes, das Johannes der Täufer von dem nach ihm Kommenden gehabt und entworfen hat: ... das Bild von dem in seiner Existenz hereinbrechenden Gerichts"[217]. The man who came with divine authority to judge everybody, in relation to whom everybody was exposed in his or her sinfulness and could only perish, was the kingly man Jesus of Nazareth as he stands in the centre of the synoptic witness.[218] His existence amongst us thus means firstly our judgement.

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[212] I/2, 183.
[213] IV/2, 40.
[214] IV/2, 39.
[215] IV/2, 39.
[216] IV/2, 246.
[217] IV/1, 247.
[218] "Der königliche Mensch ist der Jesus der vier und insbesondere der drei ersten Evangelien. Darum – nicht nur, aber insbesondere – der Jesus der Synoptiker, weil hier eben der Mensch Jesus von Nazareth als Subjekt

The Synoptics perceived His *Dasein* thus as *interruptive otherness*: He calls His contemporaries into decision "by not only demanding their decisions, but *also provoking and consummating them*"[219]. Yet He judges their decisions "analogically to God's way of existence"[220]. This means, that He came to exist as their judge as a manifestation of God in His self-humiliation: as someone who was "neglected" and "despised"[221], who existed in solidarity with the poor and weak[222], yet also in divine freedom towards human principles and structures[223], and who was as such "not against, but *for the man* ... of the old world of Adam"[224]. This characteristic of the kingly man Jesus is displayed fully in His death on the cross for man. This means that the history of divine judgement, as it is revealed and consummated in Jesus Christ, is as such eminently a history of salvation.

To sum up: the life history of Jesus Christ appears from the synoptic perspective as the consummation of God's judgement over humankind. Yet the consummation of this judgement takes place as God Himself steps into our place, thus establishing our freedom to respond to Him.

The death of the judge in our place

God in the *Seinsweise* of the Son stepped into the place of fallen humanity in order that we, "who feel and act like our own judge, receive the true judgement we deserve"[225]. But it happened on Golgotha "that the Son of God consummated the judgement of man by putting Himself, as man, *in our place*" and submitting Himself to our charge and its consequence, in order to save us from annihilation.[226] God's judgement over humankind takes place on the cross – but in the most astonishing form, that God as our judge allows Himself to be judged,

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der Aussage: "Er war wahrhaftig Gottes Sohn" (Mr. 15,39) im Mittelpunkt steht, während die johanneische Beschreibung umgekehrt ... auf das Menschsein des ewigen Sohnes Gottes zeigt" (IV/2, 174).

[219] IV/2, 175.

[220] IV/2, 185.

[221] IV/2, 186.

[222] IV/2, 188.

[223] IV/2, 191.

[224] IV/2, 200.

[225] IV/1, 241

[226] IV/1, 244.

to be put to death in our place: "[E]r handelt damit als Richter an unserer Stell, daß er eben das, was wir an dieser Stelle tun, auf ... *seine eigene* Verantwortlichkeit nimmt"[227]. Jesus Christ is therefore "the lamb, which carries the sins of the world, ... so that they are radically and totally carried away"[228]. Thus occurred in the self-humiliation of God the final "victory in the battle against sin"[229].

Hence, we can conclude that, for Barth, Jesus Christ is, precisely in and through His act of final judgement, the redeeming reconciler of humankind with God. This means, that *the inner meaning* of God's history of judgement, which manifests itself as His *concursus* against human sin, consists in His grace and salvation as it is revealed in the act of divine judgement on the cross. How Barth considers us eligible to perceive this inner meaning will be the question of the second part of this chapter, where I will look again at the history of God with man, yet this time under the presupposition that the descended God in His victory over sin and nothingness is as such already the author of the entire covenant-history.

The 40 days

As the bodily resurrected crucified, Jesus Christ is eternally *victor* over sin and nothingness. For Barth, Jesus Christ's resurrection means that He *lives* – today, tomorrow and in eternity in the character of His particular finite history in its exaltation into the union with the eternal God: "Eben das sagt ja die Auferweckung Jesu Christi ...: daß er als der *Gekreuzigte „lebt und regiert in Ewigkeit"* (Luther), ... nicht in die Schranken seiner durch seine Geburt und sein Sterben befristeten Zeit eingeschlossen blieb, sondern als der, der er in dieser seiner Zeit *war*, der Herr aller Zeit ... wurde ... und also jederzeit gegenwärtig ist"[230]. "[Seine Geschichte ist] εφ ἅπαξ, ein für allemal geschehen"[231]; "als der, der *einmal* gelebt hat",

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[227] IV/1, 259.
[228] IV/1, 260.
[229] IV/1, 280.
[230] IV/1, 345.
[231] IV/3, 256.

"*lebt* er und *wird* er leben"[232], "nicht nur geistig, sondern auch leiblich, genau in der raumzeitlichen Gestalt seiner damaligen Geschichte"[233].

The same once-and-for-all-relation between Jesus Christ's particular, limited historical existence and His eternal life consists, for Barth, between the particular revelation-history of the 40 days and His eternal life. The crucified and risen Jesus Christ is in His eternal life the redeemer and reconciler of humankind (as divine judge in His priestly office and as exalted man in His kingly office) *as the revealer* of His history in His *prophetic office*. He exists eternally in the power of His particular history of revelation as prophet and light[234]: "Jesus Christus lebt ein für allemal] als *Lichtquelle*, durch deren scheinen es draußen hell wird"[235].

It is by the power of His resurrection that we perceive and acknowledge that the telos of our own existence has become present in time, as He calls us to acknowledge and follow Him, to become His servant and witness and to exist thereby as those who already have their everlasting life in Him: "[Seine Geschichte ist] *Offenbarungs*geschichte". "[Sein Leben ist] Tat", "[welche] als solche auch sein Wort [ist]", "[d.h. während er sie vollstreckt], bringt er sie Gehorsam fordernd zu Gehör"[236], "ruft er seine ganze Umgebung (die ganze Welt und Menschheit also) in die Verantwortung ihm gegenüber, ... ruft er sie auf, dem in seiner Tat gesprochenen Ja mit ihrem Ja zu entsprechen"[237].

This means that Jesus Christ lives eternally as the risen crucified in the power of the *Holy Spirit*. Barth sees Pentecost as the second parousia, as the second form of Jesus Christ's presence among man between His ascension and His final return. Jesus Christ is, for Barth, the living Lord of this time-in-between as He proclaims Himself in the power of His Spirit and thereby calls us to recognise Him and to live as His witnesses according to our own eternal life in Him: "[Der Heilige Geist ist die] Gegenwart Jesu Christi selber": "Wo er, Jesus Christus, Menschen, die ihm ferne sind, begegnet und nahetritt ..., als ihr Herr erkannt wird, da hat er diesen Menschen eben damit den Heiligen Geist gegeben"[238].

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[232] Ibid.
[233] Ibid.
[234] IV/1, 52.
[235] IV/1, 49.
[236] IV/1, 50.
[237] IV/1, 51.
[238] IV/2, 143.

However, Barth acknowledges the troubling fact that Jesus Christ in His self-proclamation "is met with *opposition*"[239]. Primarily Christians do not exist according to their everlasting life in Jesus Christ but confront His call to exist as witnesses of His self-proclamation with their contradicting lies. Jesus Christ's self-proclamation is consequently "not absolutely and finally, but relatively and temporarily seriously limited"[240]. John 1:5 therefore states: "*Das Licht (des Lebens) leuchtet*, es leuchtet aber ... *in der Finsternis*"[241]. "[Das heißt daß sich das Licht gegenüber der Finsternis] von Schritt zu Schritt und also in jener *Geschichte* durchsetzen muß"[242]. The relation between the light Jesus Christ and the darkness of human revolt is therefore "*dynamic-teleological*"[243] - "a battle is fought there"[244]. "Nicht in ihrem Anheben, wohl aber in ihrem Verlauf ist [die Geschichte der Prophetie Jesu] *Kampfgeschichte*"[245].

The limitation of Jesus Christ's prophetic Lordship appears particularly severe, as His presence is not directly perceivable. We exist between His "directly perceivable presence and action"[246] during the 40 days and His promised "final coming in His revelation as judge of the quick and the dead"[247]. However, Barth does not consider our present time to lack the presence of Jesus Christ. Against Bultmann, he dismisses the notion of Jesus final words to His disciples as "Abschiedsreden".[248] Jesus Christ is present in the power of His Spirit – present in His continuous battle against the last shadows of nothingness. Barth therefore sees the new time-space between Jesus Christ's ascension and final return just in its preliminary and overshadowed character as a work of grace.[249]

This confident acceptance of present history is grounded in Barth's belief that our present time is the time-space, which Jesus Christ Himself has chosen for His way towards the final universal revelation of His salvation-work, and that He calls us to follow Him as His witnesses: "[D]ie Vorläufigkeit unserer Situation ist dadurch begründet, daß es Jesu Christi

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[239] IV/3, 190.
[240] IV/3, 190.
[241] IV/3, 191.
[242] Ibid.
[243] IV/3, 192.
[244] Ibid.
[245] IV/3, 271.
[246] IV/3, 810.
[247] Ibid.
[248] Cf. Bultmann, 1952.
[249] IV/3, 375.

guter Wille ist, vom Anfang seiner Offenbarung her nach deren Vollendung hin auszuschreiten, ... und insofern selber ... *vorläufig* zu sein, der er ist, ... sich selbst für seinen Kampf Raum und Zeit zu lassen. So kann es ... für uns alle nur darum gehen ... ihm nachzufolgen"[250].

Jesus Christ's continuous battle is gracious as it provides us with the opportunity of freely acknowledging His salvation-work and of becoming His co-workers in His prophetic office. The final strike against the last shadows of nothingness in His universal revelation takes time "because also in this respect He does not want to be ... without us, to ... act over our heads, as he wants much more ... to let us partake ... in His work"[251]. Thus, we are granted some final time for *recognising* and *confessing* God's living Word[252], for invoking and proclaiming Him, and for being His witness[253] by joining Him in His final fight as co-workers in His prophetic office.[254] The resurrection as the *telos* of God's descent must therefore be understood as the "*beginning*"[255] of a new history between God and human beings: once more a teleologically orientated *Kampfgeschichte*, yet one which is not fought by God alone, but in which we are called to participate as witnesses of Jesus Christ's self-proclamation.

The history of Jesus Christ is therefore "*eminently* historical": "[W]eil sie, indem sie Erkenntnis begründende Offenbarung ist, ihre scheinbar Beschränktheit und Isoliertheit als diese damals, dort, geschehene Geschichte von innen heraus in eigener Kraft durchbricht, ... hinaus und hineintritt in das Weltgeschehen, das Geschehen jedes einzelnen Menschenlebens, um sich selbst, ihr eigenes Geschehen, als den Ursprung, den Sinn und das Ziel alles Geschehens zu erweisen, um also alles Geschehen zu übergreifen, es umzugestalten zur Teilnahme an ihrem eigene Geschehen"[256]. The particular telos of God's descent, the resurrection and revelation of Jesus Christ, is, as such, the telos and meaning of the entire history between God and humankind and therefore also the telos and – *already fulfilled(!)* – promise of the present '*Kampfgeschichte*'. "Ebenso deutlich wie Auferstehung,

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[250] IV/3, 381.
[251] IV/3, 383.
[252] IV/3, 383f.
[253] IV/3, 384.
[254] Cf. also IV/1, 823f.
[255] IV/3, 367.
[256] IV/3, 241.

Geistausgießung, letzte Wiederkunft Jesu Christi zu unterscheiden sind, müssen wir sie nun aber auch als Formen eines und desselben Geschehens verstanden und also zusammengesehen werden"[257].

The present teleological *Kampfgeschichte* of Jesus Christ in the power of His Spirit is therefore inherently determined by the event of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ: "Die Bestimmung, die der Welt und dem Menschen in Jesu Christi Auferstehung widerfahren ist, ist endgültig"[258]. This "*total*", "*universal*", "*definitive* determination"[259] consists in the once and for all consummated covenant between God and humankind and therefore in the eternal life of all people in Jesus Christ.[260] Jesus Christ's resurrection revealed "the already eternalised ... life of ...all mankind, which is in its humanity already lived out of God, with God, for God"[261]. This telos of our existence is present in Jesus Christ's self-proclamation.

To sum up: the resurrection of Jesus Christ in the power of God's Spirit is the fulfilment of the telos of God's *Kampfgeschichte*, the final consummation and revelation of the covenant. In the light and spiritual power of this event, the history of Jesus Christ as the history of the Son in the flesh appears as *Offenbarungsgeschichte*: it enlightens our understanding of the entire history of the covenant, of the ultimate character of the reality so established and of its final goal, that is, its universal revelation in the return of Jesus Christ.

In so far as Jesus Christ reveals Himself in His resurrection as both God in man and exalted man in union with God, He reveals Himself as being the living Lord over all ages in His particular historical character. This means that we must acknowledge Him as the eternal author, Lord, and final judge of the entire history of God with humankind, of the history of the church, and of our individual existence, as they are bound up with covenant-history. The particular event of the resurrection, as the telos and meaning of God's *Kampfgeschichte*, thus turns, in the power of God's Spirit, firstly the history of Jesus of Nazareth into revelation-history, and then, in this light, the entire history of God with humankind into revelation-history.

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[257] IV/3, 339.
[258] IV/3, 352.
[259] IV/3, 354.
[260] IV/3, 352.
[261] IV/3, 364.

In the light of these revelation-stories, the history of the church and our individual life-stories are turned into stories of revelation - into stories that come from, are ruled by, and are drawn to the bodily risen Jesus Christ who has revealed Himself as the light in which they receive their meaning and task: to be His witnesses. They witness to Jesus Christ as the history of God's descent and fight against sin and nothingness – yet they receive their light and strength from Jesus Christ's victory on the cross and they receive their present importance and necessity from God's grace to elevate His reconciled and redeemed people into the freedom of His friends and witnesses, into Jesus Christ's kingly and prophetic office.

We can therefore conclude that the synoptic perspective focuses firstly on God's primacy and agency. Yet the telos of the God's history with humankind, which appears from the synoptic perspective as God's fight against human sin and nothingness, consists in the consummation of the covenant between God and humankind in Jesus Christ's death and resurrection. This event includes for Barth all ages and all reality. Yet this means that all human beings are, once and for all, elevated into the responsibility to be witnesses, even a co-workers and co-fighters of God in His history with humankind in Jesus Christ. It is the Pauline-Johannine perspective that perceives the history of God with humankind primarily under this presupposition.

The following section will therefore follow the history of God with humankind again from its beginning and analyse how Barth interprets the different loci according to the Pauline-Johannine perspective. It will emerge that this perspective allows for, and even requires, a high degree of human freedom and moral agency. Yet it should have become clear that this new perspective on the importance of human freedom and agency is the necessary consequence of the history of God with humankind as perceived from the synoptic perspective.

Part IV

The history of God with man from the Pauline-Johannine perspective

I will now examine the history of God with humankind again from the Pauline-Johannine perspective, that is, under the presupposition of Jesus Christ's victory over human sin and thus of our exaltation into the freedom for being witnesses of God's victorious

Kampfgeschichte. As victor over sin and nothingness, Jesus Christ must be seen as the author and Lord of the entire covenant-history. Barth contradicts doubts about the legitimacy of this hermeneutical move[262] by arguing as follows: "[I]st ... das nicht das Einfachste von der Welt: Ist die Jesusgeschichte das Geschehen der Versöhnung, ist die Versöhnung darum wahr und kräftig, daß Gott selbst Mensch wurde, um Subjekt dieses Geschehens zu sein ... wie soll es dann anders sein, als daß wir es ... in der „*Jesus*geschichte" mit der Wirklichkeit zu tun haben, die als Gottes erstes und ewiges Wort aller anderen Wirklichkeit zugrunde liegt und vorangeht ...?"[263] The origin of the history of God with humankind is thus already the consummated covenant: at the beginning of all His works and ways. God is already in union with humankind, and humankind is exalted into the union with God in and through the eternal *historical* existence of Jesus Christ.

Seen from this anabasic perspective, one "can assume ... that his relation to God, fellow human beings, and self ... is perfectly in order"[264]. God's history with humankind thus appears as *Offenbarungsgeschichte*, as a history in which Jesus Christ calls us into recognition of Himself and of our own true existence in Him: "Er ... offenbart sich selbst ... als die Wahrheit, in der alle Wahrheiten – die Wahrheit Gottes vor Allem und die Wahrheit des Menschen – eingeschlossen sind [...] Er beruft damit zu bewußter, verständiger, lebendiger, dankbarer, williger, tätiger Anteilnahme an seinem Geschehen"[265].

This perspective on the history of God with humankind as victorious *Offenbarungsgeschichte* follows, for Barth, especially the Johannine tradition: "[Vor allem das] Johannesevangelium" [ist] "das besondere Evangelium ... von dem prophetischen Werk Jesu Christi"[266]. The gospel of John focuses on Jesus as the exalted man, who was as such "in the beginning with God"[267] as "light, witness, *revealer*"[268]. Jesus in His eternally enduring particular history is for John "the way"[269] towards the Father, towards eternal life. "Eternal life" thereby means for John "recognising ...Jesus Christ ... in unity with the sole true God"[270].

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[262] Cf. Emil Brunner, 1951, 98.
[263] IV/1, 55f.
[264] IV/3, 283.
[265] IV/3, 6.
[266] IV/3, 265.
[267] Ibid.
[268] IV/3, 266.
[269] IV/3, 267.
[270] IV/3, 266.

Guided by the Johannine perspective, I will now look at the way in which the different theological loci appear once they are perceived on the premise that Jesus Christ is, as the exalted man, eternally with God, and, as victor and light, the eternal author, upholder, and ruler of world-history.

Trinity

The telos of God's descent in the *Seinsweise* of the Son, that is, the exaltation of the man Jesus into the union with God, determines, for Barth, God's eternal triune being. Barth thus states that in Jesus Christ, God has "lifted humankind upon his *throne*"[271], whereby he understands 'throne' as "the *triunity* of God's simple essence"[272]. From this anabasic Johannine perspective, Barth perceives God's triune being consequently as follows: the triune being of God includes inherently "an above and below, a prius and a posterius, pre- and subordination"[273]. God exists eternally as the Father of the obedient Son. It is thus only from the Johannine perspective that Barth can say that the Father is eternally the "prius" in His *self-humiliation*, while the Son in His obedience is "posterius" as the *exalted man* Jesus.

The obedient Son is, as such, not the *logos asarkos*□□but the exalted *man Jesus*. With respect to John 1:1, Barth thinks that we are compelled to say that this man Jesus "was ...*with God and God Himself*...: ... in the eternity of God"[274]. "Der ewige Sohn Gottes ist ... *Jesus Christus*, wie er in der Zeit lebte, starb und auferstand, und nur er"[275]. "[Es ist] uns verwehrt..., ... von einem „Logos an sich" zu träumen, der *noch nicht* diesen Inhalt und diese Gestalt hätte"[276]. God Father is therefore "not only the eternal Father of His eternal Son, but as such the eternal Father of this historical man" and therefore "the eternal Father ... of the people, which is represented by this man as its king"[277].

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[271] II/1, 547.
[272] II/1, 535.
[273] IV/1, 219.
[274] III/2, 581.
[275] IV/1, 55.
[276] Ibid.
[277] II/2, 7.

To sum up: from the Pauline-Johannine perspective, the reality of the consummated covenant, and thus humanity, appears as exalted into God's eternal triune being: God was in the beginning the Father of His Son, who bears the concrete character of the bodily risen crucified, and of His redeemed creation.

Election

Consequently, the doctrine of election is, for Barth, not the dark decree of the *Deus absconditus*, but originates from God's one Word Jesus Christ, with whom alone theology must "begin"[278]. Jesus Christ was as "God's eternal election and decision" Himself "the electing God"[279]. He was "as *elected man* the *God* who elected humankind in His own humanity.[280] "Wir werden in keiner Tiefe der Gottheit einem anderen als ihm begegnen [...] Der Vater ist ... der Vater Jesu Christi und der Heilige Geist ist der Geist dieses Vaters und ... Jesu Christi"[281]. Barth refers here to John 1,1-2, where he sees the term *ho logos* as "unmistakably substituted for: Jesus ... . He, Jesus, is in the beginning with God"[282].[283]

Hence, election is not solely a divine act: "Man kann den Gedanken von einer rein innergöttlichen Entschließung als dem ewigen Grund des Gnadenbundes erhaben und erhebend finden. Er ist aber entscheidend zu erhaben und zu erhebend, um ein echt christlicher Gedanke zu sein. Um die Begründung eines Verhältnisses zwischen Gott und Mensch und also gerade nicht nur um ein Verhalten Gottes zu sich selber soll es doch gehen"[284]. "In diesem freien Akt der Gnadenwahl ist vielmehr die Existenz des Menschen ...

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[278] II/2, 2.
[279] II/2, 123.
[280] II/2, 125.
[281] II/2, 124.
[282] II/2, 103.
[283] Cf. KD III/2 and IV/2 and more often: "Und nun wäre das Sätzlein Joh. 1, 2: „Dieser war im Anfang bei Gott" eine überflüssige und verwirrende Wiederholung aus v 1, wenn damit nicht auf die Person gezeigt wäre, die nachher den Gegenstand der ganzen evangelischen Erzählung bildet: auf denselben, von dem Joh. 1,14 heißt, daß das Wort Fleisch wurde und wohnte unter uns. Nicht von einem ewigen göttlichen Sohn oder Logos *in abstracto*, sondern von ihm in seiner Einheit mit dem Menschen Jesus ist das Alles gesagt" (III/2, 580). "Es wäre aber auch der Satz Joh. 1,2 „Dieser war (ουτος ην) im Anfang bei Gott" eine unverständliche Wiederholung ... wenn es nicht vorwegnehmend auf den *fleisch*gewordenen Logos deutete" (IV/2, 35).
[284] IV/1, 69.

schon gegenwärtig“[285]. “Gott war auch im Anfang aller seiner Wege und Werke ... *nicht ohne den Menschen*“[286].

To sum up: God's self-election to be God for humankind in Jesus Christ does not exclude the concrete reality and decision of the human person Jesus as a representative of humankind. The doctrine of the election of grace therefore reveals, if seen from the Pauline-Johannine perspective, the involvement of humanity in God's primordial decision and therefore our primordial responsibility and liability for covenant-history.

Nothingness

With respect to the once-and-for-all-character of Jesus Christ's victory over sin and nothingness, “one can by no means say of nothingness“, “that it still has objective existence“[287]. Barth perceives nothingness primarily as conquered by Jesus' victory.[288] Yet neither can we ignore that from the perspective of Jesus Christ's perfect victory, sin, and nothingness still come into view – however, in a different way. While it is true that Jesus Christ overcame the threat of nothingness, originating from God's eternal election, once and for all, it is just His reconciling work that provokes, according to Barth, our contradicting lies. Jesus Christ's self-proclamation “provokes ... contradiction“[289]. Human beings in their pride are unwilling to accept that their proper relation to God and others has already been established without their cooperation in Jesus Christ, and the consequences that this has for their way of existence. Barth thinks that we all thus intend “to confront the truth with a ... *counter-truth*: ... less sharp, reconcilable with [our] pride, because reconcilable with the certainty that conversion is unnecessary“[290].

Hence, we create our personal world-views: “Im Rahmen einer Weltanschauung wird ... auch das Wort der Gnade zu einem betrachtbaren Bild“, “das ... nur noch ... aus

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[285] IV/1, 70.
[286] IV/2, 34.
[287] III/3, 419.
[288] III/3, 420.
[289] IV/3, 262.
[290] IV/3, 293.

gemessenem Abstand und nur unter und neben vielen anderen Bildern allenfalls auch reden darf – und vor Allem: nur im Zusammenhang eines Gesamtbildes, dessen Urheber ... dafür gesorgt haben dürfte, daß es ihm nichts sagen wird, was ihm zu nahe treten könnte"[291].

We thus try to escape the confrontation with the Word of God by domesticating it, by shaping it according to our image, according to our desires, expectations, and categories. We thus turn it into a world-view. Yet we thereby obscure and veil the true reality, in which we exist before God and fellow human beings. We create the sham-reality of a world in which we are still haunted by nothingness. We thus choose to remain in the misery already overcome by Jesus Christ. In this situation, the self-proclamation of Jesus Christ becomes "unavoidably ... the contradicting word of the ... accusing ... law, the proclamation of God's wrath and judgement"[292]. "Nicht in ihrem Anheben, wohl aber in ihrem Verlauf ist [die Geschichte der Prophetie Jesu] *Kampfgeschichte*"[293]. Jesus Christ's self-proclamation therefore reveals Him in His fighting against human lies and calls us "*to accompany* Him ... in His unfinished *battle*"[294]. This call to battle is our great chance of "stepping into His service in freedom"[295]: of understanding and taking part in God's providence.

To sum up: from the Pauline-Johannine perspective, human beings are from the very beginning confronted with Jesus Christ and therefore aware of, and responsible for, covenant-history. Hence, we are also responsible for its contradiction. We therefore see how the Pauline-Johannine perspective gives the answer to the transcendental possibility of the character of God's descent as *Kampfgeschichte*: God's history with humankind, which begins as *Offenbarungsgeschichte*, gains the character of a *Kampfgeschichte* from our rebellion against eternal truth and our destined freedom. Yet from the Pauline-Johannine perspective, we see that this *Kampfgeschichte* has the form of Jesus Christ's self-proclamation that breaks through the world-views that we have engineered in our rebellion against God.

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[291] Ibid.
[292] IV/3, 263.
[293] IV/3, 271.
[294] IV/3, 378.
[295] IV/3, 384.

Creation

With regard to John 1, we must confess that "Jesus Christ is the Word, through which God created the world out of nothing"[296]. Barth can therefore agree with Aquinas that Jesus Christ is "not only the image of the Father, but also the archetype of the world"[297].[298] He is "the firstborn of all creation. For ... through Him and towards Him everything has been created and in Him everything is upheld"[299]. Furthermore, Barth refers to the "known sequence of New Testament statements about an ontological relation between Jesus Christ and creation", viz. Colossians 1:17, John 1 1:1, John 2:13f, and Colossians 1:15. All these statements claim: "Er steht wie Gott und mit Gott vor und über dem mit der Schöpfung geschehenen Anfang aller Dinge"[300]. And John 1:3.10 states: "Jesus Christus wird nicht erst, sondern er ist der Herr aller Dinge, denn er ist ... der Schöpfer aller Dinge"[301].

While the synoptic catabasic perspective appeared as inherently affiliated with the priestly creation tradition, Barth perceives the anabasic Pauline-Johannine perspective together with the Jahwist tradition. The latter is "a genuinely different, new creation saga"[302], as it emphasises that the covenant is "the internal foundation of creation"[303]. It does *not* perceive "Jesus Christ as telos, but Jesus Christ as beginning (just because He is the telos, also as the beginning!) of creation"[304] and accordingly narrates *not* "how creation *promises, signifies, prophesises* the covenant, but how it ... *prefigures* and thereby *establishes it at the outset (vorwegnimmt)*"[305]. In the Jahwist account "the end [is thus] already ... present ... and perceivable at the outset"[306]. Creation-history is consequently for Barth as the "after-image" of the covenant also its "model"[307].

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[296] I/1, 465.
[297] I/1, 466.
[298] "Das erste, ewige Wort Gottes, das dem Schöpferwillen und Schöpferwerk als Anfang aller Dinge in Gott selber zugrunde liegt und vorangeht, heißt wirklich *Jesus Christus*, ist identisch mit ihm, der als wahrer Gott und wahrer Mensch , in der Zeit geboren, lebend, handelnd, leidend und überwindend die Versöhnung vollstreckt" (IV/1, 54).
[299] IV/2, 35.
[300] III/1, 54.
[301] III/1, 55.
[302] III/1, 259.
[303] III/1, 261.
[304] III/1, 263.
[305] III/1, 262.
[306] IIII/1, 264.
[307] III/1. 265.

The Jahwistic account of creation thus features, for Barth, four important prefigurations of the consummated covenant. First, it perceives Adam as the man Jesus who is created as the covenant partner not only of the woman but foremost of God. Second, it perceives human beings as the created brothers and sisters of Jesus, participating in His kingly freedom for God and the other. To us is thus the task assigned to prove our freedom over and against nothingness. Third, it perceives the double aspect of light and darkness within the world as a prefiguration of the event of the cross, of Jesus Christ's humiliation and exaltation, whereby darkness is already inherently limited by light, that is, by Jesus Christ's exaltation. Finally, it perceives our finite life in its limits of birth and death as a prefiguration of eternal life.

The particularity of the creation of Adam lies for Barth in the fact "that God blows the breath of life into his nose". This "highly personal ... act"[308] of God signifies his "humanity"[309]. For Barth, it is primarily Jesus Christ "who has been ... in this direct, personal immediacy of God" and "whose confidence and hope has been *solely* ... *God*"[310]. The creation of Jesus Christ as the first Adam is thus fulfilled by the mutual covenantal relationship between God and the human person Jesus: by God's intimate turning to him and by his acknowledgement of God as his sole comfort and hope.[311]

Jesus Christ is as the last Adam the first Adam, the first creature, so that we are created successively as His brothers and sisters and in His kingly freedom for God and the other. This kingly freedom is emphasised by the saga's pointing to the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil": "Eben das von Gott dem Menschen geschenkte Leben bekommt angesichts des Baumes der Erkenntnis des Guten und des Bösen den Charakter einer Aufgabe. In

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[308] III/1, 268.
[309] Ibid.
[310] III/1, 271.
[311] The concept of analogy used by Barth to describe the relation between God and creation from the Johannine-Jahwist perspective differs from the concept he used in his interpretation of the priestly saga. The latter concept states solely an analogy between the *relations* in which God exists in His eternal triune being or Jesus Christ in relation to the church and man in his relation to the woman (III/1, 207). Yet the former concept intends to say more, namely that man exists in analogy and in repetition of God's very own essential humanity. While man therefore still differs fundamentally from God in His *divinity*, he is *equally* created in his *humanity*. Humanity, considered as free obedience over against God's eternal election of grace, is therefore the "*tertium comperationis*" between God's and man's existence (III/1, 302). Man is thus in his existence analogue to God's own existence in Jesus Christ in the "*event*" of his "cooperation" for the good" (III/3, 60), in the execution of His kingly freedom in loving obedience to the call of Jesus Christ.

Anerkennung des Richteramtes Gottes, in bewußter Dankbarkeit und insofern in Form von Entscheidung und Gehorsam will es gelebt werden“[312].

Human beings are created in “freedom“ to obey God's decision.[313] Our existence gains its fulfilment by receiving from God the *possible* task of proving our freedom: “[D]amit und erst damit wird seine Erschaffung nach dieser Seite vollendet, daß Gott sich ihm als der souveräne Richter über Gut und Böse zu erkennen gibt und daß er ihm gebietet, sich an ihn als diesen Richter zu halten .... Kraft der Anrede und Aufforderung, in der ihm damit zugesprochenen Verantwortlichkeit wird und ist der Mensch frei: ... frei dazu, ... Gottes in und mit seiner Erschaffung vollzogene Entscheidung seinerseits zu bewähren“[314]. This task is Jesus Christ's gracious invitation to us to enter freely and actively the covenant and share in His kingly office: ”[Er will damit des Menschen] höchste Gemeinschaft mit ihm selber. Man beachte also wohl, daß er ihn auch von seinem Richteramt keineswegs einfach ausschließen, daß er ihn vielmehr in ganz bestimmter Weise auch daran und also allerdings an seinem eigenen göttlichen Wesen beteiligen will“[315].

Our kingly freedom is further characterised as our freedom *for the other*. The consummation of the covenant between man and woman is interpreted by Barth not only as the model of the covenant between God and humankind in Jesus Christ, but also as our freedom for the other: “Indem Gott ihm die Frau zuführt, will er zweifellos noch einmal wissen, „wie er sie nennen würde“ .... Und erst mit ... der Kundgebung seiner freien Wahl und Entscheidung, wird dann auch Gottes eigenes Werk zu seinem Ziel gekommen sein“[316]. By freely acknowledging the woman as his partner, the man (and thus humanity in general) is “with his recognition and confession involved ... in the act of the fulfilment of his own creation“[317].

We do not find this strong focus on the genuine freedom and moral agency of human beings in Barth's interpretation of the priestly creation tradition. We can therefore see how Barth perceives created human beings from the Pauline-Johannine perspective in their kingly

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[312] III/1, 299.
[313] III/1, 300.
[314] III/1, 302.
[315] III/1, 303.
[316] III/1, 341.
[317] Ibid.

existence in the exalted Jesus Christ as the author and model of human existence in responsible freedom for God.

With respect to the consummation of the covenant, human beings have been created in a twofold way for this end: as inherently *honourable* and *needy.*[318] Yet we have seen that this double aspect of creation is essentially shared by God Himself: "Prior to our rejoicing and sighing was His"[319]. Yet we have also seen that this twofold aspect is of no "absolute symmetry" but rather a "path and work"[320]: on God's way, "the cross is followed by resurrection"[321]. Jesus Christ's perfect victory over sin and nothingness means that we have to perceive the threat of nothingness to creation as limited already from the outset. In faith in Jesus Christ, we have to see "through the imperfection of being into its perfection", whereby the latter has, for Barth, the character of a "*free and joyful*" "fight in which we may acknowledge God's consummated decision always anew as consummated also for us"[322]. In Jesus Christ as eternal victor, "creation is here and now already perfect in all its imperfection"[323]. Hence, we are called to affirm this in the execution of our kingly freedom.

Our finite life is itself already the prefiguration of our eternal life, because the latter is the inner mystery of our finite existence in time. For Jesus Christ has risen in the "finitude" of His historical existence "from the dead ... and will return in glory. Just as this man, finite like ourselves, He rules already at the Father's right hand. We are like Him by existing within this finitude; it therefore announces our great liberty"[324]. The promise of eternal preservation by God will therefore not override the particular boundaries of our temporal existence; neither is this eternal preservation by God a "second ...after his temporal upholding. It is its mystery, which is already ... fully effective ... and will one-day be manifest in full clarity"[325]. Eternal life as a life of free ministry of God is thus for Barth as the telos of our finite existence already its origin and hidden inner meaning, so that from this Jahwistic-Johannine perspective our finite life appears as the prefiguration of, and consequently in continuity with, eternal life.

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[318] III/1, 430.
[319] III/3, 436.
[320] III/1, 439.
[321] III/1, 440.
[322] III/1, 435.
[323] III/1, 441.
[324] III/3, 267.
[325] III/3, 102.

To sum up: we can see how Barth perceives, from the Pauline-Johannine perspective, human created existence not only as the technical facilitation but also as the prefiguration of our redeemed existence with God and fellow human beings. We are truly human once we repeat God's very own existence in self-humiliation for the sake of humankind, that is, in the execution of our kingly freedom. From the Pauline-Johannine perspective, Barth is also eager to stress the personal responsibility of created human beings for their finite lives, as these created finite lives will constitute – judged and redeemed by Jesus Christ – the character of their eternal lives.

Providence

We have seen from the anabasic Pauline-Johannine perspective, that Jesus Christ is, as descended God and exalted man, as the Word through which everything has been created in His likeness, the first Adam. Thus, the human person has been created in her kingly freedom for Jesus Christ, who calls her to confirm her freedom by witnessing to His self-proclamation in her own existence. The doctrine of providence accordingly appears not as a *concursus* of God against sinful human confusion, but as the Lordship of Jesus Christ as victor and light, who calls us in the power of His Spirit to recognise and to serve Him freely in His kingly and prophetic office, thus executing our created freedom for God and fellow human beings. "Christian faith in providence is ... faith *in Christ*"[326]. The Johannine anabasic perspective recognises God's reign over the world in His Word, "which became flesh and is called Jesus Christ"[327]. Equally, it recognises Jesus Christ as the victor over sin and nothingness as creation's powerful upholder: "Das Geschöpf muß darum erhalten werden, und es wird darum gewaltig erhalten ... weil Jesus Christus zur Rechten Gottes ist und vertritt uns"[328]. Everything stands under His rule - also nothingness: "Es bilden aber auch Sünde und Tod, Teufel und Hölle ... hier keine Ausnahme"[329].[330]

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[326] III/3, 29.
[327] Ibid.
[328] III/3, 67.
[329] II/2, 99.
[330] Cf. also III/3, 422; 425.

Human history becomes through Jesus Christ's creative, sustaining, and governing call a parable, an analogy of the history of the covenant.[331] The "prevailing of His providence"[332] consists therefore therein, that Jesus Christ calls human beings into the service of His coming as the Kingdom of God: "Daß er sie im Dienst jenes Reiches *braucht*, daß er sie also seinem Werk in diesem Reiche *zuordnet und hinzufügt*, daß er sie an der Geschichte dieses Reiches *mitwirken* läßt, das ist das Walten seiner Vorsehung"[333]. From the anabasic Johannine perspective, providence therefore appears as our gracious chance of proving our created kingly freedom for God and of existing already in correspondence with our eternal life in Jesus Christ: "Gott will eine Geschichte in dieser Kreaturwelt: eine Geschichte, in der ihr Anteil an dieser Freiheit, der ihr schon zukommt ... von ihr bezeugt, verkündigt, begriffen und ergriffen werde"[334].

Here, "God's perfect Lordship" takes place not as *concursus* but "in the freedom of the *Spirit*"[335]. In the power of the Holy Spirit, "the fatherly Lordship of the creator" and "the childlike obedience of the creature"[336] together take place. Jesus Christ causes human history to evolve in free correspondence with His will "by speaking to every creature His Word, which has the power ... of His *Holy Spirit*"[337]. Addressed by this Word "the Christian participates in God's providence" in so far as he is made responsible for the coming Kingdom and "receives a task"[338]. But what is our concrete order? – According to Barth, we receive this order in and through Jesus Christ's self-proclamation. It is thereby important to note that because the "man Jesus ... has a concrete *contour*", "the work of the Holy Spirit"[339] has also a particular character. For Barth, also the Holy Spirit appears from the Pauline-Johannine as "truly human ... and therefore not at all ... [as] indefinable"[340]. His power can best be described as "*direction*"[341].

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[331] III/3, 60.
[332] III/3, 49.
[333] Ibid.
[334] III/3, 90.
[335] III/3, 106.
[336] III/3, 106f.
[337] III/3, 161.
[338] III/3, 290.
[339] IV/3, 403f.
[340] IV/3, 404.
[341] Ibid.

The "direction (*Weisung*)" of Jesus Christ in the power of His Spirit is firstly the "*Introduction (Einweisung)*" "into our true freedom"[342] for God and the other, which consists in our one opportunity for God in our particular historical situation. It is secondly "critique (*Zurechtweisung*)": "[S]ie grenzt die eine, dem Menschen von Gott in jener Ausgangstellung her gegebene Möglichkeit ab gegenüber allen anderen, die von dort aus für ihn ausgeschlossene, keine Möglichkeiten sind"[343]. "Das Wirken des Heiligen Geistes besteht darin, daß Beides an den Tag gebracht ... und unterschieden wird: Da kommt auf die rechte Seite: was aus ... dem Geist stammt, ... die in der Freiheit der Kinder Gottes gewählte und ergriffene eine Möglichkeit ... . Und da kommt auf die linke Seite: was aus dem Widerspruch zu des Menschen Sein in Jesus Christus stammt"[344]. Jesus Christ's direction is thirdly "Instruction (*Unterweisung*)": "[S]ie zeigt ihm gebieterisch die eine von ihm zu verwirklichende Möglichkeit; sie ruft ihn auf, sich als der zu betätigen, der er ist – zur Tat seiner wirklichen Freiheit"[345].

The Holy Spirit instructs us in living "directed towards the kingly man Jesus"[346], in becoming His "disciple, pupil, companion, follower, servant"[347], and in looking for our own life "there..., where it is objectively, namely in him"[348]. If we follow Jesus Christ's order in the power of His Spirit in free and faithful recognition of Him as our Lord, in loving obedience and hopeful and responsible prayer, we are exalted into the active communion of God and humankind in Jesus Christ.

Exalted into this communion, we are invited to play an active, understanding, and responsible part within divine providence[349]: "Es gibt keine die Alleinherrschaft und Alleinwirksamkeit Gottes begrenzende und konkurrenzierende *Kreatur*freiheit; es gibt aber eine von ihm selbst ... geschaffene Freiheit der *Freunde* Gottes, denen gegenüber Gott selbst sich bestimmt, sich seinerseits, ohne das Heft auch nur einen Augenblick aus der Hand zu geben, auch von ihnen bestimmen zu lassen"[350]. " Es gibt ... ein Gebet, ein Bitten mit ihm und

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[342] IV/3, 405.
[343] Ibid.
[344] IV/3, 411.
[345] IV/3, 405.
[346] IV/3, 419.
[347] Ibid.
[348] IV/3, 420.
[349] III/3, 323.
[350] III/3, 323.

auf dem Grunde seiner Fürbitte. Und so gibt es eine Teilnahme des Christen ... auch an seinem *königlichen* Amt. Ist Gott in ihm an unsere Seite getreten, ... so sind wir in ihm an Gottes Seite versetzt [...] Und eben das ist es, was im christlichen Glauben, Gehorsam und Gebet Ereignis wird: daß wir dahin versetzt, dorthin emporgehoben werden"[351].

Our existence as partakers in Jesus Christ's prophetic and kingly office demands our understanding of God's providence, of the "direction" of His Holy Spirit. If we want to perceive God's providence from the two different biblical perspectives, we must "note the following double rule": firstly, we must understand from the Johannine-Jahwistic perspective the consummation of the covenant not merely as "telos" but as "archetype and model of the general"[352]. "[Es ist also] von dem in der Bibel bezeugten *besonderen* Geschehen, von Gottes Handeln in dem dort aufgerichteten und durchgeführten *Gnadenbund* in Israel und in der Gemeinde Jesu Christi her sofort nach *außen*, auf das *allgemeine* Weltgeschehen zu blicken. Jenes Besondere geschieht nämlich nicht für sich, sondern als innerer Grund des ganzen Kreaturgeschehens"[353]. World-history must therefore be perceived as the "after-image of this particular history", which stands in its free "service"[354].

However, it is equally necessary to perceive world-history according to the synoptic perspective: to look "from general world-history ... towards the history of the covenant, from its first promise to its final fulfilment"[355]. From this perspective, world-history appears under the rule of the descending God as judge and warrior against human sin, as the preparation of the consummation of the covenant as its final judgement. Guided by Jesus Christ's critical though instructive direction, we have to differentiate between our possibilities to serve Him in our genuine freedom and the "excluded ... possibilities"[356] which originate "from the contradiction of man's being in Jesus Christ"[357].

To sum up: Barth's doctrinal understanding of God's providence according to the synoptic and the Pauline-Johannine perspectives leads directly to ethics. As world-history bears the signs of both God's spiritual guidance and His fight against human sin and evil, it is

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[351] III/3, 325.
[352] III/3, 207.
[353] Ibid.
[354] III/3, 208.
[355] Ibid.
[356] IV/3, 405.
[357] IV/3, 411.

the task of the church as a whole and of each Christian to interpret the present situation by critically distinguishing between the two. The practical ethical imperative consists then in following the direction of Jesus Christ's self-proclamation in the power of His Spirit and in turning away from these kind of actions and perceptions that appear in the light of the covenant-history and of the consummated reality of the covenant between God and His redeemed creature in Christ as standing under the divine judgement.

Incarnation and reconciliation

The final consummation of the covenant in Jesus Christ appears from the Pauline-Johannine perspective as a particular, although not contingent, event as it proves itself as the "arch-phenomenon of God's positive will in His relation to man"[358]. Incarnation and reconciliation therefore appear not merely as the final act of God's fight against sin and nothingness, but state that God became a human person "positively in order to give concrete reality, effectiveness to the promise: "I will be your God!" and the command "You shall be my people!""[359]. "Was in Jesus Christus, in ... der in ihm vollbrachten Versöhnung in der Zeit geschieht, ist also nicht nur eine Reaktion gegen die menschliche Sünde, sondern ... dies, daß Gott dieses sein Wort, wie es von Anfang an lautete, hält und *erfüllt*"[360]. As Jesus Christ is God's first Word, and "as the covenant is in Him ... eternally founded", the "covenant between God and humankind ... is the final thing to which we may, can and shall hold on"[361]. "Die *rechte* Unterscheidung der Versöhnung von allem bloß zufälligen Geschehen, die *rechte* Anerkennung ihrer Gültigkeit und Tragweite ... hängt an der Einsicht: wir haben es in Jesus Christus wirklich mit dem *ersten ewigen Wort* Gottes am Anfang aller Dinge zu tun"[362].

Jesus Christ comes into the world and confronts human beings as the new Adam – but He does so precisely because He has already been the first Adam: "Daß Jesus Christus in Wahrheit der Erste ... ist – das macht die Neuheit aus, in der er innerhalb der Geschöpfwelt

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[358] IV/1, 49.
[359] Ibid.
[360] Ibid.
[361] IV/1, 51.
[362] IV/1, 52.

allem ihm Vorangehenden gegenübertritt“[363]. Creation's exaltation into the covenant with God through its confrontation with ... the kingly man is a truly new and disruptive event: for Jesus Christ consummates in a particular historical situation the meaning of the eternal will of God as the man for God who has been both creator and first creature. He executes our created freedom and calls us unmistakably to follow Him and thereby be what we truly are: His brethren. ”[R]econciliation as such“ is therefore simultaneously ”a movement from below to above, the movement of the reconciled human person *to God*“[364].

To sum up: Jesus Christ encounters us in the execution of proper human freedom. He thereby liberates us for following Him into His truly human freedom for God and the other. Reconciliation is therefore, if seen from the Pauline-Johannine perspective, an execution of truly human freedom in response to God's gracious descent into the flesh. In this event, reconciliation establishes the possibility and necessity of ethics as the structured way of reflection on the proper way of existence of reconciled humanity towards God.

Conclusion

In the previous chapter, I argued that Barth has identified two counter-posed perspectives of the history of Jesus Christ within the New Testament: the synoptic perspective, which perceives the descended God in Christ, and the Pauline-Johannine perspective, which claims that the historical Jesus was, as the bodily risen crucified, in the beginning with God.

I have then intended to show that Barth has used these two perspectives in order to give a detailed and differentiated account of covenant-history. I argued that the two counter-posed perspectives gave Barth the possibility to include different traditional interpretations of each Christian doctrine by perceiving each doctrine as a moment of the covenant-history and the different denominational interpretations according to the two counter-posed perspectives.

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[363] IV/1, 53.
[364] IV/2, 4.

This enormous work of translation and differentiated interpretation of a great deal of the wealth of Christian tradition led to a detailed account of God's covenant-history. Yet among all the detailed discussions, two main line became visible: Barth perceives God's covenant-history with humankind firstly, and according to the synoptic perspective, as *Kampfgeschichte*, as a chronological account of God's successive overcoming of nothingness and human sin by His gracious descent into His creation: by Him becoming worldly and finite; by taking upon Himself fallen humanity, and by dying on the cross, under God's judgement and in alienation from God. God's victory over sin and nothingness in Jesus Christ's resurrection is therefore a historical event that reveals the reality and utter seriousness of the threat of nothingness and human sin, the total dependence of God's creation on God's grace, and the qualitative difference between created and eternal life in the resurrected Christ.

Moreover, Barth also perceives the present time between Jesus Christ's resurrection and His final return as the universal revelation of His perfect victory, as *Kampfgeschichte*: as the ongoing fight of Jesus Christ against the final shadows of nothingness and sin, which Barth perceives in humankind's lazy rejection of and arrogant rebellion against the reality of the consummated covenant by creating different views of reality, whose central focus and limit is not Jesus Christ but the individual. Yet the reason for this ongoing *Kampfgeschichte* lies for Barth in God's grace: it is each person's opportunity for proving her redemption by freely affirming and repeating God's consummation of the covenant in Jesus Christ and for testifying to this reality in her existence within the world.

Yet from the Pauline-Johannine perspective, human freedom, which we are called to execute in the present situation, appears not only as objective reality, established by God's consummation of the covenant, but also as our eschatological subjective reality, which we yet have to actualise and prove in our temporal lives. From the Pauline-Johannine perspective, human freedom for God and fellow human beings represents, as the reality of the covenant, *ultimate* reality. For the Pauline-Johannine perspective perceives the bodily risen crucified in His being in the beginning with God – and therefore the reality established by His death and resurrection as the ultimate reality.

The history of God with humankind appears from this perspective not as *Kampfgeschichte* but as *Offenbarungsgeschichte*: as the history of the revelation of this ultimate

reality, that is, of the Lordship and self-proclamation of Jesus Christ as victor and of His call to human beings to follow Him and to execute their proper human freedom by joining Him in His prophetic and kingly office. The kingly office consists, as we have seen in the first chapter, in our exaltation into prayer and into our corresponding existence, while the prophetic office involves witnessing to the ultimate covenant reality as the ultimate meaning of the present situation.

Each task is inherently related with the other. Each requires reflecting on the present situation of the world, the church, and the individual along the lines of both perspectives, thus searching for signs of God's contradicting judgement but also for signs of His victory and of free human responses to this victory.[365] This differentiating reflection must take place in prayer, as prayer is the actualisation of human freedom for God and fellow human beings in hopeful anticipation of Jesus Christ's universal self-revelation, in faithful remembrance of His covenant-history as testified by Scripture, and in loving witness to the ultimate reality of the covenant, consummated once and for all in Jesus Christ's death and resurrection, yet still hidden by our lordless world-views and yet to be universally revealed in Jesus Christ's final return.

So far, we could see how Barth combines exegesis and systematic interpretation of the Christian tradition in order to create a differentiated and detailed narrative theology of the covenant. It thereby emerged that this narrative theology makes a twofold ethical claim: firstly, it depicts the present situation as the time in which the church and each of her members is called to prove their freedom for God and fellow human beings, and equally it shows that the freedom thus executed is the constituent of ultimate human reality and thus challenges our present existence.

Moreover, the detailed narrative of the covenant-history according to the two apostolic perspectives reveals not only the necessity and possibility of ethics as a reflection on the proper way of proving and executing one's freedom for God and the other, but also provides a structural framework for ethical reasoning, in so far as it is incorporated into prayer. The explication of such a prayerful interpretation of our present situation according to the reality of the covenant, perceived within the framework of the two antithetical biblical perspectives on this covenant-reality, is therefore the content of the next chapter.

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[365] Karl Rahner describes this responsibility as the principle task of pastoral theology. Cf. Rahner, 1971, 233-256, esp. 237.

Chapter III
Barth's understanding of human moral agency in correspondence to the history of Jesus Christ according to the twofold apostolic witness

The outline, method and goal of the argument

Barth perceives human existence and moral agency in relation to the history of Jesus Christ: in relation to God's descent from the synoptic perspective and in relation to the ascent of man from the Pauline-Johannine perspective. Hence, he perceives our existence as moral agents, on the one hand, in relation to God's descent into His creation in order to be with and for us as our Lord, and in relation to God's descent into our fallen situation in order to judge and thereby justify and sanctify us, that is, in order to exalt us into the covenant, which He has consummated once and for all in His death and resurrection as the man Jesus of Nazareth. And finally, Barth perceives our existence as moral agents in relation to God's descent into the sham-reality of our misery in order to call us into recognition of His final victory and awaken us to exist as its witness in the hopeful expectation of its final universal revelation. Consequently, we have to understand ourselves as God's obedient creatures, as reconciled sinners, and as God's children under God's promise.

Yet on the other hand, Barth perceives our existence as moral agents in relation to our exaltation into the covenant, consummated by Jesus Christ once and for all.[366] Thus, he understands us to be God's creature, a reconciled sinner, and a redeemed child in so far as we are originating from Jesus Christ, who is, *as* the reconciler, the Word through which God created the world, and in so far as we are destined for Jesus Christ, who is, *as* the reconciler, the final redeemer of the whole world. The command of God then calls us first and foremost into recognition of our being from and towards Jesus Christ and into witnessing to the world that Jesus Christ is the origin and telos of all things. If we exist mindful of the fact that we come from Jesus Christ and are heading towards Him, guided and directed by Him, and perceive Him accordingly as the origin and telos of all other persons, things and events, our

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[366] I agree here therefore with Seung-Chul Tae's observations that man's existence has for Barth its reality within the life-work of Jesus Christ "das in der Mitte der Zeit geschah" (Seung-Chul, 1987, 111), but that this work as "das schon erreichte Ziel" of the covenant-history, i.e. Jesus Christ in His particular character and man's reality in him, stands "am Anfang der sich erst zu diesem Ziel hin entwickelnden Geschichte" (205).

created temporality is restored. This restoration of our temporal existence is, as we have seen in chapter I, primarily enacted in prayer.

Existing in prayer, in our genuine temporality, we disclose, according to Barth, the meaning of our own existence and our current situation as our *vocation*, as our place within God's salvation history, under his graceful judgement, in the proper relation to our neighbour, the church as Christ's body, and the cosmos. Disclosing our particular situation does not, however, mean that we disclose God's particular command; but that we will know – when encountered and enlightened by it - how to bear witness to it as we disclose the one present possibility to serve God according to his command. Our disclosed situation - grounded in Jesus Christ as its origin, fulfilment and telos - will appear as the most suitable place for our commanded action. Or we might even say that the particular command of Jesus Christ will prove itself to be the most natural way of action: a way of correspondence to the uttermost reality of our own existence and the world. Our obedience will therefore have the character of a decision in the freedom of our own conscience.

According to Barth, we exist in our proper temporality once we perceive our mortality as a sign of our utter self-responsibility before Jesus Christ as our final judge. Existing in this way, we disclose the voice of our conscience as a witness of Jesus Christ's command. This disclosure of our own conscience takes place as we follow Jesus Christ in His human acts (His baptism with water, His invocation of His Father in the words of the Lord's Prayer, and His celebration of the Last Supper), and as we disclose the other, as well as the voices of history *intra* and *extra muros ecclesiae*, as witnesses of Jesus Christ's command in prayerful remembrance of Jesus Christ.

I intend to demonstrate the structural and material importance of Barth's Christology for his anthropology and ethics by showing how Barth has restructured the material of his Münster ethics lectures in his KD. With respect to the command of God the creator (III/4) and the (unfinished) command of God the reconciler (CL), I will show how Barth's reworking of his lectures, in much closer relation to the two apostolic perspectives of the history of Jesus Christ, allowed him to legitimate his ethical claims in more christological depth, and led him to some slight, but nevertheless notable and important material changes. This analysis of the way in which Barth restructured the material of the command of God the creator in his KD allows us to gain an idea of how Barth might have intended to conclude his

particular ethics on reconciliation and redemption in his KD. In accordance to the results of this analysis, I will conduct a christological re-reading and re-working of the final two chapters of his Münster lectures.[367]

Part I

An analysis of the way in which Barth restructured his Münster lectures in his KD

General orientation

So far, I have intended to show how Barth tried to perceive the reality of Jesus Christ as a story that determines all ages in relation to the two mutually respective though counter posed biblical perspectives, that is, the synoptic and the Pauline-Johannine testimonies. According to Barth, the Synoptics perceived Jesus Christ as the sovereign God who, in the *Seinsweise* of the Son, descended into His fallen creation in order to be (according to His free self-election) God for humankind as the obedient, yet precisely as such free, human person for God in our place. Following this particular perspective, Barth's Christology gains its typical historical-linear, teleological-eschatological characteristics and directedness. Thus, along this line of thought, Barth describes God's inner-Trinitarian life, His eternal election of grace, creation, reconciliation and the still outstanding final redemption as a chronological process, grounded in and gaining its creative and determining power from God's pre-temporal sovereign free decision and leading toward its future final fulfilment.

The main characteristic of this perspective lies therein, that the relation between humankind and God is seen differently from the *supra* and *post lapsum* states. Prior to the fall, human beings are perceived as being created open to and appropriate for God and His covenant, however after the fall, they are perceived firstly as *peccatores* and then, after the Christ event, as reconciled, though not yet redeemed, sinners. From this perspective, Barth

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[367] This task has already been undertaken by Nigel Biggar, who intended to use the Münster lectures "partly to help in conjecturing the outline of the third part of 'special' ethics in the Dogmatics ..., and partly to draw out the significance of the Dogmatics arrangement of 'special' ethics by comparing and contrasting it with an earlier version" (Biggar, 1993, 3). I hope to add to his interesting work by focussing on the structural importance, which Barth's Christology, according to the twofold biblical witness, has gained for his special ethics.

perceives the historical descent of God into His fallen creation as *Kampfgeschichte*: first as God's fight against human beings' sinful arrogance within the *concursus* of His providence, which culminated in His final judgement over humankind on the cross, and thereafter as His continuous battle against the last shadows of nothingness in the form of human sin as laziness and lies. Creation is therefore seen, from this angle, as the presupposition of the consummation of the covenant, but not as itself already determined by it. Respectively, reconciliation and our corresponding existence as reconciled sinners are seen as a new state beyond creation, yet still in need of God's final redemptive act.

This characteristic of Barth's explication of the relation between the different divine works *ad extra* has been most often noted by scholarship. Barth himself in his Münster ethics lectures chose to approach the ethical relation between the commanding triune God and human beings above all according to this particular perspective. Barth therefore understands ethics as a witness of the event in which God firstly prepares us for His obedient service as His covenant partner, secondly corrects and guides our sinful ways, and thirdly calls us to walk freely and joyfully towards Him as His children, in the spiritual knowledge of His will and ways. Starting with the perception of human existence according to God's descent means that Barth wants to show that, like our sheer being, also our good actions have their sole source in God's superior grace. Barth therefore focuses, in each of his three main ethical considerations, on a particular moment and divine act within God's free and superior creating, reconciling, and redeeming descent as the sole presupposition of our corresponding obedience.

However, it must be held in mind that the synoptic perspective is, according to Barth's own judgement, insufficient to perceive the *entire* reality in all its particular characteristics of Jesus Christ's history; it is in need of being seen in its necessary relation to the Pauline-Johannine perspective. The latter states, as we have seen above, that the telos of the divine descent is, in its particular historical character, as a work of the eternal God *primordial*: it creates, expands, and determines time as a process from Jesus Christ, who is, as the risen crucified, the Word through and for which everything has been created, and in which humankind has been exalted into the union with God. The exalted man Jesus Christ is therefore, *as* the ultimate Word of God, spoken in the middle of time, God's first and final

Word about Himself and His relation to His creation, and therefore about every single human being.

Because Barth, in his Münster lectures, does not effectively link his synoptic perception of the relation between the commanding triune God and humankind with the Pauline-Johannine proposition that our being in Jesus Christ as God's redeemed children must be as the final Word about this relation its presupposition, he tends to distinguish rather too sharply between the commands of God the creator, reconciler, and redeemer. The consequence is that his corresponding particular ethical considerations seem to lack - especially with respect to the command of God the creator - a thoroughly christological legitimisation, and therefore coherence; they even tend to contradict each other at some points.[368]

This means, more concretely, that Barth perceives human moral agency firstly according to the command of *God the creator* from a pre-fall and pre-covenant, that is, pre-christological perspective, and with a teleological outlook towards the covenant and its universal revelation. This means that the command of God the creator reveals our place in relation to God's creation and providence, to the natural order, yet not in relation to the order of divine grace and the factual human confusion of this created order. Secondly, Barth perceives human moral agency according to the command of *God the reconciler* as the object of God's superior battle-history, of His judgement. It discloses our contradiction of God's natural order but – at least sometimes - abstracts from our existence as reconciled and, in Jesus Christ already redeemed, children of God. And finally, Barth perceives human moral agency according to the command of *God the redeemer* in its eschatological reality as the child of God in Jesus Christ.

It seems astonishing that especially the section on the command of God the creator abstracts from the whole reality of the human person in correspondence to the history of Jesus Christ according to the two differentiated though mutually related apostolic witnesses, for the lectures are introduced by the consideration that the three perspectives on the human person as God's creature, reconciled sinner, and redeemed child focus on her

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[368] Bigger also observed that "[a]lthough the Münster lectures share the same trinitarian structure [as the KD], they do not accord material primacy to the command of the Reconciler and they present the three aspects of special ethics in a less co-inherent fashion" (Biggar, 1993, 62).

undividable reality in Jesus Christ, "whereby Jesus Christ ... is from the dominant centre of the thought of reconciliation also the presupposition and epitome of the thoughts of creation and redemption"[369]. The first word about our existence must therefore be our existence in Jesus Christ as God's elected, reconciled, and redeemed children: "Bevor ich das Verkehrte erwählte, *supra lapsum*, war ich in Christus erwählt"[370], "war durch Christus vollkommen für mich genug getan"[371].

Already in his lectures, Barth therefore understands the first and most important human ethical task to be: "to reckon with grace", and this means "praying"[372]. The presupposition of the eternal, all history determining character of the consummation of the covenant between God and humankind in Jesus Christ, that is, that thinking about God and humankind must start with the telos of God's descent according to the Pauline-Johannine perspective, gains practical relevance in Barth's KD. Here Barth also starts with a synoptic perception of the relation between God and humankind in its graciously free and historical character; his christological ethical descriptions of the encounter between God's Word and humankind follow the history of God with humankind in Jesus Christ chronologically. He thus perceives God – as in his Münster lectures - *firstly* as creator, *then* as reconciler and *finally* as redeemer, and therefore perceives human beings firstly as God's creatures, then as reconciled sinners, and finally as God's redeemed children.

This time, however, Barth examines the relation between God and humankind under the Pauline-Johannine presupposition that Jesus Christ is, as the exalted man in his reconciling work on Golgotha, God's *ultimate* and therefore God's *first* Word, through which the world was created. Consequently, Barth's christological consideration "has to see them always and everywhere together: the first article from the second and toward the third, the second as the presupposition of the first and third, the third as the final word, which must be said about the second, and with that also about the first"[373]. "Daß Gott der Herr des Gnadenbundes ist, das ist das sachlich Erste, durch das auch sein Sein und Tun und so auch sein Reden und Gebieten als Schöpfer und Erlöser bestimmt und geprägt ist. Und daß der Mensch von ihm als dem Herrn des Gnadenbundes her und zu ihm hin ist, das kennzeichnet

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[369] E, 88.
[370] E, 167.
[371] Ibid.
[372] E, 174.
[373] CL, 10.

(positiv oder negativ) auch sein Sein und Handeln als Gottes Geschöpf und künftiger Erbe: beides nicht umgekehrt"[374].

Hence, the ethical material of the KD is circularly structured: the command of God the creator and of God the reconciler start each with the focus on the human person's eternal reality in Jesus Christ as God's child according to the perfect character of Jesus Christ's reconciling work. In KD III/4, each human being is consequently, as God's creature, firstly called to rest in eternal peace with God on the Sabbath, and to exist as His child in the invocation of the Father in the *Nachfolge* of Jesus Christ as an active witness of His Lord's Prayer, participating thereby in Jesus Christ's kingly office. Similarly, the ethics of reconciliation[375] start with the command to invoke God as our Father according to the Lord's Prayer, focussing thereby on our being called as God's children into the prophetic and priestly office of Jesus Christ as witnesses of His saving and revealing work. However, Barth's Pauline-Johannine perspective does not ignore the characteristics of human beings disclosed by the synoptic perspective: their sinful existence under Jesus Christ's *Kampfgeschichte* in need, and in hopeful expectation of, His final redemption. Our existence as reconciled, though not yet redeemed, sinners must be taken utterly seriously – but within the limits of God's final and therefore prior Yes.

Each of Barth's special ethics, the ethics of God the creator as well as the ethics of God the reconciler, start with our existence under God's Yes, and perceive only from this starting point our wilful negation of our – ultimate and thus primordial - reality as God's children in Jesus Christ. This order of perception of sin, as the free revolt of the children of God against God, causes Barth to take sin not at all easily, but, on the contrary, as something for which we are utterly responsible, and which threatens not only our creaturely finite but also our eternal life.[376] However, because sin is effectively limited, even negated and overcome by Jesus Christ's victory in His death and resurrection, Barth concludes each

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[374] CL, 13.
[375] CL.
[376] Nigel Biggar – and others like Konrad Stock - criticise that Barth's anthropology leaves man no freedom to repulse God. It is indeed the case that man's turning away from God is seen by Barth as limited by Jesus Christ's salvation work. But within these limits, Barth provides a way to think of man's freedom to turn away from God by just grounding this freedom in man's genuine freedom for God. He thereby prevents any dualism between God and a demonic sinfulness of man, without falling short of appreciating the negative aspect of human freedom, although he prefers to call this negative aspect of human freedom our 'loss of our proper freedom for God'. The nullity this self-responsible revolt causes is – although not absolute by divine standards - utterly serious and destructive for man in his temporal limits, and does not necessarily exclude the afterlife.

ethical consideration with the reminder that human beings exist as reconciled sinners from Jesus Christ's salvation work towards its perfect and universal revelation, and that they are therefore called to perceive the nullity of their sinful being and to exist in *conversion*: in hope, away from their sinful existence, which is already overcome in Jesus Christ, towards their true existence in Jesus Christ, towards their freedom as children of God.

Part II

An analysis of Barth's reconstruction of the commandment of God the creator

It appears obvious to me that Barth's basic Christological convictions about the interrelation between the synoptic and the Pauline-Johannine perspective - and its anthropological consequences - were completely formed at the time he lectured on the command of God the creator in 1928, as my above analysis of his exegetical commentaries and lectures on Romans (1922), John (1925/26), I. Corinthians (1926), and Philippians (1928) should have shown. Their factual practical ignorance can only be explained by historical speculations about Barth's reliance on rather conventionally structured ethics due to lack of time or creativity. The fact is nevertheless that Barth finally works out practically in his KD what he already knew theoretically at the time of his Münster lectures: "Es ist ... nicht wohlgetan, zwischen dem Gebot des Schöpfers und dem Gebot Christi einen Gegensatz zu konstruieren. Wir haben es gerade in Christus mit dem Schöpfer und im Schöpfer mit Christus zu tun. Was uns der Schöpfer wirklich gebietet, das ist nicht „natürliches", sondern christliches Gebot, und was wirklich christliches Gebot ist, das ist auch Schöpfungsordnung"[377].

KD III/4 therefore begins in contrast to his Münster lectures (which start with the command of man's life) with a *Christologically* interpreted section on the commandment of the Sabbath.[378] For Barth, the latter draws its imperative force from its revelation of man's eternal being under God's gracious 'Yes' according to the all-encompassing character of Jesus Christ's work of reconciliation: "Es sagt ihm, daß er dem göttlichen als allein souveränen,

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[377] E, 195.
[378] III/4, 51.

wirksamen und heilsamen Ja entgegengehen, weil eben von ihm immer schon herkommen darf"[379]. It calls us to prove our primordial existence in Jesus Christ as God's covenant partners and children within our temporal existence: by hearing and understanding God's Word within the congregation[380], by confessing our belonging to Jesus Christ and His earthly body[381] in our free act of baptism, but – above all - by claiming our right to be God's children in Jesus Christ in our prayer for the world.[382]

In prayer, we participate as Jesus Christ's brothers and sisters in His "kingly office"[383] "in free, cordial, spontaneous obedience"[384] by witnessing, in our human acts, to God's reception of our prayer. This possibility of free human existence as moral agents rests on the fact that in Jesus Christ humankind is – according to the Pauline-Johannine witness - "from eternity with God, is God from eternity joined with humankind"[385]. Consequently, we are called to be certain about God's reception of our prayer, if we pray together with Jesus Christ's own invocation of His Father and in His name.[386]

We can see how Barth begins his explication of our responsible existence before our creator by following "the specific Johannine thought about prayer "in Jesus name""[387]. Since Barth perceives human beings in KD III/4 as God's obedient creatures, existing first and foremost as God's children in Jesus Christ, he cannot start with the self-enclosed existence of the individual, but has to speak first of all of our being for God in Jesus Christ. However, subsequently Barth also takes the synoptic witness into account: Jesus Christ descended into the misery of humankind in order to be there with and for us, to die and to rise for our salvation. If each human being has his or her true being in Jesus Christ, if he or she exists in correspondence to Him, it must be said that because Jesus Christ's humanity is essentially being-with and -for, each person's creaturely life must be perceived necessarily as a life of "freedom in communion": "*Indem Gott der Schöpfer den Menschen zu sich ruft, wendet er ihn auch seinem Mitmenschen zu. Gottes Gebot sagt im Besonderen, daß der Mensch in der Begegnung von Mann und Frau, in*

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[379] III/4, 58.
[380] III/4, 90f.
[381] III/4, 82.
[382] III/4, 95.
[383] III/4, 120.
[384] III/4, 125.
[385] III/4, 119.
[386] Ibid.
[387] Ibid.

der Beziehung zwischen Eltern und Kindern, auf dem Wege von den Nahen zu den Fernen den Andern mit sich selbst und mit sich selbst auch den Anderen bejahen, in Ehren halten und erfreuen darf"[388].

These three aspects of our created being-with were in Barth's lectures originally located in the section on the divine vocation (*Beruf*). While their material content stays largely identical in KD III/4, it is important to note that the way in which Barth perceives human beings as God's creature due to their primordial being in Jesus Christ demands a greater priority of human existence in communion. A person must *not* be seen first and foremost in and for herself, even in her singularity before God, but in her being before *God in communion with her neighbour*. Her neighbour is thereby disclosed by the command of God the creator as the member of the opposite sex, as her parent or child, and as those whom she encounters on her way from her home into the wider world.

That for Barth being-with gained a higher, because christologically grounded, priority, becomes especially obvious if we consider that Barth places each person's sexual being-with, and her being the child of her parents, in KD III/4 not solely in the rank of a *vocation*, but in the rank of a "permanent order (*ordines*) of His creation"[389]. This does not mean that being-with doesn't define each person's vocation, the place of her call into responsibility over against God's command.[390] It means, in contrast, that while the particular characteristics of each person's vocation must be always disclosed anew in response to God's call, her sexual being-with and her being the child of her parents (and in some cases: the parent of her child) are the unchangeable and primarily obligating characteristics of her vocation - for they correspond to her reality in Jesus Christ as God's child and *imago Dei*.

I have shown above that Jesus Christ is under the presupposition of the Pauline-Johannine perspective - as the Son of the Father - eternally the human person for God in unity with His elected people, His church. This means that primarily He is eternally the true *imago Dei*. Elected in Jesus Christ, human beings thus have their true existence in correspondence to Him in so far as they exist as the partner of their sexual opposite as God's *imago*. And by existing as children of their parents, they correspond to and manifest the relation between the Son and the Father and the Father and his adopted children. The

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[388] III/4, 127.
[389] III/4, 341.
[390] III/4, 687.

created order in which they exist has thus its eternal reality and legitimacy in the order of grace.

The material of the KD differs from Barth's Münster lectures in the following aspects: first, the discussion of our sexual co-existence differs from the lectures with respect to the question of divorce. Our true existence consists in witnessing to Jesus Christ as the eternal revealer of His perfect consummation of the covenant. An essential act of our testimony consists therefore in our free following of Jesus Christ's personal call into the human covenant with the partner appointed by Jesus Christ. Barth thus identifies the inner ground of marriage in KD III/4 as Jesus Christ's personal free call. This means that because we are called to exist in obedience to His call, a marriage which stands under His *Berufung* must not be divorced.

However, it is possible that not every couple is called by Jesus Christ into their covenant.[391] This means "that just the recognition of faith could be indeed the recognition of the divine judgement over this and that marriage"[392]. In such a case, the marriage could - but must not - be terminated. If the couple does consider divorce, it must do so very responsibly, after earnest praying and looking for signs of God's promise. This decision, that a divorce can be commanded by Jesus Christ, and be therefore a good deed, differs from Barth's judgement in his lectures. There he perceived marriage as a created order, which is binding even if Jesus Christ's personal call is lacking. However, Barth made there also the claim that a divorce might be commanded, albeit solely under the order of grace.

We can therefore see that the way in which Barth has restructured his ethical considerations demanded a different conclusion, for he perceives human beings as God's creation not solely from a pre-fall, but in an inclusive perspective. Consequently, he deals, in his discussions of the particular commands of God, with the fact that human beings exist in contradiction to the created order, which consists in God's ordering will. Moreover, if God's ordering will is the will consummated once and for all in Jesus Christ, it is impossible to perceive a tension between the created order and the order of grace.

However, because the order of grace is the internal foundation of the created order, priority must be given to Jesus Christ's personal and actual call. If a person elects a partner in disobedience to Jesus Christ's call, she consequently contradicts the created order: her

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[391] III/4, 233.
[392] III/4, 236.

marriage is therefore not binding, albeit she is free to pray God trustfully to forgive her and to justify and to sanctify her marriage. However, God might receive her prayer by way of disclosing to her His judgement over her marriage as the product of her sinful confusion and choosing to justify and sanctify her by calling her out of this place into a new situation, in which she can serve Him and the other, not least her former partner, in a better way.

The final criterion of a commanded divorce is, however, that it happens as a *borderline case* - which I think means: a *rare eschatological event*. The decision for a divorce must be a decision in the freedom of the child of God in its direct confrontation with Jesus Christ as its final redeemer: an obedient following of His call that loosens all worldly covenants, addressing solely its eschatological existence in Jesus Christ. Knowing that, in Jesus Christ, all are perfectly united, the individual is, in particular circumstances, freed to break with his temporal, particular, limited relationships in order to exist as a witness of the perfect communion of all in Jesus Christ.

Second, Barth's consideration of the *relation between children and parents* in KD III/4 differs in a similar way from the corresponding lecture material in two points: in KD III/4, Barth perceives the relation between parents and their children also from the Pauline-Johannine perspective. Accordingly, Jesus Christ appears as creator and Lord of His creation in His character as the *risen crucified*. This means that the relation of any human being to Him as the risen *crucified* must include the aspect of their *sin*, whereby the latter is bracketed by their *reconciled and redeemed character* according to His eternal existence as the *risen* crucified. Children are consequently called to obey and honour their parents in their function of representing both the divine correcting judgement *and* the divine redemption as their educators[393]: perceiving God in his free self-humiliation in Jesus Christ, in his being-judged in our place, the child should become aware of its need for correcting judgement and thus acknowledge the necessity of its obedience to its parents, trusting and expecting that it will actualise its proper freedom and self-responsibility within and through its obedience.

The commanded obedience must thereby be a free act towards its *sinful*, but as such *in Jesus Christ* already *redeemed*, parents: perceiving itself in solidarity with its parents under God's justifying and sanctifying judgement, the child should find itself called to exist as a witness of God's patience in relation to its parents, trusting that their true nature as God's

[393] III/4, 273; 286.

redeemed children will eventually shine through, and honouring this true nature in faith even if hidden from the eye. Parents are consequently called to perceive their child "from God's perspective"[394] As the sinner loved by Him, but first and foremost as His free and responsible child. They are thus called to bring up their children as self-responsible humans by always appealing, in their educating acts that contradict the child's self of the Old Adam, to the free respect and responsibility of their young children.

Yet this created order between parents and their child is, for Barth, limited and governed by its internal foundation, the lordship of the living Jesus Christ as humankind's reconciler and redeemer: "Wie aber, wenn eben er selbst ... hier dazwischen träte?"[395] "Wiederum kann aber Gehorsam gegen Jesus Christus für bestimmte Menschen in bestimmter Situation auch das bedeuten, daß der in ihm geschehene Abschluß aller menschlichen Geschichte ... gebieterische Bedeutung bekommt"[396]. If we encounter "the Lord Himself"[397], who is our creator as our *reconciler and redeemer*, we are freed, in Barth's eyes, to witness to the coming of God's Kingdom in a direct way - even if God's concrete command leads us into a conflict with our parents or children: "Das Gebot ... besagt ..., daß die Konflikte, die durch besondere Berufung zu unmittelbarem Zeugnis von Gottes ewigem Reich auch zwischen Kindern und Eltern entstehen können ... unter keinem Vorwand vermieden werden dürfen, sondern unter Schmerzen aber in Ehren ausgetragen werden müssen"[398].

Third, Barth's consideration of *each person's relation to the other on her way from her inherited social, cultural, national and historical home into the wider world* is particularly interesting for both its continuity with and differentiation from his lectures. With respect to the continuity, it is to say that Barth perceives in KD III/4 God's command to exist on the way from one's acknowledged background into the wider world as a character of one's *vocation.* Each person's commanded way *from* her home into the wider world, obediently following God on His way into the far country and expecting His final universal revelation of His reconciliation of humankind with Him and therefore among each other, is a necessary characteristic of the place of her responsibility for God's call. In his lectures, Barth was

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[394] III/4, 312.
[395] III/4, 290.
[396] III/4, 292.
[397] Ibid.
[398] III/4, 296.

interested in pointing out that once we recognise our coming from our creator and Lord, we have to acknowledge and be faithful to our national and cultural heritage as the proper starting point for our call into the service of God and fellow human beings. Yet KD III/4 goes beyond the lectures in so far as Barth again focuses on the fact that our creator and maintainer is the living risen crucified, Jesus Christ.

Barth therefore includes firstly the perspective of our fallen existence under the judgement of God the reconciler. This has the consequence that Barth perceives our faithfulness to our particular origin as standing under the crisis of Jesus Christ's call. Subsequently it must be said that we have to live in accordance with, and affirm, our origin to the extent in which we perceive it in correspondence to Jesus Christ's actual call, that is, as a granted presupposition of the particular service into which we find ourselves called now; yet if particular characteristics of our historical place appear, in the light of the actual command, as a hindrance to our ministry, to our freedom for God, and thus as the shadows of our sin under God's wrath, we are called to confront them critically. Hence, we have to be "positively critical"[399] regarding our national heritage.

Yet Barth also includes the perspective on our existence in Jesus Christ as our redeemer. This perspective legitimates as well as limits our call into faithfulness to our national heritage: it legitimates it because we have received our particular limited origin from the God who is, as our creator, also our reconciler and redeemer, who has appointed our origin intentionally as the adequate place for our service of the coming Kingdom as the universal revelation of the eternal reality of the brotherly communion of all perople in Jesus Christ.

Yet it also limits and challenges our faithfulnes to our national heritage for the following reason: "Nun ist die Geschichte seines Bundes mit dem Menschen, erfüllt und vollendet in dem einen Jesus Christus, die eine Mitte aller Geschichte, der Sinn und das Ziel auch aller Völkergeschichte. Wird nun sein Wort ... von einem Menschen vernommen, ... dann muß es auch so sein, daß es ihn zugleich ... auf jenes größere Volk ... verweist"[400]. Jesus Christ's particular command as our creator who is as such our reconciler and redeemer thus calls us into an existence in transgression, from our cultural-national identity towards the other in his or her different nationality and culture. From this eschatological perspective,

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[399] III/4, 329.
[400] III/4, 335.

Barth cannot sustain his early judgement that each person's nationality, and thus the existence of particular nations, is not only the beginning of each person's existence in her vocation in openness for Jesus Christ's call, but also a permanent created order. In KD III/4, he perceives them solely as a "direction (ordination) of God's providence"[401], which is limited by the coming of the one Kingdom, by Jesus Christ's universal revelation of the unquestionably unity of all in Himself.

The third section of Barth's ethics of creation focuses in KD III/4 *on the command that each person has to honour and protect created life in her movement from God toward her fellow human beings.* If we compare this paragraph with Barth's lectures, we note a material similarity at most points, but also - and it is this I am concerned most with here – a different placement due to the different perspective in which it has been discussed; this results in some slight yet important material changes. By placing this command after an exposition of the command that each person has to exist from, with and toward God under His command in such a way that she discloses within this movement the other in his necessary relation to her, Barth stresses his conviction that we live not in and for ourselves, but have received our lives as a gift for our proper service to God and the other.

Barth already held this conviction in his Münster lectures and it serves in both works as the prime legitimisation for the command to honour and protect one's own life and that of the other: "Indem Gott der Schöpfer den Menschen zu sich ruft und seinem Mitmenschen zuwendet, heißt er ihn, das Leben - sein eigenes und das jedes anderen Menschen - als seine Leihgabe zu Ehren zu bringen und gegen alle Willkür zu schützen, um es in seinem Dienst und zur Zubereitung für seinen Dienst tätig ins Werk zu setzen"[402].

However, Barth's discussion of the command to honour and protect one's own and the other's life for the service of God in KD III/4 surpasses his lectures, since here Barth acknowledges more strongly the christological, especially the *eschatological* perspective of man's existence, that is, his corresponding comportment toward the One who is, as the reconciler of humankind with God, and thus as the guarantor of each person's eternal life in union with Him, our free origin and telos. Human existence is as such seen firstly according to the synoptic perspective of God's descent into the finitude and limitedness of a mortal

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[401] III/4, 341.
[402] III/4, 366.

human life. As such, this act reveals "the command of reverence for life"[403]. Moreover, as God descended into the flesh in order to be there for His fallen creature, in order to serve His neighbour, the synoptic perspective of God's history with humankind also reveals the characteristic in which human life must be honoured, namely as the presupposition and place of the ministry of God's fallen but already reconciled creation.

Yet this perspective alone is insufficient. We must also consider that Jesus Christ is, according to the Pauline-Johannine perspective, as the descended God the exalted man. His earthly, finite, temporal existence *is* His eternal life. In so far as human beings exist due to Jesus Christ's salvation work and understand themselves accordingly, they recognise their finite, temporal life under the promise of eternal life, which is already fulfilled in Jesus Christ.[404] Not surprisingly, Barth sees the relation of our temporal life to our eternal life in a twofold way: seen from the synoptic perspective, eternal life is the telos and limit of our finite life.

Yet this does by no means degrade the importance of our temporal life. It rather bestows on our temporal life an enormous importance and responsibility, for as Jesus Christ exists eternally as the *bodily* risen crucified, we will rise in Him as the ones we have become within our lifetime under God's providence. Seen from the Pauline-Johannine perspective, however, our finite life is *grounded* in our eternal existence in Christ; it is grounded in and thus leads towards the grace of God who is our creator as our reconciler and redeemer. This means that we have to lead our finite lives in responsibility for, and in hope of, our eternal life: we have to honour ours and any finite life – regardless of its fragility and sinfulness – just because of its "eschatological limit"[405], because it is limited by and has its grounding in our eternal life in Jesus Christ, as God's beloved children.

Barth also perceives these two reasons for our reference for life as the inner limit of this command: life must be honoured in and for its service to God and the other, within the limits of its eternal determination. It is now, in my eyes, this latter perspective on human responsibility for the eternal life of God's creature that causes Barth to employ *a more definite tone* with respect to each borderline commandment that a life must either *not* be terminated

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[403] III/4, 384.
[404] III/4, 383.
[405] III/4, 388.

or in particular circumstances be indeed terminated.[406] [407] Again I understand here Barth's term 'borderline' to denote not only an extraordinary event but foremost an event which happens under the command of God the creator who is our 'border' as our redeemer. While the considerations explicated above influence the way in which Barth discusses any particular case, which falls under this command, I restrict my analysis to one particular ethical question: the question of the ethical legitimacy of capital punishment. Here, Barth's ethical conclusions gain, in contrast to his lectures, a certainty that comes close to a change of mind due to the differentiated twofold christological perspective he employs.

In his lectures, Barth thought that any judgement about the legitimacy of capital punishment required our previous serious self-questioning if we were actually and *personally* called to consummate this judgement with our own hands. Any decision involving the limitation or even termination of another creature's life must be the decision of an *individual* - not of the anonymous 'Man' - who earnestly questions herself if she could justify herself as the hangman of this particular person before her own merciful judge.

Our personal accountability to God in ethical questions is also predominant in KD III/4: "Zu verantwortlichem Mitdenken und Mitreden in dieser Frage ist nur der befähigt, der weiß und sich dabei behaften läßt: in der Person dieses Anderen bin ich es selbst, der das Alles tut"[408]. Yet this criterion is seen here within the context of a more fully developed christological argument, which *categorically* rules out any institutionalised form of capital punishment. Because the final sacrifice for atonement has been already offered once and for all by Jesus Christ[409], human beings (which God's judgement reveals as lacking the wisdom, power and right to be themselves judges over being and nothingness) are prohibited from consummating final judgements and from expecting within the other - for whom Jesus Christ has also died and who thus has his true being in Him as God's loved and obedient child - "implacable evil"[410]. Instead, ethical judgement and penalty must offer, in

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[406] The inclusion of the Pauline-Johannine perspective on Jesus Christ as eternal prophet of His work of reconciliation leads thus to the already by Paul Lehmann observed fact that "in CD II/2 and III/4, the interrogative has given place to the indicative" (Lehmann, 1981, 10).

[407] Nigel Biggar criticises Barth for his "relativization of the value of life" (Biggar, 1993, 62). I cannot share this criticism for I think that the way in which Barth perceives the relation between eternal and finite life demands highest ethical responsibility and respect for human life.

[408] III/4, 502.

[409] III/4, 506.

[410] III/4, 504.

correspondence with the divine judgement of humankind in Jesus Christ, forgiveness and the opportunity for betterment[411]: the opportunity for living up to one's true reality in Christ.

Moreover, because God's justifying and sanctifying judgement was consummated in Jesus Christ for all humankind and thereby united them for their mutual support of their new life in conversion towards their true being, society must not surrender their responsibility for a criminal by terminating his existence.[412] Barth therefore concludes in KD III/4: "[V]om Evangelium ist nichts, gar nichts für diese Einrichtung, Alles gegen sie zu sagen"[413]. Capital punishment as an institution must therefore be "attacked" by the church.[414]

However, whilst the death penalty must not be institutionalised due to the clear command of the God who, according to the synoptic perspective, died for our sins and is, according to the Pauline-Johannine perspective, humankind's creator as the risen crucified, it is this very existence of the living Jesus Christ, which is the inner limit of this command: it could happen that Jesus Christ calls a particular person to witness His personal judgement over another concrete person. Firstly, this judgement must, in correspondence with Jesus Christ's death for the world, aim at the service and protection of the life of the nations and the entire world community. Secondly, this judgement must, in correspondence with the goal of Jesus Christ's obedient death, the exaltation of the finite life of all humankind into eternal union with God, aim at the prevention that the temporal life of the convicted gains a character, which could mean – if lifted into eternal preservation – solely eternal nothingness and hell.[415] For Barth, it might therefore have been the case that someone was called to sacrifice the life of Adolf Hitler in order to thus save his eternal peace and the practical freedom of the world-community for serving God and neighbour.[416]

To sum up: the analysis of the first three paragraphs of KD III/3 exposed that the command of God, who is our creator as our reconciler and redeemer in the all ages encompassing existence of the crucified and bodily risen Jesus Christ, calls us to exist from and towards His grace under His command, and thus to disclose the other in his necessary relation to ourselves as the member of the opposite sex, as our parent or child, or as the one

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[411] III/4, 507.
[412] III/4, 504.
[413] III/4, 510.
[414] Ibid.
[415] III/4, 511f.
[416] III/4, 514.

whom we meet on our commanded way from our home into the wider world in our *Nachfolge* of Jesus Christ.

The command further discloses our fellow human beings as those whose lives and individualities we have to honour, foster, and protect in so far as we perceive them as God's creatures, as our co-workers in the ministry of God in the *Nachfolge* of Jesus Christ, and, above all, as those whose lives are grounded in, and are limited by, their eternal life in Jesus Christ as God's children. Existing under this command, we start to see and think in a newly ordered way: we will perceive other people and ourselves according to the characteristics that they and we ourselves gain once they are recognised in correspondence witn the history of God as our creator, reconciler, and redeemer in Jesus Christ, according to the two biblical perspectives.

We can thus come to the conclusion that Barth's employment of the synoptic, but also of the Pauline-Johannine perspective, establishes christological coherence of the different commands. It further enables Barth to elaborate the claims of each command in such a differentiated manner so that his ethics gain a more definite and imperative tone, while simultaneously shifting focus to the actuality of Jesus Christ's call and our personal response.

The basic understanding of human ethical existence as a way of disclosing God's creation in accordance to its divine origin and telos, and therefore as the proper object of God's concrete command, is further developed by Barth in KD III/4 in his discussion of human finitude and of each person's vocation and call. In §56 of KD III/4, Barth reworks material, which has appeared in his lectures in the sections about each person's vocation and God's orders. Here, we can see again how the reconstruction of this material leads to a further development of its ethical content. The most obvious change is that Barth starts §56 with the final word of the corresponding section of his lectures, that is, with a discussion of the ethical imperative to reflect upon one's very own finitude and mortality: upon one's life as a "single chance"[417]: "[D]as Sterben ist das letzte uns gegebene Kriterium unseres Handelns ... . Verantwortlich handeln ... würde heißen, im Blick darauf handeln, daß der Augenblick,

[417] III/4, 653.

dem wir entgegengehen, unser letzter Augenblick sein, daß der Herr mit seinem richtenden Gebot jetzt eben uns zum letzten Mal und endgültig begegnen könnte"[418].

Being aware of our mortality means being aware of the fact that we are limited and called into responsibility by the God who is, according to the Pauline-Johannine witness, as the risen crucified our origin and telos. This self-reflection on our limited temporality gains in Barth's KD an important ethical function: our conscious temporal existence has become for Barth the commanded way of our *disclosure* of our place within God's salvation-history under His command in relation to the other, in the cosmos and in world-history. The need to introduce the paragraph on each person's vocation with the depiction of a commanded way of its responsible disclosure arose for Barth due to the holistic christological approach according to the two biblical perspectives, which he employs in his KD.

In his lectures, Barth perceived human beinmgs under the command of the creator - following solely the synoptic perspective on the divine works ad extra and thus neglecting its Pauline-Johannine counterpart - from a *pre-fall* perspective. He thus presupposed that our situation *is* the place which we occupy due to God's creation and providence and thus in and for itself the proper way of serving God and our neighbour according to God's particular call. While Barth by no means dismisses God's sovereign Lordship over His creation in his KD, he perceives our situation under the command of the God who is our creator as the risen *crucified*, that is, under the presupposition that God's Lordship over His creation already includes the quality of a concurring judgement. Furthermore, he presupposes along this line of thought that our *natural* knowledge of our particular existence before God in the world is the knowledge of *the reconciled and redeemed child in Jesus Christ*, who accepts its created place as the proper opportunity for responding to its call into the free ministerial *Nachfolge* of Jesus Christ.

Barth thus needed to remind his readers that while there is no doubt that their own personal-historical situation stands under the providence of Jesus Christ (who is the eternal victor over sin and nothingness) and is therefore the proper place to answer His call into His *Nachfolge*, yet even itself a "*clue* for God's command"[419], due to humankind's sinful rebellion

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[418] E, 352.
[419] E, 298.

against God, it cannot be perceived as such *directly*; each person "has to analyse"[420] her vocation in a positive-critical, that is, christological way: perceived from the Pauline-Johannine perspective of Jesus Christ's Lordship who is each person's creator as her reconciler and redeemer, her historical place will reveal such opportunities, which she must plainly affirm in obedience to God's call and command. However, because Jesus Christ's continuous *Kampfgeschichte*, as it appears from the synoptic perspective, discloses each person's vocation as pervaded by her laziness and lies, each person must relate to her vocation also negatively-critically.[421] "In irgendeinem Maß ... wird [sie] sich ... bestimmt immer positiv und negativ, [sie] wird sich also m.e.W. kritisch mit ihm auseinanderzusetzen haben"[422].

Such a critical differentiated perception of our particular present existence requires an understanding of ourselves as coming from and heading towards Jesus Christ as our origin and telos, who calls us to follow Him and to witness about Him to the world. We consequently find ourselves called to exist in correspondence to Jesus Christ's own existence according to the two antithetical, and therefore critically differentiating, apostolic perspectives. We must therefore firstly consider that the history of Jesus Christ has, according to the synoptic perspective, the character of a *Kampfgeschichte*: following the divine descent, which leads to the cross as the place of God's judgement over human sinfulness, Jesus Christ appears as the final limit of our existence, as the judge of our personal sin. We are therefore called into "concern"[423] about our death, which will be, as the final encounter with our Lord, our last judgement.

This thought is supposed to cause "serious terror"[424] and thus a sense of urgency in which we are called to respond to God's command in any decision we make. This sense of urgency is perpetuated once we consider that in our death, we will be confronted with Jesus Christ in a direct, personal and totally disclosed encounter: He will reveal the particular, individual character of our total existence and judge us accordingly. Consequently, we have to acknowledge the fact that we cannot hide behind the 'Man' in our confrontation with our

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[420] III/4, 715.
[421] III/4, 715.
[422] III/4, 716.
[423] III/2, 664.
[424] Ibid.

judge Jesus Christ, but have to be personally responsible for the totality of our existence in response to any single command of Jesus Christ.[425]

Moreover, we must consider that our finitude is not neglected by the promise of eternal life but that we are, in our limited temporal lives, responsible for the concrete character of our eternal life. Observing ourselves in correspondence with Jesus Christ who is the eternal Lord of time as the risen crucified, as the revealer of His historical, limited character, we must acknowledge that our own temporal life will be, in Jesus Christ, not forgotten and left behind, but "revealed before God's and all others eyes – in its deserved shame, but also in its undeserved honour", and will be as such eternal in God.[426]

The ultimate reason for our responsibility for our finite existence therefore lies in our eternal existence in Jesus Christ. This argument is also present within Barth's lectures, albeit if it appears there in the section on the command of God the redeemer.[427] Here, we can see again that the KD and the lectures do not contradict each other, but that the KD aims to perceive each command according to the entire reality of Jesus Christ and humankind in Him according to the two biblical perspectives, thus already employing thoughts from the later chapters of the Münster lectures in the section of the command of God the creator. Moreover, we must consider that we do not know when we will be confronted by Jesus Christ as our final judge in the hour of our death. This means that we are called into constant "vigilance"[428]: we must use our given time responsibly for our appointed tasks.

However, we must not forget that Jesus Christ's *Kampfgeschichte* exalts each person into her new life as the sister of Jesus Christ in the service of the coming Kingdom. Hence, we have to affirm now that God's judgement over our past already lies in His hands as a means by which He prepares us for, and calls us into, His ministry. We are therefore called to turn towards our past and there to look there for signs of God's judgement in order to perceive, within and through these signs, a pointer towards our reality in Christ according to the concrete present command.[429] Awareness of Jesus Christ as the justifying and sanctifying judge of our finite existence thus leads us to a critical perception of our past and thus to conversion: from our sinful past to our new existence in Jesus Christ. Yet we are able to face

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[425] III/3, 262.
[426] III/2, 771.
[427] cf. E, 373.
[428] III/4, 680.
[429] III/2, 651.

up to our unmasked previous existence under the divine judgement solely if we are liberated from our existential angst and shame. It is thus by God's forgiveness alone that we are freed to live "now for the future in a calm retrospective view"[430]. Judged and protected by God, our memory might disclose His command for our way into the future.[431]

Finally, we must also consider the Pauline-Johannine perspective. We must remember that Jesus Christ is, as victor over nothingness and sin, the ultimate Word of the eternal God, and thus His first and final Word. Subsequently, we have to acknowledge that we exist from and towards Jesus Christ - who is, as the risen crucified, our redeemer - as God's children. Once we perceive ourselves as God's children in Christ, our responsibility before Jesus Christ and His particular command appears as our freedom of conscience: we have to respond in the clear knowledge of our existence and situation as God's children. Seen from this perspective, God's command "corresponds to and does justice to [our] being"[432]. In the freedom of God's children, we thankfully accept our finite existence as a "unique *offer*"[433], as a meaningful gift, which is so precious that God expects it to cover it with eternal life, to allow it to enter into direct communion with His own eternal but as such highly particular being.[434]

Hence, we are called to exist towards Jesus Christ as the final limit of our finite existence not in angst but in joyful expectation. We must not fear death, "because there where [we] will be no more, ... God ... stands up for [us]" and takes "an eternal interest in [us]"[435]. This God has revealed Himself in the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ as our eschatological future.[436] We are thus called to head toward Jesus Christ as our limit and judge in hope and joy, trusting that we already freedom in Him here and now - and therefore the necessary duty - to perceive and conduct ourselves according to our being in Jesus Christ as God's loved children who are liberated to follow His command in free obedience. We are thus called to seek within our past existence under God's judgement not only signs of His wrath, but also of His love, and therefore signs of our existence as His children in Christ. While we are therefore called to leave those ways that bear signs of God's wrath, we are

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[430] III/2, 652.
[431] III/2, 653.
[432] III/3, 664.
[433] III/4, 656.
[434] III/4, 657.
[435] III/4, 681.
[436] III/4, 682.

similarly called to expect and actively watch out for proper ways of responsible existence before God within our own and others' lives.

Once we start to re-order our existence in the knowledge that our existence is limited and judged, but also that our existence is already redeemed in Jesus Christ, that is, once we starts to perceive our existence in a critically differentiated way and allows it to be re-ordered by the counter-posed biblical perspectives of Jesus Christ, we will start to perceive that God's command is not a heteronomous law. Instead, we will see it as coming from the One who has created us and our environment, has led us faithfully into our current situation and calls us to head toward Him in His *Nachfolge* in order to become what we are in Him from eternity: God's free children, that is, truly free human persons. Thus disclosed, our present situation is the place in which we have to be responsible witnesses of God's universal salvation history to the world: the place where each of us has to represent God to the world and be responsible for the world as disclosed to him, for *his* world, to God: "Jetzt und hier ... geht das ganze Weltgeschehen auch ihn an, nimmt aktiv und passiv ... auch er an ihm teil. Indem er sich selbst verantwortet, verantwortet er an seinem kleinen, aber in höchster Ernsthaftigkeit nun gerade ihm zugewiesenen Ort, in seiner ...nun gerade ihm gewährten Stunde die Kreatur als solche und als Ganzes"[437].

Each person not only finds herself in the cosmos - standing under God's commandment, in the light of Jesus Christ, she also discloses the cosmos as *her* world, as the realm most proper for her personal freedom for God and the other. Each person can therefore say - in her disclosing function in obedient temporal existence under God's command - about the cosmos: „would I not be – in the entire finitude of my being, in my fleeting transition from birth to death – it would dissolve at once, it would not be"[438]! Each person's world *is there* as *her* created world, as the place in which she finds herself within the proper possibility to serve God as Jesus Christ's witness to the world in so far as she *discloses* it: in her running towards Jesus Christ as her final judge in faithful remembrance of His salvation work, in hopeful expectation of His coming as its universal redeemer and in loving obedience to His call to serve God in her existence towards the other and the whole cosmos as Jesus Christ's witness.

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[437] III/3, 265.
[438] III/4, 658.

Existing in this way, each person's relations to others and to the demands of her worldly existence are ordered. Here, we perceive – although with some fundamental differentiations[439] - an important continuity with Barth's thoughts in his lectures concerning the "orders" of creation.[440] So claim the lectures that our actions are good if they are directed toward God, bound by His will, and therefore ordered by Him who is Himself "the order"[441].

Likewise, KD III/4 portrays human existence as being reordered towards God and His redeemed relation in Christ. It is thereby essential that - within my "particular historical standpoint"[442], according to my "particular talents and interests"[443], and within my particular "sphere of activity"[444]- I make a differentiated and critical choice between the possibilities of existence that are open to me: against those which are open to me due to my existence in disobedience to God's previous commands, but along the lines of my ways of existence in accordance with God's providential care, and in openness for His new command, for the new ways of existence it discloses and calls me to choose, trusting thereby that I am capable of following His call. I am thus, to speak with Calvin here, not excusable, for I am His creature, properly created and guided to inherit His Kingdom in the freedom of my true being in Jesus Christ.

The final word of the ethical consideration of human existence under the command of God the creator must therefore be the word about our freedom for God in Jesus Christ. Because Jesus Christ is according to the Pauline-Johannine witness as our reconciler with God our origin and telos, the origin and the telos of our ethical existence under God's command must consist in our freedom for God as His children in Jesus Christ.

Hence, KD III/4 closes with a section on honour. Here Barth intends to show that human freedom and obedience with respect to the command of God are not contradictory

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[439] We have to distinguish here between „created orders" and the order man's life gains once he exists toward God under His command in resolute openness for the Other. In his KD, Barth made the decision that the unchangeably binding 'created order' consists of man's existence as God's image in correspondence to Jesus Christ with and for the Other, in his being limited by and therefore responsible to God and his neighbour. However, if he exists within the created orders (being-with, finitude) from and toward Jesus Christ, his entire life becomes ordered and gains the character which will be covered – after its final judgement – with eternal life.

[440] Thus also Nigel Biggar has made the observation that the concept of order is in KD III/4 "predominant throughout, albeit incognito" (Biggar, 1993, 58).

[441] E, 362.

[442] III/4, 710.

[443] III/4, 716.

[444] III/4, 724.

but identical[445] – as God's perfectly free existence as the obedient man Jesus of Nazareth has revealed. Already Barth's lectures concluded the command of God the creator with a section on faith.[446] They perceived human beings not only as God's creatures but first and foremost as God's children. Faith was seen by Barth as the event of corresponding human action with the divine will, the moment of my decision to acknowledge the divine command in "divine clarity", "in which I not only - God says it – fulfil the command, but also ... know, that I fulfil it"[447].

Conclusion

We can see that, for Barth, ethical reasoning about our existence as creatures under the command of God the creator cannot abstract from the reality of our existence as reconciled sinners and redeemed children under the commands of God the reconciler and God the redeemer. This means, that for Barth, ethical reasoning perceives us as totally encountered by, and made utterly accountable to, Jesus Christ. Our reality in this total encounter with Jesus Christ is analysed and discussed by Barth according to the two counter-posed biblical perspectives.

Ethical reasoning therefore analyses human reality firstly as it appears once it is perceived from the synoptic perspective in relation to Jesus Christ's *Kampfgeschichte*. This perspective reveals our sinfulness as well as signs of God's judgement about our past, poses a critique to our present existence and situation, and exposes our urgent need to exist in vigilance and conversion. This sense of urgency is particularly caused by Barth's warning that we must be responsible for our temporal existence, as this existence will gain, according to God's providence and under His final judgement, an eternal character.

Yet ethical reasoning has to analyse human reality also in so far as each person's existence is perceived according to the Pauline-Johannine perspective, that is, according to the person's exaltation into Christ. This perspective reveals that the necessary critique about our present existence and situation cannot be the final word. In all our sinfulness, we exist

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[445] III/4, 745.
[446] Cf. E, 418 – 435.
[447] E, 430.

already here and now as instruments and witnesses of Jesus Christ's revelation-history, for He has overcome sin and nothingness once and for all. From this perspective, the divine command of God the creator does not appear as a heteronomous command but as the voice of our own conscience, as the challenge of our present existence by our ultimate reality in Christ.

The perception of each person's existence from the two counter-posed synoptic and Pauline-Johannine perspectives therefore brings forth a critical and differentiated consciousness in which her being-in-the-world is disclosed as coming from, governed by, and leading towards God as each person's creator, reconciler, and redeemer in Jesus Christ.

We have seen that Barth's earlier lectures do not contradict Barth's later thoughts – they principally also affirm as the presupposition of anyone's good existence his or her free existence in Jesus Christ in correspondence to, and as a witness of, His history, according to the two apostolic perspectives, to the world. However, this perception had not yet gained its full practical impact: despite being the conclusion of the Münster lectures, it is not yet their first practical guiding principle.[448] Yet in his KD, Barth was able to reread and rework his lectures with respect to the command of God the creator under the presupposition that – guided by his understanding of the reality of Jesus Christ and of humankind in Him according to the two apostolic perspectives – the conclusion of his Münster lectures, namely that each person stands under God's particular command first and foremost in the freedom of His child in Jesus Christ, must be the first practical guiding principle for our reasoning about the reality of human freedom under the command of God. I therefore consider it possible and necessary to follow his lead and to try to re-read and re-work the following two chapters of his Münster ethics lectures under the same presupposition.

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[448] I therefore consider it misleading when Dietrich Braun says that Barth's lectures are "not yet an expression of the new principle of analogy" (E Viii). It would be better to say, I think, that the principle of analogy, man's existence and corresponding self-understanding as God's child in the ministry of Jesus Christ, is not yet the all-encompassing thought that it becomes in the KD.

Part III
The Command of God the Reconciler

Having gained some basic understanding of the way in which Barth perceives human ethical existence under the command of God the creator, I turn now towards Barth's perception of human ethical existence under the command of God the reconciler. I intend to reread this section of Barth's Münster lectures again on the premise that Barth aimed to perceive human existence in correspondence to the compelling reality of the living Jesus Christ according to the mutually related synoptic and Pauline-Johannine perspectives. I refer therefore to Barth's own considerations in KD IV/4 and the fragments of *Das Christliche Leben*, as they stand in the wider context of KD IV, and the published notes of his Neuchantal lectures on the interpretation of the Lord's Prayer according to the Reformers.

If we focus on the Pauline-Johannine testimony that the living Jesus Christ is, as victor over sin and nothingness, as the bodily risen crucified, the origin, telos, and present Lord of man's existence who calls each person into His *Nachfolge* as His knowing and faithful witness, we cannot but confirm that the first word about human being in general must consist in the affirmation of each person's freedom for God in the *Nachfolge* of Jesus Christ. True human existence is thus understood by Barth as a way in which each person confirms her freedom for God by following Jesus Christ on His decisive way, from His baptism by John, through His praying to His Father in the power of the Holy Spirit, towards His final sacrifice of His body and blood for the world. By witnessing to these works of Jesus Christ in her free demand to be baptised with water, in her free joining of Jesus Christ's intercessions and in her joyful participation in the Eucharist, she confirms her freedom for God.

This perception of true human existence under the command of God the reconciler is consistent with Barth's Münster lectures, which state: "With the synoptic: "Follow me!" ..., in which the imperative of Jesus of Nazareth finds its sharpest sting, something very particular is said"[449]. It is His call to the members of His body, to His church, to live and act in "*imitatio Christi*"[450]. This imitation refers for Barth exclusively to Jesus Christ's *humanity*. Because Jesus Christ has been bodily raised, as the One He has been in His particular history

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[449] E, 130.
[450] Ibid.

in the flesh, as the free descended Son of God, His particular human history is for Barth, in and for itself, the compelling command of God the reconciler: God Himself exists in His majesty and lordship in the flesh, manifesting in His concrete human life-history His actual will in an unmistakable and imperative way.

Thus, we encounter God's concrete existence in Jesus of Nazareth as an imperative direction, cutting us off from any domestication of God's Word: "[D]as ist Gottes Gesetz, das uns gegeben ist, daß uns dieser Mensch gegenüber gestellt ist"[451]. "Diesen anderen Menschen in seinem konkreten Dort und Damals können wir nicht ... in uns selbst, in unserem Jetzt und Hier aufgehen und verschwinden lassen oder uns in ihm"[452]. "Gerade seine Menschheit sichert [Jesu Christo] die *Würde* des Hauptes, des Königs und Herrn"[453]. "Darum hat lange vor dem Streit mit Osiander schon Luther so hartnäckig gerade darum gestritten, daß der Blick auf die Krippe von Bethlehem und auf das Kreuz von Golgatha gerichtet bleibe. Mit dem, was dort zu sehen ist, können wir uns *nicht* identifizieren, wie es der abstrakten Gottheit gegenüber allen Heidentümern der Welt nur zu leicht gefallen ist"[454].

Jesus Christ is, in His concrete human existence as the descended Son, in His submissive obedience and directedness to His Father, the command of God the reconciler. As the bodily risen One he continuously calls us to follow Him into His obedient freedom for His Father, and to participate in the particular works and actions in which He executed this freedom. A concrete ethics of the command of God the reconciler must therefore focus on Jesus Christ's major works of obedience to the Father (that is His baptism, prayer, and final self-offering), and display the way in which Jesus Christ calls us to follow Him as His witnesses by participating in these works in their proper human form.

Jesus Christ is, according to the Pauline-Johannine witness, as the One in whose own particular way of existence human existence in general has its grounding, the Word by, through, and for which everything has been created and is sustained. Accordingly, Barth perceives creation in KD III/4 under the presupposition of the second article. This decision

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[451] E, 120.
[452] E, 63f.
[453] E, 64.
[454] Ibid.

threatens our self-understanding: God has elected Himself freely to exist in the *Seinsweise* of the Son in a thoroughly *human, creaturely* way in relation to God Father.

It is therefore in following Jesus Christ in our human acts of the reception of baptism, obedient and hopeful prayer, and the celebration of the Eucharist in the freedom for God's grace, that our true human nature as God's creature is manifested and confirmed.[455] This threefold witness happens, in unity with the congregation, as the testimony to the world that, in the reconciling work of God in Jesus Christ, the proper relation of each person to God and the other has been established once and for all.

Baptism as an act of human responsibility

In the previous part, I intended to show that true human creaturely existence in relation to God and the other has, for Barth, the character of personal self-responsibility. Reflecting upon our mortality and therefore on our constant call to responsibility towards our gracious judge as our origin and limit, we discover that we cannot be represented in our personal existence, in each decision in relation to God and the other, by anyone else: least by the Man, but neither by the congregation. Barth's critique of infant baptism in KD IV/4 manifests therefore a necessary continuity with KD III/4[456]; for this tradition is based on the view that the congregation, the godparents, and the parents *represent* the child before God. However, with respect to the moment of each person's death as her encounter with her final judge – and thus also with respect to Baptism as each person's free acknowledgement of God's judgement over her in Jesus Christ's death and resurrection - it is to say: "Da steht kein Anderer für [sie] ein"[457].[458]

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[455] Ignorance of the way in which Barth allows room for human creaturely existence before God might often be the result of an understanding of Barth as a modalist. Yet by leaving room for the concrete otherness of Father and Son within the eternal trinity, Barth is able to confirm the existence of the *incarnate* Son in His obedient freedom for the Father in His profoundly specific character and thus of man in Him without losing either the inner unity of God or the profound differentiation between divine and human existence.

[456] According to the Barth-Miskotte correspondence, Barth has already opposed infant baptism on biblical and dogmatic grounds in 1939 (cf. Miskotte's letter from 22.03.1939, and Barth's response on 08.04. 1939).

[457] IV/4, 205.

[458] Barth wants to say that no other *human being* or *human institution can represent us in our* decisions in relation to God. For Barth, this is the consequence of Jesus Christ's perfect representing obedience: Perfectly represented by Jesus Christ before God, we stand – according to the Pauline-Johannine perspective – under the in Jesus

To sum up: Barth perceives baptism as the act in which we consciously begin our existence as a disciple of Jesus Christ by acknowledging our personal responsibility for our existence under His judgement and in confrontation with His call. Baptism is therefore for Barth the beginning of our existence as Jesus Christ's witness in human freedom. In baptism, we encounter and acknowledge Jesus Christ as our personal judge who is, as such, also the giver of our new life in freedom for God and our neighbour. Baptism is therefore the origin of our Christian existence, as it points us towards Jesus Christ as the new focus and limit of our existence and therefore reorders our fallen existence. Reordered in this way, we begin to exist as witnesses of Jesus Christ's ongoing *Kampfgeschichte* against the last shadows of nothingness and sin by testifying to Him as the One in whom human beings are baptised by the Holy Spirit and thus exalted into eternal life in union with God and His redeemed creation.

The transcendental possibility and seriousness of human sin

Barth perceives each person's true humanity in her self-responsible freedom for God and the other. Hence, he denies that his perception of humanity, in correspondence to Jesus Christ and according to the two biblical perspectives, leads to a Christomonism and thus to the danger that all "anthropology and soteriology" is "swallowed by Christology"[459]. Barth's decision to perceive humanity ontologically and noetically in correspondence to the history of Jesus Christ, according to the two biblical perspectives, has nevertheless been questioned. One major concern of Barth's critics is that his christological perception of our creaturely existence allows neither for the logical comprehension of the fall, nor for the acknowledgement of its seriousness.[460]

Christ already fulfilled promise of the baptism with the Holy Spirit. A baptism based on *human* representation therefore questions the perfect '*once and for all*' character of Jesus Christ's representation.

[459] IV/4, 21.

[460] Konrad Stock claimed that any "christological anthropology" contains an "inner aporetic" (Stock, 1980, 9). Stock thinks that once man's creaturely existence is perceived as being established by the eternal election of grace and the consummation of the covenant in time, no "divine conduct is thinkable, in contradiction of which man becomes a sinner" (58). But if sin becomes unthinkable, so does "reconciliation and justification" (58); the latter seems superfluous as a particular divine act (72).

He therefore suggests perceiving – following on from Brunner's critique of Barth – creaturely man in a pre-christological way in his "own possibility ... for his being" (57), in his created freedom *from* God for his own

However, if we follow Barth's thoughts about humanity directed by the history of Jesus Christ according to the two biblical perspectives, we make three observations: following the Pauline-Johannine perspective, we must firstly state that human beings are – for they exists from, through, and towards Jesus Christ as victor over sin and nothingness - in their created human nature *free for* their witnessing ministry of Jesus Christ, who confronts them in His self-proclamation in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Yet according to the synoptic perspective, which is also affirmed by John 1, we secondly consider that Jesus Christ came into the world as the judge of those who did not receive Him as their light but stayed in darkness although they were His. And finally, we must bear in mind that Jesus Christ consummated His final judgement over human sin and nothingness in *His own death in our place* and revealed it in His resurrection.

Thus, we learn that the factuality of Jesus Christ's existence in His *Kampfgeschichte* reveals our existence in sin. And the fact that it took God Himself, the creator of *everything* that is, to bear and thereby judge the sins of the world reveals the malicious, serious and universal character of human sin: the disturbing fact that not only some but *all* have turned away from Him and that the consequence of this universal human deed can be overcome solely by God alone. Human sin consists therefore in each person's *free* turning away from Jesus Christ's self-proclamation, and bears the character of arrogance, laziness and lie.

In laziness, the person rejects Jesus' call to follow Him in His particular human existence in free obedience for God and the other in order to exist undisturbed[461] by His call into her freedom for God and his neighbour. Her laziness manifests itself in her arrogance and lies. In her arrogance, she rejects God's eternal decision to be God for humankind so that each person may exist as a member of His people for Him. Instead of existing according to God's Lordship, each person intends to be her own master and judge.[462]

She tries to accomplish this by domesticating[463] God's Word, the concrete self-proclamation of Jesus Christ: She transfers it into a truth-system according to her own

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being in contradiction of God. The problem with this critique is that it fails to see that Barth perceives man's possibility of turning away from God as the consequence of his freedom *for* God. This comprehensible perception has the advantage over the by Stock advocated split between a pre-christological theological and a chroistological-soteriological anthropology that it prevents the possibility of a dualistic-competitive understanding of man's relation to God.

[461] IV/2, 457.

[462] IV/1, 494.

[463] IV/3, 512f.

interests and ideas.[464] She thereby opposes the revealed truth about God and herself with her lies. The worst way in which Jesus Christ's self-proclamation is rejected consists therefore, for Barth, in religion as "God's *nostrification*"[465], that is, in our domestication of God, in our misuse of God's name in order to legitimise and authorise our personal interests and projects.[466] Like laziness and arrogance, sin in the form of lies "presupposes each human being's distant or close encounter with Jesus Christ, with His truth"[467].

Sin is therefore no mere inherited genetic disorder ("Erbsünde")[468], but "each person's most responsible life-*act* "[469]. Given the character of sin as the deliberate revolt of the child of God against the Holy Spirit, its utterly serious and life threatening character should be obvious: we willingly ignore God Himself as He has given Himself to us in Jesus Christ as our covenant partner and thereby miss our personal vocation. We step beside our "personal reality into the unreal, the abyss, where [we] cannot stand ... . Where [we] cannot ... be [ourselves], but solely [our] own shadow"[470].

We therefore see that the transcendental possibility of human sin lies in Jesus Christ's superior victory over sin and nothingness. Equally, the destructive force, under which each person exists due to her free turning away from God, has its origin within God's final judgement over sin and nothingness in Jesus Christ's death: creation rests on God's decision between good and evil, "between being and nothingness"[471], consummated in Jesus Christ's death and resurrection once and for all.[472] If we do not repeat but oppose God's decision, "the *objective* evil" happens.

Because in our rebellion, we converse "the *primordial relation ... of creator and creature*", on which everything rests[473]: "[Der Mensch] *kehrt* es in einem unwürdigen Possenspiel (und darum ohnmächtig!) – aber im Rahmen dieses Possenspiels sehr real um und richtet damit im Raum des geschaffenen Seins ... die denkbar größte Verwirrung an, schafft eine Scheinwelt, ... in der jeder Maßstab falsch, jeder Gedanke und jedes Wort zum

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[464] IV/3, 502.
[465] CL, 214.
[466] Ibid.
[467] IV/3, 500.
[468] IV/1, 558.
[469] Ibid.
[470] IV/2, 459.
[471] IV/1, 498.
[472] IV/1, 499.
[473] IV/1, 483.

Selbstwiderspruch, jede Tat und Verhaltungsweise verkehrt wird"[474], "[so daß] alles Heil zum Unheil [wird]"[475]. "[Die] Kraft der guten Schöpfung Gottes ... [kann sich] jetzt, statt positiv, nur negativ auswirken ... . Gerade Gottes seinem Geschöpf zugewendete Gnade wird ihm jetzt zum *Gericht*"[476]. Yet the resurrection of Jesus Christ shows that God is also Lord over our sinful confusion of the possibilities of nothingness with the possibilities of his created existence and over the sham-reality brought forth by this confusion.

We must therefore conclude that human sin and nothingness must not be seen as something of the same ontological status as God. Rather, we have to admit that while man exists undeniably in sin, this existence is indeed limited by God's salvation-work in Jesus Christ, and cannot be comprehended in abstraction from it. There must be an 'ontological difference' between our existence in sin and in Jesus Christ. Barth accepts therefore the Lutheran characteristic of the human person as *simul justus et peccator* solely under the presuppositions that the ontological difference between the two states of being is observed, and that both states are not interpreted according to a metaphysical world-view but solely according to Jesus Christ as witnessed from the two biblical perspectives. We saw in the second chapter how Barth overcame a metaphysical understanding of the doctrine of the two natures by perceiving Jesus Christ from the two apostolic perspectives. He understands our two states of being correspondingly as *two ways of existence* in relation to God and the other, which are enabled, limited and ruled by God's own salvation history in Jesus Christ.

Our existence must therefore be seen firstly under the Pauline-Johannine presupposition that our genuine being consists in our coming from Jesus Christ's self-proclamation as the One who is the origin and telos of all things as the world's reconciler with God. We find ourselves thus confronted with His call to follow Him as His witnesses into the world, using thereby our particular creaturely potentials and powers. We genuinely exist therefore as the persons we are, once we understand ourselves as Jesus Christ's witnesses, once all our thinking, willing and acting is guided by the one focal point of our entire existence, that is, Jesus Christ in His salvation work according to the two biblical perspectives.

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[474] IV/1, 484.
[475] IV/2, 552.
[476] IV/3, 801.

Having this particular focus, Barth discloses firstly his own existence as limited and determined by Jesus Christ and thus as proper for his commanded service in Jesus Christ's *Nachfolge*. Secondly, he discloses his genuine temporality as happening in his coming from Jesus Christ as his past and in his running toward Him as his future while following His present call. Thirdly, he discloses the other as his brother and fellow-worker in Jesus Christ, and finally he discloses his historical situation as the proper place of his responsibility before Jesus Christ and His concrete command.

The synoptic perspective, on the other hand, urges us to confess that *every* person shifts her focus away from Jesus Christ in His self-proclamation towards her personal world-view. She desires to follow not Jesus Christ but her own ideas about herself, the other, her historical-worldly situation, and, first and foremost, about God. Hence, she reacts against Jesus Christ's self-proclamation by trying to turn it into a lie according to her own desire in order to establish herself as the central focus of her existence, as the ruler and judge of the world she discloses according to her own world-views. But this 'disclosure' of her world, and of her and the other's being according to their place within it, is actually a concealment of her true situation under Jesus Christ's command: the latter shifts out of her disclosed field of vision into the darkness, behind the veil she has created by her existence according to her own projected world-view.

The world in which each of us lives is thus the world created by our obscuring[477] and disordering existence. Our misery is caused by the "*disorder*, which penetrates and determines, poisons and ruins ... all human affairs and relationships"[478] as we deviate from proper co-existence under God with our neighbour.[479] Once we stop to direct our existence towards the God who has descended into the flesh in order to call us into the *Nachfolge* of His human way and works, so that we may exercise and confirm our true humanity, we lose our humanity and create an obscured sham-reality.[480]

We have seen above that both the honour and limit of our potent creaturely existence consists in our obedient service of Jesus Christ, that is, in our execution of our "historical responsibility". Consequently, if we turn away from Jesus Christ as the proper

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[477] IV/2, 552.
[478] CL, 358.
[479] CL, 359.
[480] Cf. IV/2, 473-476.

focus of our existence, our creaturely powers and gifts lose their purpose. They are not lost, but we disclose them in abstraction from their proper end in the service of Jesus Christ, in the determining context of our personal world-view. Yet once we employ them for our personal desires, we employ them against their nature and thus less for our benefit than for our self-destruction. They seem simply not to fit into our world; they appear unsuitable for our intended tasks and even to develop a life of their own, which threatens to overwhelm us. We thus find ourselves – against our intention – not as the Lord of our world, but as a slave of demonic forces haunting us.[481]

Barth counts among the lordless powers "manifestations of *political absolutism*"[482] "*mammon*"[483], "ideologies"[484], and physical ("chthonischen"[485]) powers. Common to them all is that under their lordship human communion becomes disordered: "Die Herrschaft dieser Gewalten, die ja alle nur die Exponenten des den Menschen von Gott scheidenden Aufruhrs sind, ist gleichbedeutend mit der Destruktion und dem Zerfall wie des Individuums, so auch der Gesellschaft"[486].

Yet it must be said, with respect to Jesus Christ's descent into the misery of his fallen creation, that we are unable to exclude God from our world. God has proven in the resurrection of Jesus Christ that he *can* - in the middle of uttermost nothingness and sin - make Himself perfectly known, proclaim His name and will, and established His righteousness by revealing Himself as the origin, order and telos of created time and of each person's temporal existence. This means that those who recognises that Jesus Christ's battle against the lordless powers is limited by His perfect victory over sin and nothingness "will by no means accept this misery as an unchangeable fact"[487]: they will find themselves urged to fight against the misery of humankind and the demonic reign of the lordless powers and to follow Jesus Christ into His fight in joyful hope, witnessing thereby to His perfect victory.

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[481] CL, 363-365.
[482] CL, 373.
[483] CL, 378.
[484] CL, 383.
[485] CL, 388.
[486] CL, 398.
[487] CL, 358.

This fight against the lordless powers, brought forth by human disorder, consists for Barth first and foremost in the prayerful petition: "*Es komme dein Reich!*"[488] Praying for the coming of God's Kingdom, of Jesus Christ in His act of establishing His righteousness by re-directing the whole world toward Him, in faithful remembrance of the fact that Jesus Christ has indeed already established Himself as the One who is the guarantor of the just order, we gain the proper courage to fight within our human limits the injustice and misery imposed by the lordless powers. For then we know that they stand under Jesus Christ's victorious reign: He originally created them fit to witness His service to the world, and He proved on Golgotha that He would remain their Lord, and would use them for His own ends, even if they were misused and obscured by man.[489]

Hence, we are compelled not to despair. While we should have proper respect and caution of worldly powers, we must be "fearless in the end"[490]. We must not worship them as horrid albeit fascinating idols, but oppose the malicious consequences of the misuse of humankind's created powers courageously and obediently, by praying to God for His righteousness and remaining focused on Him alone. The commandment of prayer is thus merciful because it prevents our fight against the lordless powers from turning its opposed object into our god, into the one fundamental presupposition that determines our further thinking, willing, and acting, as this would mean re-entering the vicious circle of sin. Hence Barth's remark that he intended to respond to Hitler's rise to power by continuing to do theology "as if nothing had happened"[491] [492].

From the Pauline-Johannine perspective, we perceive the meaning of God's *Kampfgeschichte* as the exaltation of humankind. Consequently, we have to come to perceive the time between Jesus Christ's perfect work of reconciliation and its final universal revelation not exclusively as a time of continuous judgement over our sinful prolonging of darkness. Instead, we have to see that the inner meaning of Jesus Christ's continuous battle

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[488] CL, 361.
[489] CL, 366.
[490] CL, 391.
[491] Barth, 1984, 26.
[492] Gollwitzer claimed that the essay 'Theologische Existenz heute' was, in Barth eyes, solely a politically '*gleichgeschaltetete*' version of a previously written political manifesto that was considered unpublishable at this time by Ch. von Kirschbaum and H. Traub (Gollwitzer, 1972). However, I do not think that Barth's anger and frustration about the inadequacy of this essay refers to its principle command to do theology with a sole focus on God in Jesus Christ, for this is the premise for any fundamentally critical standpoint and action.

consists in His gracious invitation to us to prove our – in Him once and for all guaranteed - humanly freedom to exist as His witness to the world.

To sum up: in the previous discussion, we have seen that the dialectical analysis of human sin from the synoptic and Pauline-Johannine perspective reveals sin's universal factuality as well as its severity. It reveals sin as our free rejection of God's gracious self-proclamation as our Lord. Turning away from God as our final focus and limit, we elect our own gods, final ideas, beings, or events that are supposed to give meaning to our whole existence and to serve as a standard for our ethical decision-making. According to Barth, this election brings forth the lordless powers, which will eventually enslave us if they are not seen as also standing under the Lordship of God. This relation between the lordless powers and God's Lordship is revealed by the Pauline-Johannine perspective, as it perceives man's sinful revolt against God's self-proclamation and its consequences as being radically limited by Jesus Christ's victory.

The command of God thus tells us that our fight against the destructive lordless powers must have the form of a witness to Jesus Christ's ultimate victory: we must exist in such a way that we perceive Jesus Christ as the origin, telos, and living Lord of everything that is, of every worldly concept, power or event, and use everything for the service of His self-proclamation. Hence, we must follow Him into His continuous battle against the lordless powers as witnesses of His ultimate victory.

Our commanded *Nachfolge* of Jesus Christ begins in our baptism with water, with the acknowledgement of our utter self-responsibility before our judge for our existence in relation to God and the other within our creaturely limits – and thus good powers – at our particular historical place. However, we have seen above that our place of responsibility towards the command of God the creator must always be disclosed anew – we have to redirect ourselves constantly towards God's will, as it has been consummated and revealed in Jesus Christ, otherwise we lose ourselves within the darkness and the demonic lordless powers.

Hence, we must lead a life of prayer: a life in which we acknowledge God as our just and loving Father and ourselves as His free children, in our constant need of receiving but also in the freedom to really ask and expect everything from Him. Existing in this way, we

find ourselves personally responsible to witness in our deeds to God's causes and to the way in which He makes Himself responsible for man's causes.

Prayer as actual re-orientation of our fallen existence and as disclosure of reality under God's Lordship

It comes to a clearing within our disordered world in so far as our existence becomes re-ordered by our praying with Jesus Christ to the One who is in Christ the Father of humankind.[493] In our prayers, we actively affirm God as our Father, and disclose therefore the other and self in our proper relation to God and to one another. We come to understand ourselves as "totally unprepared *infants*"[494], who can come to the Father solely with empty hands, ready to live from His grace alone. While the relation between us and God is one of inequality, of a giving and a receiving side, it is nevertheless seen by Barth as reciprocal and mutual. As God's child, it is our right and duty to approach our Father, to enter freely, also from our side, the encounter with God: "Daß sie diesen Verkehr auch ihrerseits aufnehmen und pflegen ... – das ist es, wozu er sie aufruft, indem er ihnen gebietet, ihn anzurufen – wenn er will, daß ihr ganzes Leben zu solcher Anrufung werde"[495]. The subject of the invocation of the Father is thereby not the individual, "but God's child*ren*"[496]. Praying to God as *our* Father re-orders and determines my relation to the other within God's church as it reveals him as God's child and thus as my brother, to whom I am responsible.[497]

Moreover, as God is in Jesus Christ not only the Lord of His church but also the "*world's* saviour"[498], any proper invocation of *our* Father necessarily includes those "who don't present themselves ... as our brothers – maybe ... even as our opponents and enemies"[499]. Invocation of God is thus for Barth "an eminent ... *publicly* social, that is, even: *political*, *cosmic* matter"[500]. It re-establishes our lost *creaturely* freedom to exist in communion and therefore

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[493] CL, 75.
[494] CL, 126.
[495] CL, 137.
[496] CL, 131.
[497] CL, 132.
[498] CL, 158.
[499] CL, 165.
[500] CL, 154.

calls us to testify this liberation to those who exist outside of, and even in opposition to, the church by our reconciling words and acts. Recognising the other as God's child in Jesus Christ demands us to take him seriously in this form: to expect him to know God as his Father and to exist as His authorised witness, but also to challenge Him to exist as this witness.

The liberating reorientation of our existence requires further our prayerful petition that God may "sanctify His name *Himself*"[501]. We thus beseech God to reveal His perfect work of salvation in Jesus Christ and human reality according to this act to all people. This implies that we recognise God as the victorious "A *and O*"[502] of our and the whole world's ways and thus as the fundamental challenge of our present ambivalent situation.[503] Therefore, when we pray for the universal sanctification of God's name in Jesus Christ in His *Nachfolge as the risen One*, we pray in knowledge, confession, and witness of His perfect work of salvation.

Consequently, we perceive God's judgement over ourselves, yet as those who have been exalted into freedom for God and been directed towards Him as our sole future: "Das wäre nicht das Ereignis, in welchem Gott damals seinen Namen ... ein für allemal verherrlicht hat, das uns nicht, indem es freilich das Gericht über unsere Gegenwart und damit über uns selbst bedeutet, inmitten dieser Gegenwart auch aufrichtete, uns nicht auf die ein für allemal erschienen Herrlichkeit Gottes als auf unsere Zukunft dieser unserer Gegenwart und also als Ziel unseres Existenz ausrichtete"[504].

Exalted into freedom for God and redirected towards Jesus Christ as the revealer of His Lordship and of the world's true situation under it, we find ourselves "responsible to personally tackle the matter, with respect to which [we] pray to God"[505]. This happens once we "consider the *supremacy of God's Word* and reckon with it"[506], once we exist according to the way our present situation appears in prayer. For if it is Jesus Christ who is the origin and telos of our being in the world as our present Lord, then we can exist according to our true being in Him solely by directing our whole existence toward Him, reordering and redefining

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[501] CL, 260.
[502] CL, 278.
[503] CL 272; 276.
[504] CL, 277.
[505] CL, 283.
[506] CL, 295.

thereby the demands of all worldly factors which we encounter within our ambivalent present: "Kein Mensch, in dessen Leben nicht ... auch *andere* Faktoren wirksam sind und das Wort führen!" – "Das Wort Gottes bringt aber *Ordnung* in des Menschen Leben: Überordnung und Unterordnung. Es tut das, indem es sich selbst an die Spitze aller in ihm wirksamen und das Wort führenden Faktoren stellt"[507].[508]

To sum up: prayer is, for Barth, our free affirmation of our true reality in relation to God and our fellow human beings in Jesus Christ. Prayer, if perceived as a description of our entire temporal existence in hopeful anticipation of Jesus Christ's final universal self-revelation, in faithful remembrance of His salvation-work, and in loving and respectful relation to the other by means of a mutual witness to this salvation-work, discloses the possibilities of proper human existence under God's Lordship as it re-directs everything toward God, and thereby reorders human relationships, and so overcomes the destructive forces of the lordless powers.

An example of the way in which Barth himself tried to reorder everything towards Jesus Christ as Alpha and Omega can be found in His lectures *Die Protestantische Theologie im 19. Jahrhundert*. Here Barth expresses the view that peoples' intentions, perceptions and actions are thoroughly determined by the forceful ideas determining their particular age. A major ruling idea of the 18th century saw the individual as the forming agent of everything he or she encounters. The individual is characterised by an "absolute will for form"[509]. Such forceful ideas that govern a whole epoch are not to be condemned – for no condemnation would overcome the force of the so absolutised forms of human beings' self-understanding. Instead, Barth demands that they are paid "respectful attention"[510], and that their greatness should be met with "human admiration"[511] – as long as we beseech God to establish Himself as their Lord.

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[507] CL, 297.

[508] This prayerful clearsightedness of Barth is the reason for Frank Jehle's observation: „In einer Zeit, in der viele nichts Neues vom Christentum erwarteten, stellte [Karl Barth] unter Beweis, daß eine *wache Zeitgenossenschaft auf der Basis des christlichen* Glaubens überraschende Konsequenzen zeitigt. Weil Barth den „ganz Anderen" zur Geltung zu bringen versuchte, hatte er einen weiten Horizont. Deshalb mußte er unbequem, konnte er nicht konform sein" (Jehle, 1999, 11f).

[509] PT, 99.

[510] Ibid.

[511] PT, 100.

Once we do this, we no longer perceive such ideas as absolutes, but as ideas, which are limited and critically re-defined by God and thus possible instruments of our thinking and acting in His service. Thus the human will to form appears as a good created human power, whose adequate execution allows us to relate properly to the created cosmos.[512] "Es erschöpft sich ja die Begegnung des intelligibelen und des intelligenten Kosmos nicht darin, daß dieser jenem sein Sein, seine Bewegung, seine eigenen Ordnungen und Gestalten kundgibt und erkennbar macht – sie schließt vielmehr auch das in sich, daß jener diesen erweckt und anregt zu einem der Besonderheit, in der auch er Kosmos ist, entsprechenden spontanen Ordnen und Gestalten"[513]

Our invocation of God to sanctify His name overcomes the power of the lordless powers as they are thereby disclosed and appropriated anew for their proper use by us as God's witnesses in the *Nachfolge* of Jesus Christ. Our new directedness in prayer cuts us off from the Man, from the collective declaration of the ruling ideas of the present age that shape the way we perceive our world and act in it. It lets a new world appear, which fundamentally challenges our "status quo", and causes our own efficient "*revolt* against that status quo, against the law of the recurrence of all things"[514]. Barth's reference to the 'recurrence of all things' denotes that our dependence on the ruling ideas and the consequent demands of our present age not only perpetuates the present situation, but is itself inherited from our past. For Barth, ideas grow historically; they are a way in which a past epoch influences the present. The concrete practical revolution against such a recurrence of ideologies consists in our eschatological existence *from* God's salvation work in Jesus Christ *towards* it in prayer, in our existence as a witness of the origin and telos of all things.[515]

Once our thoughts and acts become redirected and reordered by our focus on Jesus Christ as the origin, telos and Lord of all things, they no longer take place in destructive competition but in "coexistence with human beings"[516]. This claim is further explained by Barth in II/1. In the context of his discussion of *God as the One*, he unmasks any abstract monotheism in which human beings sets absolute their "subjective self-consciousness"[517] or

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[512] IV/3, 167.
[513] Ibid.
[514] CL, 303.
[515] CL, 315.
[516] CL, 345.
[517] II/1, 504.

"one of the different incarnations" "of the various worldly powers", thinking that they could transcend and divinise themselves in that way.[518] But because the created worldly powers are manifold and diverse, giving exclusive precedence to one of them over the others is possible solely by violent force. The necessary result is thus a "fight on the Olympus"[519], a clash of world-views, which fundamentally threatens our co-existence. Hence, it is only once God is recognised as the single creator and Lord of the diverse cosmic forces that their mutual exclusiveness and contradiction can be overcome and human communion restored.

The reordering of our existence and the consequent new disclosure of reality, of our being-in-the-world, with respect to God's Lordship, requires furthermore our prayer for the coming of God's Kingdom. Barth identifies the possibility and necessity of an effective fight for human justice as our directedness toward the already established and revealed "order of human life and coexistence"[520] in Jesus Christ, that is, toward the Kingdom of God. We are called to resist and fight a number of possibilities, because we are shown "a thoroughly *different* possibility in such glory"[521]. Once we perceive this once and for all established order and pray for its universal revelation in the final coming of Jesus Christ, the present state of "*disorder*"[522] (of man's deviation from his orderly coexistence under God, with his neighbour[523]) appears as an *impossible possibility*.

Thus, we cannot but oppose this state in our own human deeds: "Dieser *Unordnung* sich zu widersetzen ist den Christen damit geboten, daß sie die Proklamation der Gerechtigkeit *Gottes* und in und mit ihr die Proklamation der dem *Menschen* gegebenen Rechts-, Freiheits- und Friedenordnung gehört und in den Ohren und also die Möglichkeit und Notwendigkeit *auch menschlicher* Gerechtigkeit vor Augen haben"[524]. We should note here that Barth makes the *possibility to perceive* "the possibility and necessity also of human justice" dependent upon our listening to Jesus Christ's self-proclamation as the one "order of righteousness, freedom and peace"[525], and upon our praying for Jesus Christ to return. Here we can see again that Barth considers it to be impossible to perceive the right possibility to

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[518] II/1, 504f.
[519] II/1, 505.
[520] CL, 455.
[521] CL, 350.
[522] CL, 358.
[523] CL, 359.
[524] CL, 360.
[525] CL, 455.

witness to God's Word and will, as long as our thinking has not become redirected by Jesus Christ as its sole focus, origin, and telos.

However, our directedness towards Jesus Christ means that we find ourselves directed towards our coming final judge who calls us into responsibility for our total existence. This means that praying for Jesus Christ to come as God's Kingdom provides us with the *possibility* and the *necessity* to perceive and to make ourselves liable for possibilities of human justice under the Lordship of the coming Jesus Christ: "In dieser Bitte ausgerichtet auf das Kommen des Reiches ... können es die Christen unmöglich unterlassen, ... dem kommenden Reich Gottes entgegen zu gehen, die vorläufig vorhandenen bzw. sich bietenden Möglichkeiten nun nicht göttlicher, aber doch *menschlicher Gerechtigkeit* und Ordnung zu sehen, zu ergreifen"[526].[527]

Jesus Christ's coming, for which we must pray, appears from the synoptic perspective as God's descent in order to exist within His creation for us. Our commanded subordination of all personal interests and worldly demands under the command of God finds its concrete form therefore in our subordination of them to the needs of the other.[528] The synoptic witness of God's *Kampfgeschichte*, in which His own being was at stake to overcome the consequences of human sin, reveals to us that the disordered way of our thinking and acting can be overcome solely by God's judgement. Barth thus perceives precisely in God's judgement His mercy: it is the concrete and efficient form of the gospel, which brings forth man's possibility of a new way of existence, thinking and acting.

It is helpful to remember that the German word "richten" has three basic meanings: it means firstly "to direct" something *toward* something: "Sie sind gerichtet, *auf* Gott

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[526] CL, 362.

[527] Barth already intended in his exegesis of Rom 1:20 to show that practical relevant knowledge of the world is grounded in proper knowledge of God. Man consequently looses the meaning of his worldly existence once he stops perceiving it as detached from his proper relation to God: "Sinn bekommt unser Leben in dieser Welt nur durch seine Beziehung auf den wahren Gott." (RII, 25). Outside of our encounter with the living God, we will lose our "sensible perception" (RII, 36), and our thinking becomes "void, formal, mere critical, unfruitful, incapable of mastering the magnitude of appearances" (RII, 25). The consequence of such a "void thinking" is inevitably "wrong acting" (RII, 26). Barth is consistent in his view, that wrong acting is grounded in man's focus on things apart from God as their origin, telos, and Lord, and that this loss of focus leads to man's enslavement by the absolutised powers within the so lordlessly disclosed world: "Nun wird der Mensch Knecht und Spielball der Dinge, all der „Natur" und „Kultur", deren Aufhebung und Begründung in Gott er übersehen, und ihn schützt nun kein Höherer vor dem, was er selbst zu seinem Höchsten gemacht hat" (RII, 28).

[528] CL, 463f.

gerichtet, - aber eben darum auch *von* Gott gerichtet"[529]. Secondly, it means "to put something right by bringing it back into its proper order". And it means thirdly, that the new directedness and order of our existence is possible only if our present existence is "judged (*gerichtet*)" as wrong and void. When God's judgement redirects and reorders our existence efficiently, our previous misdirected and unordered existence is "hin-gerichtet": "put to death".

Barth's discussion of the command of God the reconciler in his Münster lecture's focuses therefore also on its character as God's contradicting and judging law, which demands of us "*penance before God* and therefore *service of the neighbour*"[530]. God's judgement is thereby understood by Barth as the event in which we are re-directed towards God and the other, so that our perception of world and self is put right.[531] Being re-directed towards Jesus Christ, we perceive our present existence as being judged in His self-humbling descent unto the cross (as witnessed by the synoptic perspective) yet also as being exalted into Jesus Christ's very own freedom for God and the other. The other therefore appears as the one for whom we must be there in order to execute our human freedom.

While we cannot be there for the other in our sin, we can by means of our future existence as God's children granted to us in Jesus Christ, and which is to be anticipated by us in prayer. With this gift comes our duty to be for the other a witness of Jesus Christ's being-for-humankind: "Bin ich nicht ein Hörer, und also ein Täter seines Wortes, wiedergeboren durch dieses Wort zu Gottes liebem Kinde?"[532] "Also muß ich bekennen, daß ich als Begnadigter Gottes in Christus reich bin in Gott ... und daß mein Nächster ... nichts ... Unmögliches von mir verlangt, wenn er möchte, daß ich für ihn da sei"[533]. This commanded being-there-for-the-other takes for Barth the particular form of us forgiving sin: "Also: es handelt sich darum, *Sünde* nicht zuzurechnen, sondern zu *vergeben*"[534].

For the capacity to forgive the other's trespasses and thus to fully restore our relationship with him, we can only "pray": "Indem wir für ihn beten, stehen wir vor Gott für ihn ein, und wie könnten wir das ehrlich und in Wahrheit tun anders, als daß wir uns eben

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[529] RII, 68.
[530] E, 260.
[531] Cf. E 280f.
[532] E, 311.
[533] Ibid.
[534] E, 313f.

für ihn vor Gott verantwortlich wüßten und erklärten? Wie können wir für ihn beten, wenn wir nicht bereit wären, für ihn zu arbeiten ...?"[535] To pray for the other involves concretely asking God to forgive *us* – me and the other – *our* trespasses, and to take both of us seriously as God's redeemed children in Christ. By this act, human relations are restored and assume the form of a human witness to the order of God's Kingdom, established in Jesus Christ.

The third petition has its human equivalent therefore in the sixth petition. Existing as a witness of the Kingdom of God implies that we must exist in relation to the other as witnesses of the divine forgiveness of sin, according to our prayers.[536] "[I]n the light of the divine forgiveness for which we pray, human forgiveness becomes almost a physical necessity"[537]. In praying for the forgiveness of sin, we become liberated from the fallen worldly order and for our new future existence in correspondence to the order of God's Kingdom: "The time for fixing our eyes always on our sins instead of on thee is past: thou hast cut us off from the past"[538]. "Now it is for us to move toward that [in Jesus Christ's already perfected future]; it is for us to believe and to make effective [in prayer for Jesus Christ's coming] the new beginning inaugurated by the death of Jesus Christ"[539].

To sum up: prayer is the event through which our total being-in-the-world is re-directed toward Jesus Christ in such a way that it receives His liberating judgement. This event makes a genuine being-with possible as well as necessary. As a witness to the way in which Jesus Christ has been there for us, our commanded existence for the other consists first and foremost in our forgiveness of his sins, that is, in our actual affirmation of his reality as God's redeemed child in Jesus Christ, and of our faith in God's forgiveness of our all sins.

The authority of the other as God's witness

Barth's Münster lectures contain an element that remains absent from CL: he made each person's existence in conversion dependent on the previous contradiction of her sinful

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[535] E, 323f.
[536] PP, 53.
[537] Ibid.
[538] PP, 55.
[539] PP, 55.

existence by the authority of the other as God's witness. I consider it important and appropriate to incorporate this notion of the importance of the contradicting authority of the other into the discussion of the command of God the reconciler as a secondary presupposition of our proper perception of God and His creation and thus of our existence as witnesses of Jesus Christ for the other. This notion is in line with Barth's thoughts about the present time in which we exist as reconciled sinners.

As the time between Jesus Christ's first and final parousia, this time is, for Barth, not only the time of human confusion but, first and foremost, the time in which Jesus Christ has chosen to be present within His world as its Lord in a mediated form: in, through and under the human witness in the power of the Holy Spirit in accordance to the whole of Scripture, understood under the guidance of the twofold apostolic witness. In the time between His first and final parousia, Jesus Christ is the living Word, "but not without the service of the heard human word, which testifies and proclaims Him"[540]. Equally, we read in the Münster lectures: "[W]ir hören ihn, gerade wenn wir ihn *wirklich* und wirklich *ihn* hören, durch das Wort anderer Menschen, das durch seinen heiligen Geist die Wahrheitskraft seines eigenen Wortes bekommen hat"[541].

The time between the times of Jesus Christ's first and final coming is thus to be perceived in a differentiated way: first and foremost according to the Pauline-Johannine perspective as the perfection of the once and for all accomplished divine victory over sin and nothingness. The 'time in between' is thus, first and foremost, a time ruled by Jesus Christ by victoriously calling those into His service who He has already justified and sanctified for their new existence as His witness in time. However, according to the synoptic stress of the character of Jesus Christ's temporal existence as *Kampfgeschichte*, we have to perceive the present time also in its ambivalent character.

Yet Barth understands the ultimate reason for the ongoing ambivalence to be God's grace by which He grants us the possibility to freely affirm what He has done for us in Jesus Christ by joining Him as His witness in His prophetic office, in His fight against the present ambivalence. In so far as the Münster lectures followed the synoptic perspective of God's *Kampfgeschichte*, they acknowledge the necessity of the contradiction of our self-centred

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[540] IV/1, 351.
[541] E, 160.

will.[542] The command of God the reconciler encounters us therefore "as an alien, external ... law, as authority, as order"[543].

However, the contradicting command of God the reconciler comes to us not in a direct way, but mediated through the authoritative witness of the other: it comes to us as the direction of the 'Moses' who is appointed as Jesus Christ's witness and entrusted with His authority: "*Gottes Gebot trifft mich als überlegene Weisung durch einen bestimmten, von ihm beauftragten Mitmenschen*"[544].

We can see here the obvious connection with Barth's claim in CL that human sinful existence can be overcome solely if we submit our thoughts to the one thought that God is God for humankind in Jesus Christ and thus to the needs of the other in prayer. As CL ends abruptly and fragmentarily with the unfinished discussion of the petition of the coming of God's Kingdom, we have good reason to assume that Barth would have taken up and developed the role of the other as a witness of God's command later on, for example in his planed discussion of the authority of stately order.

It is thereby important that we perceive the other according to the two counter-posed biblical perspectives. According to the Pauline-Johannine perspective, the other appears as God's child in Christ, as being liberated to exist as God's authoritative witness according to the voice of his conscience. Yet from the synoptic perspective, the other also appears in his ambivalence, in his tendency to use his witness of God for the sake of his own self-affirmation opposite the other. Hence, we must be aware of the fact that the other is not directly perceivable as God's child and thus as the authorised witness of Jesus Christ's command. The authority of the other – primarily as a representative of the godly directed stately law and order – can take the character of a lordless power.

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[542] I therefore depart here from Nigel Bigger's interpretation that the concept of law is necessarily absent from CL as a governing principle due to Barth having given "priority of Gospel over law" (Bigger, 1993, 67). I do not think that Barth has at any stage of his though perceived law and gospel as mutually exclusive. In contrast, he perceives the gospel, God's grace, as having the form of the law, of His critical and thereby liberating judgement. The law is not overcome and annulled but established in God's gracious work of salvation: „just in grace ... the law is *erected*" (E, 58). Consequently, I think that CL presents no change from law to grace but that Barth has paid more attention to the question of the particular *order* of these two terms as revealed by Jesus Christ's history. Jesus Christ is man's origin and telos as the *risen crucified*. This means that man's standing under the divine judgement must by no means be ignored, but Bigger is right to claim that "humankind's being judged by God is neither their original and basic, nor their last and definitive, determination" (op. cit., 80), but limited by Jesus Christ's eternal existence as victor over sin and nothingness.

[543] E, 184.

[544] E, 167.

Barth therefore counted among the lordless powers the "manifestations of *political absolutism*"[545]: "Wenn nun die Macht sich von dem Recht löst, wenn der Mensch, der in dieser Sache im Dienst jener göttlichen Anordnung tätig sein dürfte und sollte, es wählt, seine ... Macht und Gewalt ... um ihrer selbst willen aufzurichten und zu üben – und eben das tut der von Gott emanzipierte Mensch -, dann entsteht, indem sie ... sein Meister wird, die Dämonie des Politischen"[546].

I do not think that the Münster lectures were too naïve to ignore the human inclination to misuse authority. Barth states there that the other has authority solely in so far as he or she is disclosed as God's witnesses by the command of God Himself: "An diesem ihrem Ursprung hat die Autorität des Nächsten ihre Grenze, ihr Maß und Kriterium. Noch einmal: wir können den Nächsten nicht außerhalb des Wortes Gottes suchen und finden"[547]. However, I consider it problematic and insufficient that in his Münster lectures Barth locates the place where we encounter the authoritative command of God Himself *solely* within the ambivalent human witness. The lectures fail therefore to provide a way of responsible existence by which we can critically disclose the other who confronts us as Jesus Christ's proper witness and a place where we can hear God's Word more directly.

This function and this place are provided by Barth's understanding of our *Nachfolge* of Jesus Christ's invocation of His Father as a member of God's church in remembrance of the biblical testimonies. For we have seen that in prayer for the coming Kingdom, we are redirected towards God and thereby towards our neighbour, perceiving him according to the two biblical perspectives of the covenant-history. Hence, it is in prayerful anticipation and remembrance of Jesus Christ as the sole criterion of authority and righteousness that we disclose the other as an authoritative witness of God's Kingdom in his authoritative claim on human righteousness[548] without being endangered to absolutise his or her authority.

Human righteousness is therefore proper righteousness where it prevents human beings from setting themselves as absolute rulers of their world according to their world-view. Where a human order fails to do precisely this, where instead it fosters such a sinful existence, it is to be opposed[549]. Yet in so far as human law and order directs us into our

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[545] CL, 373.
[546] CL, 374.
[547] E, 177.
[548] E, 212.
[549] E, 225f.

proper limited place before God and the other, it is "mercy"[550]. By submitting ourselves to the law and order commanded by Jesus Christ, we receive the authority and thus the duty to encounter the other ourselves as a representative of the law as a witness of Jesus Christ's judgement[551]: "Wir sind nicht nur dazu aufgerufen, Recht über uns ergehen zu lassen, sondern eben damit auch dazu, ...das Recht gegen Andere geltend zu machen"[552]. The final criterion of proper human law lies thereby in its character as a *limited, provisional human* law. Its representative must always remember "that *God alone can establish righteousness*"[553] – our own submission to and our own establishment of righteousness can only properly occur in prayer for the coming of His righteousness.

Barth lacked time to conclude *The Christian Life* with a discussion of the final three petitions of the Lords Prayer. However, he had already discussed them in KD III/4[554] and – to the greatest extent – in his 1949 Neuchantal lectures on *The Interpretation of the Lord's Prayer according To the Reformers.*[555] There, Barth points to a "change of attitude" that occurs between the first and the last three petitions[556]: "Note the boldness, I might even say the effrontery, of this demand. Here is a man who dares to put God to the trouble of concerning himself with human affairs, who dares to issue orders"[557]. This change of attitude is possible, even commanded by God, because He has "accepted us as fellowworkers [sic]"[558]. He has freed us to make His cause ours and in return to bring our own human concerns before him, trusting and witnessing to His reception of our petitions in our corresponding human actions. In the final three petitions we ultimately affirm therefore our proper relation to God as His children by coming to Him freely, demanding courageously to live by His grace alone.

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[550] E, 233.
[551] E, 228.
[552] E, 227.
[553] E, 236.
[554] III/4, 114.
[555] Karl Barth, Prayer And Preaching, London 1964, pp. 24-63.
[556] PP, 43.
[557] PP, 44f.
[558] PP, 45.

Concluding summary

By way of a concluding summary, it can be said that the ethical explication of human existence in response to the command of God the reconciler with the help of the two counter-posed biblical perspectives has identified three basic interrelated acts of Christian existence. These three acts must not be perceived as isolated acts, but as necessary moments of the Christian life in response to the whole reality of God, His church and His creation. These necessary moments are baptism, prayer, and the disclosure of the other as God's authoritative witness. In baptism, we affirm God as our final judge and acknowledge our personal responsibility and freedom before Him and His creation. This re-direction of our entire existence towards God as our focus and limit and towards His creation is repeated in prayer.

Coming from baptism and existing continuously in prayer, our existence as well as our perceptions of self, world, and the other are re-ordered and reinterpreted according to God's covenant-history in Christ. We thereby overcome the lordless powers, the destructive influence of absolutised world-views and created potentials. Moreover, our existence in prayer allows us to disclose the other as God's authoritative witness, and requires us to submit our interests, powers, and world-views to his claim on human righteousness. However, while prayer for the coming of God's Kingdom confronts us with the authority of the other as God's witness, it prevents us from taking the authority of the other as an absolute end in itself. Instead, prayer points us to Jesus Christ as the sole origin, criterion, and limit of any authority on earth.

However, because we are always inclined to affirm our present existence, beliefs, interests and world-views against God's self-proclamation, we need to be confronted by the other, so that our self-assurance, and therefore our perceptions of God, self and His creation are challenged. Since it is being challenged that creates the space in which God's command can manifest itself anew to us in its ultimate authority.

Part IV
The command of God the Redeemer

Barth introduces his discussion of the command of God the redeemer in his Münster lectures with the following summary: "*Gottes Gebot geht mich an, sofern ich als sein Kind ein Erbe ewigen Lebens bin. Indem er mit mir redet, verheißt er mir seine Gegenwart als mein Erlöser aus der Vorläufigkeit, in der ich jetzt und hier sein Geschöpf, und aus dem Widerspruch, in dem ich jetzt und hier ein Christ bin, und heißt er mich also warten und eilen auf diese seine Zukunft*"[559].

We are therefore told firstly that the command of God the redeemer addresses us as His children and heirs of eternal life. The term 'address' has here a rather *causative* meaning: we are not God's children as such, but "as the hearers of His Word", in Jesus Christ, where God has turned to all people as their Father and all people have turned to God as His children.[560] Since our being as God's children is not grounded in us but in Jesus Christ, it is "an irresolvable relationship, which cannot be undone by any means"[561]. Its objective reality has been established perfectly on Golgotha by the consummation of the covenant in and through Jesus Christ. Yet this also means that we cannot possess our true essence: we can solely *receive* it once Jesus Christ *comes to us* and gives Himself to us, that is, in so far as He is '*zu-künftig*' and therefore our '*Zu-kunft*' *(coming future)*. Our redeemed existence in union with God is therefore „*zukünftige*, ... coming truth: for we are not eternal children of God as such, but ... *we become so* as God's Son comes to us"[562].

Moreover, we are told that we are God's children in so far as we obediently *await* the coming of Jesus Christ. However, we are *called here and now* to wait for His coming by the God who *is* in Him our coming redeemer. The presupposition of our waiting for the coming of Jesus Christ and for our new existence in Him is therefore *His presence* in which He calls us to wait for Him and for the final revelation of His once and for all established order between humankind and God and thus among human beings. The eschatological truth about our existence as God's children is thus to be understood as "future in the present"[563].

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[559] E, 359.
[560] E, 368.
[561] E, 368f.
[562] E, 369.
[563] E, 367.

We have seen in the previous sections that we can receive Jesus Christ's promise of His final revelation of His perfect work of salvation and of our corresponding being solely in prayer. In prayer, we follow Him obediently in so far as we wait for His new coming in remembrance of His perfect work in obedience to His present command to witness His coming in our own human deeds here and now. In prayer, we therefore wait for Him as we hasten towards Him. In this awaiting and hastening *Nachfolge*, we *are* in Him, invoking God together with Him as our Father, and thereby claiming - from Him who alone can grant it - our right to exist as His children: "Das Gebet ist geradezu *die* jetzt und hier mögliche Realisierung unserer eschatologischen Wirklichkeit"[564].

We notice here again, how Barth's understanding of Jesus Christ as the redeemer and of our corresponding reality bears a dialectical character due to his willingness to perceive the one reality of Jesus Christ according to the interrelated Pauline-Johannine and synoptic perspectives. Barth's understanding of eschatology is thus firstly shaped by his exegesis of Romans and I Corinthians: "Eschatologisch heißt nicht eine solche Wahrheit, die erst Wahrheit werden oder die uns als Wahrheit erst angehen muß"[565]. "Eschatologisch heißt nämlich vor Allem: „*letztlich*", also abschließend, definitiv, unüberbietbar"[566]. Moreover, Barth holds unto the notion of „Johannine faith as having eternal life"[567].

The Pauline-Johannine perspective therefore reveals the *present and ultimate, unquestionable* character of the coming Jesus Christ as the one who has died and risen for us and thus of our own future being in Him. We are ultimately and thus essentially His children according to our eternal election in Him, which has been consummated once and for all on Golgotha. However, the Pauline-Johannine perspective presupposes and affirms the synoptic perspective: our true being lies *in Jesus Christ* who comes to us as our final judge in His divine, sovereign, and victorious battle against our continuous sin. God's Kingdom and our citizenship of it have come near, albeit they will not collapse into our fallen world. Both must be sought always anew by praying for Jesus Christ's free coming and for our justifying

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[564] E, 378f.
[565] E, 364.
[566] Ibid.
[567] E, 367.

and sanctifying judgement. We have our true existence in proper relation to God as His children, our ultimate and therefore essential being, in no other way than "in the *promise*"[568].

Barth therefore expresses our present existence with the term "heirs of eternal life".[569] As heirs of eternal life we are commanded to exist in the hope of God's grace, for Him who has in the resurrection of His Son proven and promised that He is our "redeemer from death"[570]: He will be there for us in the middle of nothingness, calling and redirecting us - as the ones we have become within our finite life before His eyes according to His providence and judgement - into the life-giving relation to Himself in Jesus Christ, into which He has eternally elected us. For this future life, we are called into responsibility here and now.[571]

So far, we can conclude that the command of God the redeemer calls us to exist in confident hope for the free gracious coming of Jesus Christ in responsibility for our eternal life as God's children, which is grounded in Him. The command of God the redeemer affirms thus – as a final word from which the previous commands anticipated their presuppositions – our responsible existence towards God as creator and reconciler. Our existence, according to the command of God the redeemer, is thus the final, the ultimate, word about our existence as God's *creature* in so far as we exist as an heir of eternal life in personal responsibility before our final judge in our death, as those who perceive their finite life in its responsibility for eternal life. Moreover, it is the final word about our existence as *reconciled sinners* in so far as we exist as children of God and heirs of eternal life here and now solely by invoking God as our Father in Jesus Christ, in hopeful expectation of, and responsibility for, His final universal revelation of the perfect consummation of His will, judgement, and righteous order in Jesus Christ.

In the discussions on the command of both God the creator and reconciler, we perceived human existence from many different perspectives. It would therefore be consistent to expect Barth to speak, with respect to God the Redeemer, a final word about human existence in accordance with each of these perspectives. However, we have to look for this final word beyond the limits of his Münster lectures: into the context of his KD and other smaller publications.

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[568] E, 367.
[569] Ibid.
[570] E, 373.
[571] E, 373.

Previously, we have perceived human existence under the perspective that our relation to God as our creator and reconciler implies necessarily a corresponding new relation *to the other* as God's creature, child, authorised witness, member of the body of Christ and agent within the ambivalent world-history. Furthermore, we have seen that our existence towards God as our future judge and redeemer enables and demands of us that we disclose our present situation as the place of our concrete responsibility for His concrete command, as it is the place created and ruled by Him as our creator who is, as such, our reconciler and redeemer. This disclosure becomes possible once we firstly acquire a differentiated critical consciousness of our past in our running towards our death, towards our final encounter with Jesus Christ as judge, creator and lord of our total finite existence; and once we secondly pray for the coming of Jesus Christ as the revealer of His once and for all consummated judgement over the historical world in which we live and thus by perceiving Him and His judgement as the origin, telos and sole criterion of everything that is. Henceforth we perceive everything solely in its subordinated relation to Him and His judgement.

This has the result that our seeing, thinking, willing, and acting becomes preliminary liberated from the dominion of the lordless powers and thus able to correspond to the reality of God's good creation. We thereby disclose the other as well as our own vocation, our particular worldly-historical situation, as a witness of God's command and are liberated to submit ourselves, our perceptions of God, world and self, to their authority, allowing them to call us into question, so that we can be redirected toward God and His actual command, as it encounters us in and through these witnesses. As such, we start to exist as God's witnesses to the world in the *Nachfolge* of Jesus Christ in prayer as a member of His church.

I will therefore inquire how Barth thinks - within the wider context of his oeuvre and of his personal existence as Jesus Christ's witness to the world within the church – about us being an heir of eternal life *in relation to the other* as God's child and witness, in relation *to the church* and *the world* and in relation to the ambivalent character of the time between Jesus Christ's first and final coming *under the dominion of the lordless powers*.

Barth's understanding of eternal life

According to Barth, Christians manifest their being as heirs of eternal life in their existence as members of the Christian congregation, celebrating the Eucharist together, hoping and demanding, "that they shall together be *strengthened* and *preserved* for *eternal life*"[572]. In their communal attendance of the Eucharist[573], they receive Jesus Christ in His gracious self-giving presence. As He comes to them as their "food and drink", He "strengthens and preserves them in their existence as those, with whom He Himself, the crucified and risen one, is on His way through the dark valley"[574]. Each Chrisian is thus an heir of eternal life in so far as she exists - due to Jesus Christ's continuous edification - in His *Nachfolge* as a member of His earthly body, the church. Yet she is this not for the sake of her individual or the church's existence: she is an heir of eternal life in order to be a witness and preliminary sign of the world's true reality in Jesus Christ: "Es handelt sich ... um den Vollzug einer exemplarischen Bewegung. Eben zum ewigen Leben sind doch alle Menschen bestimmt"[575].

Our existence as heirs of eternal life has therefore a profoundly practical, responsible, communal and worldly meaning. Consequently, Barth categorically rules out all forms of pious solipsism: our justified and sanctified existence in "personal, free co-responsibility for God's cause" is our incomprehensibly valuable promise. "Das ist die Ehre ... des ewigen Lebens, die [uns] von Gott versprochen ist"[576]. Our future eternal life, which we already anticipate in prayer, has, for Barth, the character of our free self-responsible actions for the divine cause in perfect knowledge of His will and works, and in our free claiming of God for our own proper causes. It consists in our *reciprocal* relationship with God. As heirs of eternal life as God's children in prayer, we are called into our real freedom as self-responsible, spontaneous, and original partners of God by following Jesus Christ in His kingly, priestly, and prophetic office as His witnesses.

Barth therefore sees the reason for creation in God's will for human beings to exist „not only as objects of His actions, as receipients of His mercy, but as responsible

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[572] IV/2, 795.
[573] IV/2, 796.
[574] IV/2, 797.
[575] IV/2, 796.
[576] IV/1, 123.

partners“[577]. We become these responsible partners by following Jesus Christ into His prayer as a member of His earthly body[578] in order “to take responsibility for ... our environment”[579]: ”[Gott] will ... daß seine Sache, die als solche von ihm geführt wird, ... nun doch nicht nur die seinige, sondern auch die unsrige sei. Er will nicht ohne uns Gott sein ... . Er ruft uns an seine Seite. Er ruft uns dazu auf, seine Absichten und Ziele zum Gegenstand unseres eigenen Begehrens zu machen“[580]. “Die drei letzten Bitten des Unser Vaters sind die Umkehrung und Konsequenz der drei ersten: Die „Wir“ treten jetzt in den Vordergrund. Weil und indem sie eingeladen und aufgefordert sind, sich bittend für die Sache Gottes zu interessieren, aktiv an ihr teilzunehmen, darum auch dazu: Gott zu bitten, sich seinerseits für *ihr* Sache zu interessieren, ihn um seine aktive Teilnahme an ihr anzugehen“[581].

In prayer, we exist as God's free partners in so far as we make ourselves responsible for His causes before the world and simultaneously for the causes of the world before God. This true exaltation into true human responsibility and originality is possible due to the fact that God manifests His divine sovereignty by creating and defining the space for our free reciprocal relationship with Him by His own existence as Jesus Christ: ”[E]ben darin besteht ... die Herrlichkeit seiner Allmacht und Souveränität im Unterschied zu der Unbeweglichkeit eines höchsten Götzen: daß er dem Bitten seines Geschöpfes Raum geben kann in seinem Willen“[582]. He allows us to participate in Jesus Christ's “kingly office“[583], and calls us “in the freedom of friends ...to encounter Him ultimately highly actively“[584].

Equally, Barth repeats in his ethics of reconciliation that God is no self-enclosed highest being, but wills a reciprocal encounter with His children: “real contact, company and exchange”[585]. ”Er ist also nicht so ... ohnmächtig, daß er sie ... nicht *erhören*, sich von ihnen nicht zu einem *neuen* Tun veranlassen, sein eigenes Schaffen, Walten und Verfügen ihrer Anrufung nicht *entsprechen* lassen dürfte und könnte“[586]. “Ihm steht es also sehr wohl zu, sein

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[577] III/4, 82.
[578] III/4, 112.
[579] III/4, 113.
[580] III/4, 114.
[581] III/4, 115.
[582] III/4, 120.
[583] Ibid.
[584] II/1, 575.
[585] CL, 169.
[586] CL, 169f.

Handeln durch das seiner von ihm zum Gehorsam gegen ihn befreiten Kinder *mitbestimmen* zu lassen"[587].

By being God's responsible and spontaneous partners, our existence gains its eternal character. We have to thank God therefore "that he wants and uses [us] as witnesses of His work and Word", and "for the eternal meaning [our] existence gains thereby"[588]. Our earthly existence as God's witness will be fulfilled and revealed at the end of our lives in its likeness to God's one proper witness, Jesus Christ.[589] Through the purification of fire it will be saved as that which it has eternally been in the eyes of God, and will find itself accepted into the "ministry in eternal justice, innocence and blessedness"[590]. This eternal ministry as God's witness in Jesus Christ's *Nachfolge* is our promise and present responsibility.

Our existence as a witness to the world, and as a representative of the world before God, presupposes our continuous listening to Jesus Christ who proclaims Himself as the coming universal revealer in His identity with His past self as the reconciler. Our listening to Jesus Christ's self-proclamation occurs in and through the witness of the prophets of apostles, and – in the critical light of this witness - in and through the witnesses of the church. Hence, our commanded existence as heirs of eternal life in hopeful expectation of the coming of Jesus Christ has primarily a *historical direction*: we exist towards our future in remembrance of Jesus Christ's perfect salvation work, and in responsibly listening to His appointed witnesses as members of His earthly body, that is, with respect to the church's history of responsible witness.

However, the church's history of human witness of Jesus Christ is hidden within the ambivalence of our present world. We saw above that sin is, according to the Pauline-Johannine perspective, primarily humankind's revolt against its gracious election by God in Jesus Christ, and that we all – according to the synoptic perspective – take part in this revolt. Consequently, we can expect Barth to perceive the factuality of human sin and its consequences within the church in its most horrible and destructive forms. While the church is an earthly model of the divine promise of eternal life, it is simultaneously – both

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[587] CL, 170.
[588] CL, 162.
[589] IV/3, 1065.
[590] Ibid.

limited and revealed by this promise - the epitome of human sin. With respect to the synoptic perspective, the church stands thus under Jesus Christ's judgement.

Yet the telos of the divine judgement consists in the justification and sanctification of all people for their existence in communion with God as His witnesses. And because Jesus Christ is, according to the Pauline-Johannine witness, the coming judge as victor, as the one in whom each person has her true *eternal life as His justified and sanctified witness*, we cannot but start our perception of the history of the church under the presupposition that her members are in Jesus Christ - by means of His final judgement - to be perceived as His proper witnesses. Our call to witness to the eternal life of the world in the coming Jesus Christ demands of us to speak on the premise that the lives of those who existed before us have been taken up in their worldly ambivalence into Jesus Christ and have been justified and sanctified in order to witness properly to Him in their historical, particular, original human words. We must therefore speak self-responsibly and originally here and now while listening to their voices, allowing our thoughts, words, and deeds to be triggered, shaped, and criticised by those witnesses who exist in Him as His perfect ministers.

To sum up: according to Barth, we exist as God's children and heirs of eternal life by witnessing to Jesus Christ's new coming as the universal revelation of His consummated order of justice and righteousness and thus of freedom and peace. As such, we exist as members of Jesus Christ's earthly body, and act as God's witnesses to the world, in personal responsibility and free originality in the celebration of the Eucharist, as well as in prayer as an act of our *Nachfolge* of Jesus Christ. We thereby witness to the coming future reality of all people in responsible listening to their witnesses in and through which the coming Jesus Christ proclaims Himself here and now, in so far as He has taken them up into His perfect service, having so covered their mortal lives with eternal life. Listening to Jesus Christ's self-proclamation within the church through His appointed and exalted witnesses and allowing our thoughts, words, and deeds to be challenged and redirected by it, we ourselves become His witnesses for the world and thus actual heirs of eternal life.

The conscience of the child of God

In his Münster lectures, Barth proposes that the command of God the Redeemer encounters man as a direction of his own *conscience*[591]: we are made accessories to God's actual command: "*Gottes Gebot trifft mich als mein eigenes streng jeweiliges Mitwissen um die im Verhältnis zu seinem kommenden ewigen Reich bestehende Notwendigkeit meines Tuns und Lassens in diesem Augenblick*"[592]. As God's children and heirs of eternal life, we exist *in Jesus Christ*, in His *Nachfolge* in hopeful prayer for His final coming as the universal revealer and in faithful remembrance of His perfect work in the light of His self-proclamation in the power of His Spirit. In this way, we receive a conscience, knowledge about God's own essential goodness and righteousness as He has manifested them in His covenant and thus about our own good deeds in responsible correspondence to God's goodness and righteousness as His free witnesses: "Gewissen heißt doch συν–ειδησις, con-scientia, also menschliches *Mit*wissen um das, was ... Gott ... allein wissen kann, nämlich über die Güte oder Ungüte [unseres] Tuns"[593].

Yet our conscience is not direct self-knowledge. We can solely *receive* a conscience by praying to God that His will be done on earth as in heaven.[594] Existing in this way, we experience the command of God not as a heteronomous law but as the call into our freedom as God's children in which we tell ourselves the command of God.[595] It encounters us thus as an autonomous direction, as a self-expression of our ultimate, that is, eternal reality in Christ: "Hier verstehen wir den Menschen unter dem letzten Aspekt seiner Wirklichkeit: ... als sein eigenes Gegenüber sozusagen, nach dem er sich immer nur betend ausstrecken kann". "[In dieser eschatologischen Wirklichkeit] stehen wir ... jenseits der Sphäre, wo uns das Gebot Gottes nur ein fremdes, von außen zu uns kommendes Gebot, wo es nur Gesetz und also Autorität sein kann"[596]. "Betend [...] haben wir ein Gewissen, nimmt uns das Gebot der Verheißung in Anspruch in Form unseres eigenen Mitwissens und also unseres Redens

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[591] For an exegetical exploration and critical discussion of Barth's understanding of conscience see John Webster, 1998, 57-60.
[592] E, 384.
[593] E, 384.
[594] E, 387.
[595] E, 388.
[596] E, 396.

mit uns selber und haben wir, um es zu hören, durchaus auf das zu hören, was wir uns selber sagen müssen“[597].

Praying for Jesus Christ's final coming in faithful remembrance of His consummation of the covenant, we exist through the power of the Holy Spirit in communion with the Father in the knowledge of His children: in correspondence to God's victorious contradiction of human sin and thus in self-contradiction. Having a conscience consequently means that we accept and repeat God's judgement over our arrogance, laziness, and lies, that we confront ourselves from beyond ourselves: “Im Gewissen ist zweifellos unsere eigene Stimme *Gottes Stimme*. ... [F]reilich unter der ... Bestimmung, daß wir selbst uns dabei ... sozusagen gegenüberstehen [...] Ich finde mich ... gleichzeitig hier *und* dort, ... hier *ich* in meiner gegenwärtigen Zuständlichkeit, dort *ich* ... in reiner Zukünftigkeit – *ich* bin doch beide“[598].

This voice of my conscience, my free repetition of God's judgement over my own existence, is, for Barth, the final criterion of any worldly heteronomous authority.[599] Yet does this not contradict Barth's demand of our responsible listening to the authoritative witnesses of those exalted into Christ? I think that Barth is clear that we are called into personal responsibility for God's actual command. As we have seen above with respect to the command of God the creator and reconciler, we cannot be represented before God by anyone else – not even by the church. Our final decision regarding the command will be a solitary decision. Nevertheless, we must consider that this solitary decision must not be made by self-centred sinners: I must therefore never forget “that I am, as receiver, a very different person than as proclaimer of my conscience, that I have thus good reason to be highly critical about that which I consider as my conscience“[600].

Thus, we must not forget that we have to perceive ourselves according to the Pauline-Johannine *and* the synoptic perspective. While Barth's discussion of the command of God the creator focused on our *personal responsibility* before God as our final judge, Barth's discussion of the command of God the reconciler focused on the *contradiction of our sinful self-centred existence as projectors of world-views* through the other in his function as a witness of God. If we

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[597] E, 389.
[598] E, 391f.
[599] E, 397.
[600] E, 399f.

expect to hear the command of God the redeemer in unity with the first two commands, as their final word, we must expect it to challenge our self-centred existence and our corresponding perceptions and judgements of the world, and thereby to liberate us for our individual personal responsibility towards God's command.

Having a conscience must therefore involve listening freely to God's actual command in personal responsibility, allowing our previously acquired perceptions of this command and of the historical-worldly context in which we are called to respond to it to be challenged. This can solely happen once we invoke God to proclaim His name, will, and righteous order – in and together with the church. Praying for the coming of Jesus Christ in His universal self-revelation as a member of His earthly body transforms us into God's accessories only if we allow our sinful perceptions to be challenged by His self-proclamation in and through the history of witness of His church, which is grounded in the witness of the Prophets and Apostles.

The church's task within the world is therefore defined by Barth as being a witness to the world of God's final universal revelation of His past work of salvation in Jesus Christ: "Sie ... anerkennt, erkennt und bekennt „allen Anderen zuvor jetzt schon", was in Jesus Christus für Alle geschehen ist, und was dann, wenn er als Richter aller Lebendigen und Toten erscheinen wird, als für Alle geschehen, auch von Allen erkannt, anerkannt und bekannt werden wird. [...] Sie existiert eschatologisch"[601]. The church exists eschatologically if she understands herself as coming from Jesus Christ's past revelation of His consummation of the covenant and as heading toward His universal revelation of this perfect event under the command to testify her origin and telos to the world by their own existence. She does this in so far as she "acknowledges, recognises and affirms" the righteous order of the covenant as the origin and telos of God's ways and thus of her own and of *all* worldly ways: for the covenantal order has "a universal and not particular, a uniting and not dividing character"[602].

Hence, the church has to exist as a witness of the order of eternal peace for all humankind. Consequently, she stands under the command to exist within the ambivalent world as the one holy catholic apostolic church, as "the preliminary manifestation of *all*

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[601] IV/1, 739.
[602] IV/3, 812.

humankind, justified in Jesus Christ"[603]. The fact that the church exists in manifold schisms is therefore in Barth's eyes "a *scandal*"[604], a disobedient rejection of her command to witness to the world of her true final reality in Jesus Christ.

We can therefore conclude that the command of the Redeemer calls us to affirm and to witness to the ultimate reality of the world as God's redeemed creation in Christ, as it is disclosed by the Pauline-Johannine perspective.

To sum up: the commanded existence of the church is her eschatological existence toward Jesus Christ in personally responsible, albeit humble and obedient, listening to each of her present members and to the witnesses of her past, in order to recognise Jesus Christ as her and the world's future, and to affirm this by becoming a preliminary sign of this telos by moving from her own sinful divisions toward a true inner unity.[605]

We can learn how Barth understood the praxis of such a commanded listening to the past witnesses of the church by analysing the way in which he himself engaged with church history. While there is no single larger work or lecture of Barth that is not the product of his own responsible engagement with the history of the church's witnesses, both his christological presuppositions and their practical application can be particularly well studied in his lectures on *Die Protestantische Theologie im 19. Jahrhundert.*

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[603] IV/1, 812.

[604] IV/1, 754.

[605] It seems a meaningful coincidence that Barth's last essay focuses on the eschatological existence of the church. Prior to his death, Barth claimed that the church is heading towards her coming redeemer solely in so far as she turns towards the witnesses of Jesus Christ's first parousia of those who are eternally alive in Him: "The church's movement is ... a stern *conversion*" "to that which originally happened" (LZ, 68) and which encounters the church as its future: "[Jesus Christus] kommt [der Kirche] und ihm geht die Kirche entgegen, aber ihm, als dem, der war. Ihm wendet sie sich zu in ihrer Umkehr" (LZ, 70). In so far as the church is heading towards her *coming* redeemer by turning back towards the event of His first coming, she cannot but exist respectfully and thankfully to her own tradition, which itself has been brought forth by this event (LZ, 70): "In der in der Umkehr begriffenen Kirche gilt: "Gott ist kein Gott der Toten, sondern der Lebendigen". "Ihm leben sie alle – von den Aposteln bis zu den Vätern von vorgestern und gestern. Sie haben nicht nur das Recht, [sondern auch die Aktualität], auch heute gehört – nicht unkritisch, nicht in mechanischer Unterwerfung, aber aufmerksam gehört zu werden" (LZ, 71).

Barth's understanding of history according to Die Protestantische Theologie im 19. Jahrhundert

If we now turn to the introduction of *Die Protestantische Theologie im 19. Jahrhundert*, we turn to a piece in which Barth gives a theoretical justification for the importance and method of his general way of doing theology historically. Characteristic of Barth is his demand that the relation between the listener and the voices of the past should be characterised by "love". He wishes that his students "show simply more love to those, who have been before us"[606]. The task of history is, for Barth, *relational* – it consists of a personal encounter with the purpose to establish true fellowship through mutual questioning and responsibility. History is thus straight forwardly ethical. "Historical knowledge" is no detached observation of facts - it happens once the actions of another individual pose a question to me, which I can answer solely by my own acts.[607]

According to Barth, we exist in relation to the voices of the past in so far as we are members of the church, which means that the purpose of our historical existence lies in testifying to the world responsibly, correctly and orderly how it has been judged and redeemed by God in Jesus Christ. However, in order to fulfil this task we have to hear God's Word always anew, here and now.[608] This hearkening is no individual task but the task of the church as the body of Jesus Christ. Each member of this body has to listen to the human historical witness of the history of Jesus Christ within and in openness to the history of the church – whereby the latter must be understood as history initiated, guided, and judged by the Word of God.

Previously in his *Göttingen Dogmatics*, Barth stated: "Das Wort Gottes in der Schrift kommt zu mir in Form der Autorität der Gemeinschaft"[609]. "Herausgerissen soll ich da offenbar werden aus meiner stolzen Isolierung [...] Respektieren soll ich nicht nur Propheten und Apostel als Zeugen, sondern auch ... eine lange Reihe ... jener Zeugen, die ihr Wort mit in die Wagschale werfen"[610]. When Jesus Christ comes to me in His self-proclamation in and

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606 PT, vi.
607 PT, 1.
608 PT, 2.
609 UR I, 281.
610 Ibid.

through the words of His appointed witnesses, I encounter the "authority of the church"[611]. Hence, this human community demands my "obedience"[612]. I must hear the Word of God through the history of its interpretation, for this history stands under God's "promise"[613] that He forgives its sins, that He justifies and sanctifies it and thus exalts it into its being as an eternal witness of Jesus Christ's self-proclamation.

We could see above that it is not self-evident that we actually hear God's Word, especially not in such a way that we understand how it corresponds to and transforms the particular present situation, how it discloses our one possibility in which to exist as His witness here and now. Since the synoptic perspective of the history of the covenant as Jesus Christ's *Kampfgeschichte* has shown that human beings, *extra et intra muros ecclesiae*, domesticate God's Word as they perceive it within the context defined by their personal world-views. Consequently, church history, as the history of the common witness to God's revelation in Jesus Christ, also appears from the synoptic perspective as an ambivalent history of more darkness than light. Hence, we are commanded to pray that God conquers our world-views and redirects us towards Himself as the sole focus of our thinking, willing, and acting.

Yet once we pray for His victorious coming in remembrance of Scripture's testimony of His resurrection and of His chosen people in Him, and in personal responsibility before Him as our coming judge, we stand under His promise of a partial, preliminary clearing of the true character of the church's witnesses. We must thereby remember that prayer has, for Barth, a critical noetic function. It allows us to perceive being – and thus also historical actions and words – according to its ultimate reality that has been established by Jesus Christ's *Kampfgeschichte*. This ultimate reality comes into view as present reality from the Pauline-Johannine perspective. Listening to the history of the ecclesiastical witnesses must therefore take place alongside our prayer for the coming One who is witnessed by the twofold witness of the Prophets and Apostles, so that our thoughts are redirected towards Him as the telos and origin of our, and of the church's, history.

Additionally, we have to remember the ontic significance which prayer has for Barth. In prayer, we exist according to the order God has established once and for all in Jesus Christ: in proper relation to God and in responsibility for those *with whom* and *for whom* we

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[611] UR I, 282.
[612] UR I, 282f.
[613] UR I, 289.

pray to God as the Father of all. We so disclose our neighbour, who challenges our self-certainty and self-enclosure as Jesus Christ's witness, as he redirects us towards God and towards our future as His child. Yet we must not only expect to be confronted with the authority of the other among our contemporaries, but also among those who have lived before us. The latter is the prime concern of the command of God the redeemer, since it simply commands us to witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ and of all people of all ages in Him.

We must therefore expect that the words of those who existed before us are not the words of the dead (and thus lifeless facts in need to be enlivened by our own interpretations and imagination), but the words of those who are alive in Jesus Christ. We must expect them to have the power to speak to us, to redirect our thoughts and actions toward God and to lead us toward a new understanding of God's Word within our present situation: "Augustin, Thomas, Luther, Schleiermacher und alle die Anderen sind nicht tot, sondern lebendig. Sie reden noch und wollen als Lebendige gehört sein, so wahr wir uns selbst und sie mit uns in der Kirche wissen"[614]. "In der Kirche gibt es keine Vergangenheit, darum auch nicht in der Theologie. Ihm leben sie alle"[615]

Living in Jesus Christ, the victorious judge and redeemer of humankind, they *are* judged and redeemed. In so far as we perceive them from the Pauline-Johannine perspective, we must not expect them to be heretics. We have to believe that God has forgiven their sins and exalted them into true union and fellowship with Himself as His faithful witnesses. The church is therefore commanded to be open toward *all* the voices of the past.[616] Trusting in God's justifying and sanctifying judgement of His church in Jesus Christ, we must expect first to hear their voices – in the midst of the sinful ways of the church in her ambivalent existence – as proper witnesses of Jesus Christ according to His self-proclamation in and through Holy Scripture. We are therefore called to perceive them as our predecessors on our way in the *Nachfolge* of Jesus Christ as His witnesses and to embrace them accordingly in loving respect.[617]

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[614] PT, 3.
[615] Ibid.
[616] Ibid.
[617] I/2, 658.

However, this does not mean that tradition is infallible. We have seen in the discussion of the command of God the creator from the synoptic perspective that our exaltation into eternal life does not mean that our sinful past is simply ignored but that it is judged and protected by God in such a way that its destructive and misleading force is shattered. It can thereby serve God's ends by becoming to us a witness of His judgement and thus a warning call, as we are freed from angst for a calm, focused, and critically differentiated review of our past. Similarly, we have to listen to the voices of the past in a faithful and respectful, though as such critically differentiated way, that is, according to the way they present themselves if perceived from the Pauline-Johannine and from the synoptic perspective. Then we can even expect them to teach us *first* in a *positive* way how to understand God's Word here and now and how to witness to it in our own words and deeds.

According to Barth, a perception of history in light of God's history with man in Jesus Christ must not neglect historical particularities. His history aims to be – under the presupposition that the history of both world and church has its origin, telos, and law in the *particular* history of Jesus Christ – a reasoning from 'below to above'. It is just our expectation of the One who comes in the historical character of the exalted man Jesus of Nazareth, which demands our appraisal of historical particularities: "Jede *Periode* der Kirche will in der Tat als Periode der *Kirche* verstanden werden, d.h. als eine Zeit der Offenbarung, der Erkenntnis und des Bekenntnisses der *einen* christlichen Wahrheit, aber als eine *besondere*, als *diese* Zeit solcher Offenbarung, solcher Erkenntnis und solchen Bekenntnisses"[618].

Confronted with Jesus Christ in His particular history, we should become open to the uniqueness of His witnesses and their specific temporal contexts, for their originality as God's children. If perceived in their distinctive character, these witnesses challenge our self-assertion so that we might gain a conscience of God and of our corresponding existence as His children. This knowledge comes then from beyond us, challenges us and thus holds us open for further inquiry into the Word of God.

The act of history is thus an act of continuous inquiry and being called into responsibility by the other. It demands of us not to project our own ideas onto the other but to turn resolutely toward him, demanding to hear *him* and what *he* has to say and allowing

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[618] PT, 13.

him thereby to challenge our own views.[619] Historical understanding does therefore not come easily.[620] For Barth, it requires us joining in Jesus Christ's fight against our old selves as the centre of our personal world-view. Thus, we must strive to gain a conscience but never generalise any momentary "personal theological knowledge".

Precisely in the moment in which we gain a conscience, we must not close ourselves off from further listening to God and to the history of His human witnesses. Under the command of the Redeemer, we are called to stay open to His coming and His final judgement and are thus forbidden to make final conclusions.[621] Otherwise, we would have placed ourselves above the other as his judge and be eager to misuse him as a means by which to affirm our own position.[622] We must therefore always remember: "Die Geschichte will für die Wahrheit Gottes zeugen, nicht für unsere Errungenschaften, und darum haben wir uns von allem vermeintlichen Schonwissen ihr gegenüber immer wieder in die Bereitschaft, Neues zu vernehmen, zurückzuziehen"[623].

While we are called before God, as our final judge, to make a personal responsible, critical decision about past witnesses, we are not called to judge them in order to justify ourselves. To the contrary, we have to perceive ourselves in sinful solidarity with them and to thus make first and foremost a critical judgement "for or against ourselves, not for or against them"[624]. All decisions I make before God as a member of His elected people will thereby be solely preliminary, consummated in openness for His final judgement. However, precisely in this preliminary form, our historical decisions do positively and concretely transform our thinking and knowing, our willing and acting. They disclose possibilities for our ministry of God as His witnesses here and now, possibilities that have previously been veiled by our world-views.

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[619] PT, 10.
[620] PT, 5.
[621] Ibid.
[622] PT, 5 ; 8.
[623] PT, 8.
[624] PT, 9.

Conclusion

Again, we can see here the dialectic of two imperatives, derived from the two counter-posed biblical perspectives: the synoptic perspective perceives history as an ambivalent process of veiling and unveiling in which we are trapped and which we perpetuate by the production of our world-views. While we therefore depend on historical critique, we are likely only to hear those voices of the past that affirm our present existence and conceptions. Prayerful rereading of the unselected and uncensored wealth of tradition within the hermeneutical framework of Jesus Christ's covenant-history according to the two biblical perspectives is therefore required of us. The possibility and necessity of such a venture comes into view from the Pauline-Johannine perspective: in Jesus Christ, the church of all ages is exalted into the freedom to speak to us today as His witnesses, and we ourselves are exalted into the freedom to hear these witnesses as witnesses of Jesus Christ's self-proclamation in accordance to the voice of our conscience as the voice of our eschatological reality in Christ as God's children.

Barth's application of these presuppositions in His reading of Hegel

Barth's reading of Hegel shows firstly how Hegel reveals the universal human character, and thus our own character, to veil the reality of God and His creation by our world-views. According to Barth, Hegel fulfils the promise of the Enlightenment, which is the self-confidence of man in his rational capacity as the final standard of judgement and reality, by stating the identity between thinking and the objects of thought, achieved by the act of thinking itself.[625]

While Hegel also engaged to a great extent with the ideas and concerns of his predecessors, he did not allow them to challenge him genuinely: despite – or rather just because of his aim to be as inclusive as possible – he suppressed the diversity of historical possibilities of thought in an extraordinarily powerful and obvious way. Hegel did not simply overlook particular concerns and problems of his processors. Instead, he intended to

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[625] PTE, 391.

affirm the promise of the Enlightenment against its contradictors by providing them with a place within his system - at which they were eventually bound to lose their critical power. What makes Hegel thus typically modern is the fact that he dared to invent a universal method by virtue of which "he could meet every request and complaint, no matter how alien it was to him, with the answer that it had already been taken into consideration in its place"[626].

Hegel thus included *Lessing*'s discovery of historical experience, *Kant*'s teaching of radical evil, of the primacy of practical reason and of the limits of knowledge, *Herder*'s protest against pure rationalism and his interest in history and mythology, the *Romantic* discovery of the immediacy of the individual[627] and longing for the unity of the I and the universe – and last but not least: the upsetting presence of God. Hegel overcame the offence that God presented to the autonomy of man's reason by asserting that self-confidence in reason is grounded in confidence in God, and vice versa.[628] This thought of a dialectical identity of human and God consciousness allowed a system to emerge in which no problem appeared as irresolvable.[629] Hence, Hegel effectively placed – eventually human - reason, as the judge and master over everything.[630]

However, Barth does not intend to condemn Hegel. Instead, he sees that the dangers of his system can be overcome solely by understanding him genuinely: by bringing oneself authentically before the heart of the matter that Hegel encountered, by breaking open Hegel's definitions and method in order to rediscover the suppressed problems of modernity "which were calling for treatment"[631]. Barth reads Hegel therefore out of his Christian existence in prayer, under the command of God the Redeemer: in expectation of Jesus Christ's final return as universal revealer and judge, remembering His perfect work of reconciliation as a member of the church in the Reformed tradition, and under the presupposition that Jesus Christ as the truth also bears witness to Himself in Hegel's philosophy.

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[626] PTE, 406.
[627] PTE, 394
[628] PTE, 395.
[629] PTE, 396.
[630] Ibid.
[631] PTE, 389.

Above we have seen that according to the apostolic witness, Jesus Christ is, as the descended God and ascended man, the A and the O, the Lord of all time. As such, He calls us to allow our thoughts, not least our thoughts about the history of philosophy, to be redirected by Him. Consequently, we must firstly perceive all things *towards* Him. We have to presuppose faithfully that the truth of any human thought can lie solely in its pointing us to the one truth whose universal revelation we wait for in hope, and which is witnessed to us by the prophets and apostles in faith. Secondly, we must perceive all things as *coming from* Him. We have to presuppose faithfully that at the beginning of all human thought stands a genuine encounter with Jesus Christ. Finally, we must perceive all things as being *through* Him and being governed by Him. We must presuppose faithfully that true understanding occurs under His Lordship in the power of His Spirit who opens up our consciousness in prayerful hope for the faithful recollection of the wealth of human possibilities of existence for God displayed by the history of Jesus Christ Himself.

Christian existence is thus hope for the final coming of Jesus Christ in faithful hearkening to history in the light of the apostolic witness of Jesus Christ's first coming. Christian existence is thereby unable to achieve a final synthesis between its future and past, between its anticipation of the coming Kingdom and its recollection of history. It can only indicate this synthesis by pointing to Jesus Christ who is present to us solely in hope, faith and love in the mediacy of the testimony of Scripture in the power of His Spirit, who, as the risen crucified, as A and O, essentially transcends any controllable simple presence in man's mind, feelings or will.

Barth therefore perceives the following positive indications of Jesus Christ and the demands they present to theology. Barth points out that Hegel understands "reason, truth ..., God himself ... only as an event"[632]. Hegel reminds theology therefore that "God is God only in his divine action, revelation, creation, reconciliation, redemption"[633]. Moreover, Hegel's concern with the truth presents the demand to theology that it should concern itself not with experiences, historical contingencies or opinions, but with the truth[634], and reminds

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[632] PTE, 398.
[633] PTE, 399.
[634] PTE, 415.

theology of the possibility "that the truth might be history, event; that it might always be recognised and discovered in actuality and not otherwise"[635].

And Barth reads Hegel under the presupposition that Hegel's philosophy is grounded in a genuine encounter with Jesus Christ and is thus not merely speculative but rather *descriptive*: "Hegel sees ... the life ... of truth"[636]. "And what makes this system a system, that gives the order" "is nothing but the rhythm of life itself"[637]. Thereby Hegel's perception of the self-movement of truth rests apparently "upon a theological premise. The truth can only be so menacing, ... if truth, as Hegel constantly assumes, is identical with God himself"[638]. Hegel can describe the rhythm of the self-movement of truth because his thinking comes from an encounter with the God who is the process of Three in One. He therefore reminds theology that the logic of theology has to adapt to the self-movement of the triune God.[639]

Once theology allows itself to be reminded by Hegel's philosophy of Jesus Christ as its promise and judge, it becomes aware of the following pitfalls of Hegel's thought. For once theology is reminded that Jesus Christ is the Son of the *free* God who descended to conquer sin out of grace, it must confess that His reality contradicts Hegel's perceptions of sin as necessary antithesis[640] and of reconciliation as a "continuation of the one eventual course of truth"[641]. Moreover, since Jesus Christ is the saviour in His salvation-*work* and calls His disciples to follow Him by allowing their entire existence to be redirected by and towards Him, we have to question the centrality of reason. Instead, we have to allow Kant to remind us again of the primacy of *practical* reason.[642]

Furthermore, the encounter with Jesus Christ Himself in the power of His Spirit in prayerful listening to His self-witness in Scripture stands in a sharp contrast to Hegel's system, in which objectivity is solely a point to be passed through. Hence, we must perceive Hegel's philosophy as a definite warning for theological thinking, urging it to recognise the freedom and otherness of God and to ensure that the "self-movement of truth" is regarded

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[635] Ibid.
[636] PTE, 399.
[637] PTE, 400.
[638] PTE, 413.
[639] Cf. PTE, 413; 415.
[640] PTE, 402.
[641] PTE, 418.
[642] PTE, 417.

justly as the self-movement of the triune God and is cautiously "detached from the self-movement of man"[643].

However, the most serious pitfall of Hegel's thinking consists for Barth in his affirmation of a final reciprocal identity of God and man, future and past, grace and sin. For Barth, this Hegelian thought is a clear expression of our general desire to establish ourselves next to God. Yet we must not judge this thought in abstraction from Jesus Christ's Lordship. It characterises our *rebellion* against the truth, against Jesus Christ's self-proclamation – yet our rebellion is rebellion against the *truth*. As such, Hegel's thought bears against its own intention witness to the fact that Jesus Christ is the truth in his differentiated identity of God and man. Yet once this truth encounters us, we must recognise *Jesus Christ* as the *promise* of our existence in faith in His perfect act of reconciliation. This means that every one who appears as the fulfiller of this promise, who understands himself as the reconciler of his age, must be rejected.

Yet is not Jesus Christ, according to God's eternal election of grace, the primarily rejected one? So maybe this might be a positive sign to return to Hegel after all. Because to believe one holy, catholic, and apostolic church means to believe that "in him they all live" as Jesus Christ's witnesses[644] and are to be encountered by us with *love*. Hegel's philosophy of reconciliation can be understood then as true witness to Jesus Christ, spoken under the sign of the certain "knowledge of the Creator of heaven and earth, of the Lord over light and darkness, over life and death. Knowledge of God could be the knowledge of irreconcilable contradictions and their eternal vanquishing in the mind"[645]. For Barth, there can be thus "no denying that knowledge of God was what [Hegel] meant, and that he was speaking from very close to the heart of the matter"[646].

We can therefore see that Barth perceives each person's encounter with Jesus Christ as the possibility of her lies. Disclosed as such and perceived under Jesus Christ's judgement, the world-views of our past and present can show themselves as transformed by Jesus Christ into His proper witnesses.

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[643] PTE, 419.
[644] PTE, 17.
[645] PTE, 414.
[646] Ibid.

To sum up: Barth understands the possibility of true human knowledge to be grounded in our proper encounter with Jesus Christ as the origin, telos, and Lord of our existence-in-the-world. A critical engagement with philosophical truth claims consists therefore for Barth in their re-interpretation within the framework of the history of Jesus Christ as origin, telos and present Lord of His reconciled fallen creation. Reinterpreted with respect to the history of the living Jesus Christ, Barth treats them as witnesses of Jesus Christ's judgement over the sinful world-views that veil our present, historically developed situation, but also as witnesses of our reality as God's redeemed children in Christ.

The practical and political importance of a christological engagement with church history

Such a Christologically guided critical engagement with history has the same function as our reflection on our mortality and prayer: the disclosure of our present situation, of its inherent possibility to serve God here and now. Moreover, we can see how these three activities are – commanded by the one God who is in Jesus Christ God for us as our reconciler, creator, and redeemer – not contingent and disperse but anticipate each other and form an interrelated unity. They are the characteristic forms of our temporal existence in Jesus Christ's *Nachfolge*: running toward Jesus Christ as our final judge and future redeemer in prayer, we trustfully remember His salvation work as witnessed by the Prophets and Apostles and by the church. By this way of existence, we disclose our present situation as being limited and judged by God, our personal responsibility for this situation before God and His redeemed creation, and the other as God's witness.

While the commanded existence in openness for the witness of history requires intellectual rigorousness and diligence, it is not an intellectualistic end in itself. It forms an integral part of our existence in Jesus Christ's *Nachfolge* in responsibility to His actual command. Jesus Christ's particular command directs us into our proper place according to the ontological order established by God between each human being and God and each human being and fellow human beings in Jesus Christ. This order is the order of eternal peace, of the heavenly polis. The church is therefore commanded to witness to this order. She

exists as this witness if she hears the voices of her past as witnesses of Jesus Christ and His order and thereby moves towards her own telos, towards her being the *one holy, catholic, and apostolic* church: "Das in ihr geführte Gespräch steht unter einer verbindlichen Absicht und diese Absicht besteht in der *Einigung* oder doch in Einigungen hinsichtlich des rechten Glaubens"[647].

If we look at the way in which Barth perceives the commanded movement of each member of the church toward her inner unity, we can see how his thinking follows the main lines of his ethical discussions. According to the command of God the creator, I have to reflect on my mortality. This reflection causes me to affirm that I cannot be represented by anyone else in my personal responsibility before God as my final judge who is as such the origin and Lord of my personal history and before His redeemed creation in Christ.

Furthermore, this reflection lets my present place, my vocation, as the appointed place on which to witness obediently and self-responsibly to God's command appear. From this particular place of responsibility within the church, I have to reach "*towards the one church*"[648]. According to the command of God the reconciler we are called to pray to God to reveal Himself as the origin and telos of everything that is, so that our thoughts, words, and deeds can be reordered by Him. This existence in prayer is also the commanded way of conversion for the church: "Wenn es nur geschehe, daß man eben *Jesus Christus* ... den Herrn der Kirche sein lassen würde!"[649] According to the command of God the Redeemer, the church and each of its members are called to exist towards Jesus Christ as their redeemer and toward their own unity in Him by listening to the voices of the past in prayer and individual responsibility at their particular *place of responsibility*: "Das dürfte in der Realisierung des Glaubens an die eine Kirche angesichts ihrer Zerspaltung der *entscheidende* Schritt sein: daß die getrennten Kirchen ehrlich und ernstlich auf die Stimme des *Herrn*, durch sie und für sie aufgeschlossen, dann aber auch auf die Stimme der anderen hören wollen und vielleicht hören"[650].

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[647] I/2, 660.
[648] IV/1, 759.
[649] IV/1, 761.
[650] IV/1, 764.

According to Barth, christologically guided, critical historical inquiry is commanded for the service of the unity of the church. Moreover, Barth sees the church as responsible also for the eschatological unity of the nations. Perceiving this eschatological reality as the world's true reality in Jesus Christ and praying for its universal revelation, she cannot but act according to this reality. Hence, the church must exist also politically: she has to understand and judge world-history and act within it in light of the covenant, the internal foundation, and criterion of world-history. As church-history is essentially the history of Jesus Christ as the ruler over His elected people, understanding church-history helps us to understand world-history: learning to see God at work within the history of His church in His victorious fight against her confusion of His Word with her own world-views teaches us to differentiate between the works of the Holy Spirit and of the lordless powers outside the church. This conclusion rests on the presupposition that Jesus Christ is Lord over church *and* world: "Auch die wirklich und scheinbar so andere Welt da draußen gehört ihm: dem König Israels. Er ist als solcher auch *ihr* König"[651]. "Auch sie ist ganz und gar von ihm her, durch Ihn, zu Ihm hin (Röm.11,36)"[652].

Above, we have seen that, from the synoptic perspective, Jesus Christ appears as the Lord over history in His victorious fight against the ambivalence brought forth by our confusion of God's command with the demands of the fallen world, of nothingness. Human confusion must therefore be taken seriously – yet it can be taken utterly seriously solely within the limits of Jesus Christ's work and existence. It is therefore a sinful temptation to perceive human confusion as the "innermost truth of worldly events", and to think, will, and act accordingly.[653]

We are thus commanded to perceive world-history within the limits and further qualification of Jesus Christ's perfect saving and redeeming work, as it appears from the Pauline-Johannine perspective: "Der Welt Versöhnung mit Gott, des Menschen, aller Menschen, Rechtfertigung vor Ihm und Heiligung für Ihn und damit die Ausrottung der Verwirrung in ihrer Wurzel, damit die Herstellung der Ordnung im Weltgeschehen – *das* ist dieses Ereignis, *das* das Werk und das Wort Jesu Christi"[654]. "Das ist das Letzte, was sie im

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[651] IV/3, 785.
[652] Ibid.
[653] IV/3, 793.
[654] IV/3, 814f.

Blick auf diese [das Weltgeschehen] zu bedenken und zu sagen hat: das Letzte darum, weil es für sie schon das Erste ist, weil sie eben davon als von ihrem eigenen Existenz- und Lebensgrund herkommt“[655].

Once the congregation perceives the reality of Jesus Christ as His history of the consummation of the covenant from the synoptic and from the Pauline-Johannine perspectives, she finds herself called to repeat the once and for all consummated decision of God about the truth of the world in her human decisions here and now. She finds herself called by the synoptic witness to join Jesus Christ's fight "against human confusion, for God's creation and against nothingness“[656], yet in the courage, hope, and love that stems from faith in the ultimate reality of the consummated covenant, as it appears from the Pauline-Johannine perspective. "Und indem sie mitten im Weltgeschehen solche Entscheidungen vollzieht, wird sie es bestimmt verändern"[657].

The matter at stake here is the proper relation between theological ethical reasoning and acting. According to Barth, the relation between God's command and our present situation presupposes necessarily our *existence in practical decisions*. Yet it is important to speak carefully nuanced here. I thus cannot agree with Friedrich-Wilhelm Marquardt's thesis that Barth's socialist praxis was the origin and parameter of his theology and of his theological ethics,[658] but I nevertheless think that Marquardt's stress on Barth's political praxis and on the fact that this praxis stood in close relation to his theology is of primary importance for an evaluation of Barth's thoughts.[659]

However, Helmut Gollwitzer criticised Barth for losing his genuine relation between theory and praxis once he became an academic. He raises the question if there was not a vestige of the idealist faith in the power of ideas, namely, that on the basis of the right theology, the right praxis will be created. In Safenwill on the other hand, according to Gollwitzer, Barth had still known that only if the church's proclamation were connected to socialist praxis could it be of service to the Word of God, and ... that only if it were grounded in such a praxis could a theology develop which would again feed back into praxis in a

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[655] IV/3, 815.
[656] IV/3, 822.
[657] IV/3, 823.
[658] Marquardt, 1972.
[659] For a more nuanced perception of the relation between Barth's theology and socialism, see Helmut Gollwitzer, 1972.

purifying and indicative way.[660] I think in order to do justice to Barth's dogmatics and ethics, we must remember that both evolve from and lead back into the praxis of prayer, whereby prayer must be accompanied by our corresponding political and social acts. If Barth fell behind his own standard in his particular existence as a busy academic, is a question I have to leave open here. As a fallible human being, he probably did.

Nonetheless, the church is commanded to erect signs of the coming Kingdom[661] for the sake of the world, to engage *practically* in correspondence to the just, righteous and peaceful order of the Kingdom of God: "Sie darf, was ihr von der Wirklichkeit der Geschichte in Jesus Christus in her in bestimmten Situation zu erkennen gegeben ist, nie und nirgends für sich behalten, ... nie ... damit umgehen, als wäre es ... eine bloße Glaubenssache, die rein innerlich und individuell bleiben könnte, der kein bestimmtes Ermessen und Handeln zu folgen brauchte"[662]. This responsibility comes with the fact that the church is the place in which it is given to its members to become accessories of God's will and works and thus of the nature and purpose of His creation: "Die wirkliche Gemeinde Jesu Christi ist ...die Gemeinschaft, in der es Menschen gegeben wird, *um die Welt*, wie sie ist, *zu wissen*"[663].

Hence, the church has an ethical obligation to humankind.[664] She must proclaim to the world the one Word of God in its character as an actual command and *act* accordingly. However, she can mess up her commanded responsibility in two interrelated ways: "Es geht auf der einen Seite um die Verkennung des Evangeliums als des zu jeder Zeit lebendigen Wortes des lebendigen Herrn der Gemeinde, auf der anderen um die Verkennung der Konstanz, in der es als Wort ihres einen Herrn zu jeder Zeit eines und dasselbe ist. Verliert es im Zeugnis der Gemeinde seine Lebendigkeit, dann wird es auch um seine Konstanz rasch genug getan sein. Und geht ihm in ihrem Zeugnis seine Konstanz verloren, dann wird es auch lebendiges Wort nicht werden oder nicht lange bleiben können"[665].

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[660] Gollwitzer, 1972.
[661] IV/3, 823f.
[662] IV/3, 823.
[663] IV/3, 880.
[664] IV/3, 888.
[665] IV/3, 931.

The first temptation therefore consists in her proclaiming the Word of the living God as "timeless truth", thus losing "the concrete meaning in which He speaks it today and here"[666]. The Word of God thus loses its power to call man into the particular possibility in which to serve His will within the present situation. Equally dangerous is for Barth the opposite temptation, that is, to lose sight of the self-identity and thus continuity of the gospel as the witness of the eternal Word of God.[667] "[Es darf daher nicht verwandelt werden in ein] von der Gemeinde ... den Stimmungen und Denkweisen ...einer bestimmten Weltzeit und Weltsituation ... angepaßtes und damit seiner ursprünglichen Kraft und Bedeutung beraubtes Pseudo-Evangelium, das dann gewiß auch der Aktualität, ... die man ihm durch solche Transformation verschaffen möchte, erst recht entbehren wird"[668]. According to Barth, the church's proclamation will lose its actuality, its power to disclose the present situation and therefore its ability to say something meaningful once she employs merely her uncritically (that is non-christologically) received "everyday-knowledge as standard, criterion and instrument to translate, interpret and apply the familiar gospel"[669].

This attitude towards God's Word defined Barth's personal 'theological existence' within his historical context. At a time when darkness rose within the German church and state, Barth aimed with all his concentrated theological gifts to hear the Word of the living Lord over this present situation as a concrete command. Shortly after the NSDAP had gained power and their direct and indirect influence on the structure of the German evangelical church had started to grow, Barth spoke a "Wort zur Lage" in his particular way: by doing theology within a historical context. "[D]as Entscheidende, was ich heute zu diesen Sorgen und Problemen zu sagen versuche [besteht einfach darin]", "daß ich mich bemühe, hier in Bonn mit meinen Studenten ... nach wie vor und als wäre nichts geschehen – vielleicht in leise erhöhtem Ton, aber ohne direkte Bezugnahmen – Theologie und nur Theologie zu treiben".[670] This was not intended as escapism, but as a "church-political and indirectly even a political statement".[671] [672]

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[666] Ibid.
[667] IV/3, 936.
[668] IV/3, 937.
[669] IV/3, 937.
[670] Barth, 1984, 26.
[671] Barth 1984, 26f.
[672] A further instructive example of Barth's intention to hear the commanding Word of the living God here and now within and through the historical witness of the church in such a way that it calls man into a political

Above, we have seen that Barth thinks that once human beings focuse not primarily on Jesus Christ but on that which He has already put to death in His first coming, sin and nothingness, their world appears obscured and inhabited by lordless powers, which are brought forth and sustained by their confusion. Barth's decision to do theology as if nothing had happened is therefore his act of protest against the human confusion which brings forth the destructive powers of National Socialism. His teaching schedule therefore shows us how he had committed himself to hearing God's Word as it is witnessed by Scripture as the coming light and Lord of all times and all people within the context of church-history, aiming to understand the present situation according to God's actual command and to proclaim it within the church and its teaching institutions for the world.[673] [674]

Barth's essay *Evangelische Theologie im 19. Jahrhundert*, albeit written 25 years later, shows very nicely how Barth's way of doing theological history instructs him to hear God's word here and now in its political relevance.

Evangelische Theologie im 19. Jahrhundert

For Barth, the theology of the 19th century constitutes a definite past age from which we are sharply separated.[675] Yet according to our faith that, according to Jesus Christ's self-proclamation in the power of His Spirit, there is one church, we must presuppose that the

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decision in responsibility over against God as the one Lord of all history are his Gifford lectures on the Scottish Confession of 1560, given 1937/38 in Aberdeen and published as *Gotteserkenntnis und Gottesdienst*.

[673] Barth was reading at this time his *Erklärung des Johannes-Evangeliums* and *Die protestantische Theologie im 19. Jahrhundert*, was conducting seminars on the third book of Calvin's Institutes and on Luther's large catechism, and offered a course on homiletic.

[674] Martin Rumscheidt has thus rightly observed that while the political theology of the German Christians "stipulated the engagement of a given political situation as conditional for the right hearing and understanding of God's Word, Barth's theology stipulated the sovereign action of God's Word as conditional for the right understanding of that political situation" (Rumscheidt 1986, 150).

Barth was therefore pleading "for a theology ... which became clear about itself before making any political judgements. Instead of a theology that allowed political events to define its milieu and locale, he strove for a theology which could give milieu and locale to political events" (155). Rumscheidt makes therefore the following concluding judgement over the character of Barth's theology: "From the very beginning Barth's theology was no theology 'per se'. It was always ethical, to be precise, his 'christological concentration' had political relevance" (161).

[675] ET, 4.

subject matter of the church of this age has been God, too.[676] Hence, we stand with the theology of the 19th century in a "communion of the matter"[677].

Above, we could see with respect to Barth's reading of Hegel, how Barth seeks firstly within a historical witness a testimony of Jesus Christ and of our proper commanded relation to Him within our time. He sees therefore the theologians of the 19th century as facing the same task as the church of the 1930s and of today: they had to witness Jesus Christ to man in the midst of the problems, ideas and world-views of their particular time. It was thereby the particular strength of the 19th century theologians "that they were ... not scared to look modern man ... in the eye"[678]. Thus, they teach us that because theology must witness Jesus Christ to the world, it must be "open and relate to the world". In so far as the 19th century theology has intended to be precisely that, she can serve and instruct us today as a positive example.[679]

However, theology has to witness something particular to the world: the fact that Jesus Christ is their Lord and light. Barth judges their primarily good intention therefore as problematic as they aimed "to adapt themselves to the *argument with* the age, with its different ideas, self-understandings, and self-evident truths"[680]. While this theology was proper theology in so far as it dealt "with its genuine matter", it's predominant focus was nevertheless directed toward the world.[681]

The theology of the 19th century intended to do her task, but she did so in the false order of their focus points: what should be seen first and as the all determining limit and criterion, namely Jesus Christ in His witness by Scripture and church-tradition, became second to the present understanding of self and world. Consequently, not much was gained for a "new *positive* understanding of the Christian truth"[682]. For Barth, this failure depended upon the fact that due to the primary focus on the present the history of the church in its richness has slipped out of view.[683] Lost into the fallen present situation, the church became unable to hear the Word of God and to perceive the present situation in relation to His

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[676] Ibid.
[677] Ibid.
[678] ET, 8.
[679] ET, 10.
[680] Ibid.
[681] ET, 11.
[682] Ibid.
[683] ET, 11.

command. She started to perceive the Word of God and the corresponding situation of humankind "solely in the context of a generally evident system of human, cosmic and divine matters" in order to mark a "Anknüpfungspunkt" between the Word of God and the dominant self-understanding.[684] This overarching world-view became in the theology of Schleiermacher the religious self-conscience in so far as it comprises God-conscience. The consequences of this anthropocentrism was that precisely the centre of this theology, the real existence of the human person, drifted out of view and was turned over uncritically and irresponsibly to the contingent powers and movements of the age.[685]

The terrible results of this consist, for Barth, in the political mistakes of the church within the 19th and 20th century, in her neglect of social questions[686], and in her turn toward the political reaction and later toward nationalism and militarism. "Und wer etwa 1933 immer noch im Bann der Theologie des 19. Jahrhunderts stand, der war, wenn er nicht durch besondere Gnade bewahrt war, hoffnungslos verurteilt, dem Nationalsozialismus gegenüber und im Kirchenkampf auf irgendein falsches Pferd zu setzen"[687].

It is now of course the case that Barth's interpretation of the failure of the church of the 19th century, that is, to pay primarily attention to Jesus Christ as God's Word and to judge all human and worldly affairs in its light, is primarily aimed as a critique of his contemporaries, and at his present readers. The task therefore falls on us to see how these dangers could have been avoided. The first step would be to believe that the ideas of the age, which influenced 19th century theology, stood also under Jesus Christ's lordship and are thus in his light meaningful for our predecessors and for us today. So has the *Geistesgeschichte* of the 19th century been dominated by their focus on history and historical development. Accordingly, 19th century theology "has ... again recognised and showed off to advantage that Christian faith is ... essentially *historical*, that is, it is determined by its relation to the history indicated by the name Jesus Christ. As a natural result of this historical interest, the tasks of exegesis and of understanding the history of the church and her dogmas became important to her in a new and genuine way"[688].

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[684] ET, 11f.
[685] ET, 18f.
[686] ET, 19.
[687] Ibid.
[688] ET, 19f.

Yet Barth concludes that the protestant theologians of the 19th century erred as they perceived faith "as a *historical* phenomenon"[689] among others. Barth's critically-constructive critique of 19th century theology reminds us today therefore of the importance of doing theology within a framework of historical concepts and ideas, and with a true interest in the history of theology itself as a history of testimony to the history of Jesus Christ Himself. Yet we must be alert to the danger to conduct such a historical theology according to our systematised pre-understanding of history and not according to the history of Jesus Christ Himself as witnessed by the twofold apostolic witness.

Barth is similarly keen to adopt Schleiermacher's anthropological focus as a direction for contemporary theology. As proper knowledge of us is knowledge of ourselves in Christ, conscience as self-knowledge must fall together with the human consciousness of God in Jesus Christ. The command of God the redeemer presupposes consequently an anthropology similar to that of Schleiermacher, if the latter had not neglected the eschatological character of human God conscience: "Schleiermacher und seine ganze Schule hätten schon recht gehabt mit ihrer Annahme eines dem menschlichen Selbstbewußtein immanenten Gottesbewußtsein, wenn sie dessen ... reine Zukünftigkeit nicht so übersehen, und wenn sie es eben als Gewissen, d.h. als das dem menschlichen Selbstbewußtsein nicht sowohl eigene als *anvertraute* Wort *Gottes* beschrieben hätten"[690].

It is precisely each person's existence in responsible relation to God the redeemer which urges theology to speak about our relation to God according to a thinking 'from below to above' – but solely under the presupposition that this relation is perceived in relation to the free coming of Jesus Christ as our redeemer and that the thinking from us to God happens as the responsible respond to the address of the coming God: "Es gibt gewiß, sobald es sich nicht exklusiv gebärden und absolut setzen will, auch ein christlich legitimes Denken von unten nach oben, von dem von Gott ergriffenen Menschen her zum dem ihn ergreifenden Gott hin. Will man den religiösen Anthropozentrismus der Theologie des 19. Jahrhunderts in *optimam partem* interpretieren – und es empfiehlt sich, das jedenfalls zu versuchen – so wird man sich fragen müssen, ob sie nicht, mindestens auf ihre Intention gesehen, als der Versuch

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[689] ET, 20.
[690] E, 393.

einer Theologie der dritten Artikels, genauer: des Heiligen Geistes zu verstehen sein möchte“[691].

Barth concludes his essay with the eschatological justification of his demanded ongoing with the theology of the 19th century: “Ich wiederhole: das 19. Jahrhundert ist nicht erledigt und seine Theologie auch nicht. An die Regel *De mortuis nil nisi bene* konnte ich mich schon darum nicht halten, weil die Theologen jener Zeit keine Toten sind. „Ihm leben sie alle“: genau in der Größe und in den Grenzen, in denen sie damals gelebt haben. *Et lux perpetua lucet eis*. Und so leben sie – aufregend genug – auch uns. So werden sie nicht aufhören, auch zu uns zu reden. Und so werden wir nicht aufhören können, auch auf sie zu hören“[692].

To sum up: the command of the one God as creator, reconciler and redeemer calls us, according to Barth, into a particular fivefold way of existence: it calls us to exist in hopeful expectation of Jesus Christ's final return as the universal revealer of His perfect work of reconciliation, faithfully remembering this very work and willing to witness it to the world here and now in our act of love toward God and neighbour. This one command of God calls us therefore firstly to exist in awareness of our mortality, so that we are called into personal responsibility for our existence before Jesus Christ as our coming final judge and His redeemed creation in Him.

Secondly, it calls us to exist as a member of the church in prayer for the world, and to witness to God's reception of our prayers in our personal political and social actions. Thirdly, it calls us to exist with and for the other in submission to his authority as a witness of Jesus Christ and in our own responsibility to witness Jesus Christ to him. Fourthly, it calls us to exist in responsibility for and in correspondence to our eternal life as God's children in Jesus Christ and also to treat everyone else in the light of this promise. And finally, it calls us to exist in communion with the history of the church's witness of God and to aim at acquiring a critical historical conscience: by perceiving history in the light and under the Lordship of Jesus Christ's personal history, thereby evaluating historical events and the thoughts of our predecessors constructively-critically by perceiving them as witnesses of Jesus Christ, albeit under His rule and critical judgement.

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[691] ET, 16.
[692] ET 23f.

Barth sees these five interrelated tasks as the necessary presuppositions of a Christian ethical existence in responsibility to the particular command of God, as they help to bring forth the disclosure of created reality according to God's very own judgement. This happens as our historical existence is reordered and redirected towards Jesus Christ as the origin, telos, and present Lord of all things, towards the other as His witness, and towards our personal existence as God's child in Jesus Christ.

Final Conclusion

The aim of this section has been to show that Barth's dogmatic work contains an ethical dimension. Yet I suppose that this dimension has, despite its all-present character, been often overlooked because Barth's understanding of ethics is quite unique. Barth is neither concerned with a codex of moral laws, nor with a categorical imperative that rests on the principle that reason must not be self-contradicting. Ethics is, for Barth, a way of existence: a way of existence, in which we prayerfully anticipate Jesus Christ's return as the universal revealer of His covenant-history, in faithful remembrance of His covenant history according to the biblical witnesses, and in readiness to witness to His present work in acts of love.

Once we exist in this way, our existence is redirected towards Jesus Christ in His covenant-history, and so are our perceptions of world and self, and our personal interests and worldly duties. This process of redirection is the necessary presupposition of a process of reinterpretation: confronted with Jesus Christ, who is, as the risen crucified, the origin, telos, and present Lord of our being-in-the-world, we start to perceive our personal existence and the state of all worldly affairs in relation to Him. Ethics is therefore for Barth first of all a way of existence in relation to Jesus Christ in His covenant-history that allows us to perceive ourselves, the other and worldly affairs in a new light. And once we perceive reality according to the covenant-history of Jesus Christ, it is our ethical obligation to exist according to this so disclosed reality.

Barth's ethics could therefore be classified as a Christological version of an understanding of ethics that sees ultimate reality as the criterion for moral agency. The most famous philosophical representative of such an ethics would be Plato. Yet Barth differs from

Plato in so far as he does not only acknowledge that we have forgotten the ultimate meaning of reality, but that we actively conceal this reality by our way of existence. Barth therefore concludes that ethics, as the disclosure of reality as the criterion of moral agency, demand a new way of existence.

Yet this new way of existence requires some directions. We must be re-directed into the way in which Jesus Christ Himself existed. For Barth, the first place to turn to in our search for such a direction is Scripture. In the second chapter, I have shown how Barth's doctrinal works are largely structured according to biblical thought-forms about the reality of Jesus Christ. I have shown that Barth has worked according to the synoptic and according to the Pauline-Johannine perspective of the history of Jesus Christ, and how these two antithetical perspectives allowed Him to develop a differentiated and detailed account of the history of the covenant and to include different doctrines from different Christian denominations and ages as perceptions of different moments of Jesus Christ's covenant-history according to one of the two antithetical perspectives.

Hence, we can see that ethics, understood as the existentiell disclosure of reality as the criterion of moral agency, presupposes a reconstruction of this reality. It is this reconstruction that happens in Barth's dogmatic works, and it receives its structure and material largely from exegesis and a discourse with the Christian tradition.

Yet the reconstruction of Jesus Christ in His covenant-history as the reality in relation to which we must disclose our own being-in-the-world presupposes for Barth the self-proclamation of Jesus Christ. This means that if an exegetically-historically derived dogmatic account of Jesus Christ shall not become an idolatrous world-view, the ethically commanded reconstructing and disclosing process must leave room for and be responsive to Jesus Christ's self-proclamation. We could see how Barth responded to this necessity in two ways: firstly, Barth grounded the process of reconstruction and disclosure in prayer, understood as an act in which we ask God to contradict our understanding of Him by His self-revelation. According to Barth, we can faithfully hope for this self-revelation to happen in two interrelated ways: in our prayerful listening to Scripture and in our being confronted with the perspective of the other.

The other within Scripture, within the church, within the world challenges our perception of God, world, and self and creates thereby the necessary space in which a new encounter with God's self-proclamation can happen. The contradicting witness of the other

fulfils therefore a necessary critical function within the ethical process of disclosure. Yet in Barth's eyes, it also fulfils a positive-constructive function: it causes us to rethink the historical reality of Jesus Christ and the corresponding reality of the world and ourselves and can direct us, if it is perceived within the framework of Jesus Christ's covenant-history in an act of Christian existence in hope, faith and love, to aspects of this reality that have not come into view from our perspective, or that we do not want to see as they contradict our present understanding and interests.

With regard to the ethical importance Barth ascribes to the witness of the other, I will introduce in the following chapter the basic ontological and ethical thoughts of Martin Heidegger. The final chapter of this thesis will discuss the possibilities of a dialogue between Barth and Heidegger and will aim to incorporate Heidegger's thoughts as a critical yet also constructive witness of the all-reality defining covenant-history.

Chapter IV

Martin Heidegger – The introduction of a dialogue partner

Introduction

The previous section on Barth has highlighted the ethical dimension of Barth's theology. It emerged that, for Barth, human moral agency depends upon a previous disclosure of reality under the Lordship of God. Such a disclosure happens in and through our existence as witnesses of Jesus Christ towards the other: in our existence in hopeful anticipation of Jesus Christ's universal revelation of His salvation-work, which we remember faithfully as we listen to the biblical witnesses, and to which we must witness in our acts towards the other in love. If we exist in such a way, Jesus Christ, in the history of His consummation of the covenant, and God's redeemed creation in Him, becomes the focus and horizon of our thinking, speaking, and acting.

Thus, if we exist in such a way, we perceive ourselves, the other, and the world differently, and consequently act differently – namely as those who perceive, and bear witness to, everything as coming from, leading to, and being governed by Jesus Christ, as the

Word through which everything has been created, is sustained, and will be revealed in its ultimate meaning in the eyes of God.

However, such a redirection of our existence towards Jesus Christ as the focus and horizon of our existence requires a challenge to our previous focal points and horizons, that is, of our world-views, interests, and goals. Such a challenge occurs, for Barth, once we are encountered by the other who has the authority of being Jesus Christ's witness. The other has such an authority in so far as his different perception of reality challenges our perception of reality and thereby creates the room in which a new encounter with Jesus Christ's self-proclamation can take place. In relation to this self-proclamation, the perception of the other has to prove itself, and can become – in the critical light of Jesus Christ's self-proclamation in and through Scripture and tradition – a particular witness of Jesus Christ's actual command.

Whilst the fifth chapter will explore the possibilities of such an encounter between theology and the philosophy of Martin Heidegger as a possible witness, the following chapter intends to present the basic thoughts of Heidegger.

The outline, method and goal of the argument

I chose Martin Heidegger as a possible dialogue partner for Karl Barth because, whilst he does not give the same answers than Barth, he raises very similar questions. Like Barth, Heidegger asks: "How can we exist in such a way that our historical existence discloses reality according to its inherent meaning and thus allows us to exist in correspondence to that which is?" And, like Barth, Heidegger arrived at this question via a reading of Paul – via an interpretation of Paul's relation to Jesus Christ as the one who will come as the bodily risen crucified.

I therefore intend to illustrate how Heidegger develops this question regarding the relation between human existence and the disclosure of being in his early phenomenological interpretations of the Pauline epistles and subsequently in *Sein und Zeit*.

I will then present an interpretation of Heidegger's later works *Vom Ereignis*, *Nietzsche*, and of his lectures on Hölderlin. I will argue that there is an important continuity between Heidegger's thinking up to SZ and his later works. This continuity becomes obvious if we

read Heidegger in conjunction with the question about the relation between human existence and the disclosure of being. I will show that whilst the earlier works of Heidegger seek to explore the adequate way of existence in order to disclose the event of the self-manifestation of being, the later works explore the history of being's self-manifestation as well as the history of man's concealment of this history. However, it is important to note that Heidegger's earlier works already were guided by a fore-sight of the history of being, and that his later works presuppose our existentiell response to this history, as our factical existence is necessary for the disclosure of being's present self-manifestation.[693]

My thesis argues that, in the same way that Barth understands human existence in its reality-disclosing function to be a response to the history of Jesus Christ as the history of the covenant, Heidegger understands human existence in its reality-disclosing function to be a response to the history of being, to the ways in which being manifests itself as our final focal point and horizon. Like Barth, Heidegger understands human beings to be essentially prone to concealing the focal point that gives itself to them and to setting one that serves their own self-interests. His aim is therefore to challenge us in so doing, and to urge us to exist in such a way that being can manifest itself to us according to its inherent meaning. Such a change of existence is, for Heidegger, the ethical imperative that alone can bring forth the conditions under which human moral agency can be made possible.

I will proceed by interpreting the main stages of Heidegger's *Denkweg* (path of thinking) according to his own historical method: at every stage simultaneously remembering and anticipating the way human existence has presented itself to Heidegger's thinking in its relation to being both before and afterwards. An early important stage of Heidegger's *Denkweg* is marked by his phenomenology of religion. I will interpret these works by anticipating Heidegger's later thoughts about *Dasein*'s temporality, being and the gods, and by remembering Heidegger's Christian inheritance. Such a reading shows how Heidegger tried to genuinely embrace his Christian heritage by inquiring into its transcendental presupposition and thereby disclosing a direction for his further thinking.

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[693] For a detailed account of Heidegger's hermeneutical circle see George Pattison's *The Later Heidegger*, London 2000, 109 – 127.

The decisive middle of Heidegger's *Denkweg* can be perceived in his *opus magnum Sein und Zeit* (SZ). I will provide a close reading of the text, remembering Heidegger's phenomenology of religion, and anticipating Heidegger's later works on Nietzsche, Hölderlin, and *Vom Ereignis*. While paying respect to the concrete text, I will try to draw attention to the *Er-eignis* as the *Wesen der Wahrheit des Seins* (essencing of the truth of being) into which SZ as a phenomenological analysis of *Dasein* points the reader.[694] Heidegger's

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[694] The termini *Ereignis*, *Wesen der Wahrheit des Seins*, *Dasein* and *phenomenology* denote in nuce the entire thinking of Heidegger. I hope therefore that they will become clearer during the process of my Heidegger interpretation. At this stage however, I consider it important to give a first anticipatory introduction to Heidegger's interrelated key concepts.

With respect to Heidegger's terminology it is essential to note that the terms have been chosen due to their self-transcending interplay of different meanings. It is this characteristic, which recommends them for their task: to allow being to present itself, to come to word. For being itself is characterised by Heidegger as a self-transcending interplay of being and beings. Heidegger sometimes calls this the *ontological difference*. This essential interplay is captured by the ambiguity between the verbal and substantive form of most Heideggerian terms. *Wesen*, *Sein*, and Da*sein* must therefore always be heard both with their actual verbal and substantive connotations. They all denote in their particular way the *Ereignis*. The *Ereignis* is the event in which being (substantive) *west* (is, verbal) as truth.

Truth means for Heidegger *aletheia*, unconcealment. The *Ereignis* is the event in which being *is* unconcealment, in which disclosure occurs. That which is disclosed is being itself in its *Wesen*. *Wesen* must be understood here again in its verbal sense (to be, essencing). The *Wesen* of being as and in truth, unconcealment, means that being shows itself as disclosing by withdrawing itself as the unconcealment of our previous world (this is what Heidegger calls *nichtigen*, negating, and presencing as the disclosure of a new world). Being is therefore always the happening of both the unconcealment and concealment of beings in total, of world. This is implied by the ambivalence between the verbal and the substantive meaning of the term being.

The *Ereignis* is thus the event of the disclosure of a new world, of a new way in which being reveals itself, and simultaneously the withdrawal of being as unconcealment, the concealment of our previously disclosed world. Heidegger calls the *Ereignis* therefore also: *welten*, the worlding of world. The same is implied when he speaks of the *Aufgehen* der *phusis*, of the blossoming and self-presentation of nature. World denotes thus beings in total in their being, in their forthcoming into unconcealment. The perception of this forthcoming of beings into their unconcealment is the aim of *phenomenology*.

Unconcealment happens within and through man's *Zeitlichkeit* (temporal existence). Human beings therefore exist as truth (or as untruth, if they fail to disclose the *Ereignis*). Hence, human beings are the place, the *Da* (there), where the *Ereignis* takes place. Heidegger therefore calls human beings *Da*sein. He also names Dasein *Lichtung* (clearing): the openness in which the *Ereignis*, the worlding of world as the differentiation between being and beings in total can take place and reveal itself. This openness is the result of Dasein's ec-sistence as ec-static temporality.

Essentially temporal, Dasein projects itself into its future (*entwirft sich*), and comes back to be encountered by its past as a *zu-künftige* (confronting) direction into the present *Augenblick* (moment of vision). *Augenblick* is the moment of the forthcoming of the *Sein-im-Ganzen* (being-in-total) into unconcealment in such a way that being-in-total presents itself in a particular *eidos* (form, *idea* which can be er-*blickt* (perceived) by Dasein. The *eidos* is the possibility of being into which Dasein projects itself and thus the perspective and standard of Dasein's so disclosed world.

The *Augenblick* is therefore opened up by Daseins *Entwurf* (projection). Heidegger therefore also calls it *Entwurfsbereich* (space-opened-up-by-projection). *Entwurfsbereich* is thus that which opens up once we enquire as to the meaning of being, that is, the happening of the truth of being, the *Ereignis*. If Dasein exists as the *Da* of the *Ereignis*, it discloses its world by *an-eignen* (appropriating) the possibilities of being within its inherited past. Dasein receives therefore, out of the Ereignis, its being, world, and history zu-*eigen* (own).

thinking culminates in his *Nachlaß Beiträge zur Philosophie. Vom Ereignis*. It has not only been conceptualised in formal similarity to Nietzsche's *Nachlaß*, published as *Wille zur Macht*. Written alongside his studies of Hölderlin and Nietzsche, the work anticipates a new beginning of human historical existence as witnessed by Hölderlin's poetry in remembrance of our philosophical and theological inheritance, which has come to fulfilment in Nietzsche. The *Beiträge* are Heidegger's testament *(Nachlaß)*, his gift for us. They have been written in order that we might disclose their inherent possibilities for a new thinking of our historical being-in-the world-before-the-god. Such a critical rethinking of our historical being before God is the aim of the fifth and final chapter of this thesis.

Part I

The origin of Heidegger's thinking of being in his early phenomenological studies of Christian existence

"Herkunft aber bleibt stets Zukunft"[695]

In his essay *Gespräch von der Sprache zwischen einem Japaner und einem Fragenden*, Heidegger claims that without his "theological origins", he would never have entered his "*path of thinking*". Furthermore, Heidegger claims that this theological background remains his "Zukunft"[696].[697] I therefore presuppose that Heidegger's early phenomenological exegesis prompted and shaped his question of the meaning of being.[698] His life-long questioning of

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[695] US. 96.

[696] Ibid.

[697] *Zu-kunft* is a particular Heideggerian term, which can hardly be translated by a single English word. It means more than simply future. Heidegger lets the term convey its literal meaning as an instruction about temporality. The term therefore speaks about the *Kunft* (coming) of our having been, which encounters us in a particular, new, and demanding way within our projection into our future existence.

[698] John Caputo points out that Heidegger's decision to develop an "existential analytic" of Dasein's temporal existence "was inspired by Luther's critique of medieval metaphysical theology and Kierkegaard's critique of Hegelian speculative Christianity". The actual existential analysis of Dasein in SZ, understood as the "destruction of the history of ontology", is in Caputo's eyes the direct result of Heidegger's "essentially theological project of 1919", that is, of his phenomenological interpretation of the Pauline letters (Caputo, 1993, 273).

For a scholarly account of the Christian influences on the formation of Being and Time, and for a scholarly interpretation of Heidegger's religion courses, see Theodore Kisiel, 1993, 69-115; 149-219.

this radical question must in turn be understood as serving the aim of understanding and taking on genuinely his Christian inheritance by disclosing the existential phenomena that underlay the Christian historical existence in faith.

Heidegger's early phenomenological studies of religion[699]

The methodological question

Heidegger shares Barth's critique of our projection of world-views into Scripture. The epitome of world-views is for Heidegger the scientific system, as it pre-determines the way in which a phenomenon can present itself.[700] In contrast to science, phenomenology asks which way of accessing a text best allows its matter to present itself according to its own standard and to make an authoritative claim on our existence. Heidegger's approach to the Pauline letters is interesting - especially if we compare it with Bultmann's claim that theology is in need of a philosophically revised terminology in order to gain more genuine access to the New Testament - because he intends to gain a genuine understanding of the texts by focussing primarily on their very own terminology and context.

For Heidegger sees the problem that any underlying philosophy pre-determines the way in which the question for the particular religious phenomena is raised – and consequently the way in which the phenomena can present themselves to the researcher. Such a pre-determination on the basis of a pre-supposed philosophy will eventually misunderstand the phenomena in question: "Sie bringt den Gegenstand zum Verschwinden". "Dagegen ist die Tendenz des phänomenologischen Verstehens, den Gegenstand selbst in seiner Ursprünglichkeit zu erfahren"[701].

Heidegger aims to prevent a projection of a contingent philosophical, literal or historical context, within which the letters of Paul are to be examined, and instead to let the subject-matter of the text present itself. He intends to explore and judge it according to its

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[699] M. Heidegger, Einleitung in die Phänomenologie der Religion, WS 1920/21, GA 60.
[700] GA 60, 3.
[701] GA 60, 76.

text-inherent context – whereby this context has to be challenged and re-established by an ongoing process of letting the text speak anew out of our growing pre-understanding of it.[702]

The corresponding phenomenological analysis of the Pauline letters

The context which Heidegger discovered within the Pauline texts and in which all particular religious phenomena are to be explored and judged, is genuine Christian religiosity as a particular way of temporal-historical existence and its conscious experience: "1. Urchristliche Religiosität ist in der urchristlichen Lebenserfahrung und ist eine solche selbst. 2. Die faktische Lebenserfahrung ist historisch. Die christliche Religiosität lebt die Zeitlichkeit als solche"[703].

Paul experiences this temporal-historical existence as the shattering of his former self-assured existence, which opened up a new genuine historical understanding of his *Dasein*. According to Phillippians 3,13, Heidegger perceives Paul's "basic religious experience" as follows: "Selbstgewißheit der Stellung in seinem eigenen Leben – Bruch mit seiner Existenz – Ursprüngliches historisches Verständnis seiner selbst und seines Daseins"[704]. The first letter to the Thessalonians explores this radical existentiell turn further: the shattering of man's previous understanding of world and self happens once he finds himself encountered by God and turned towards him, away from the idols as his previous standard and guarantee of understanding: "Die den Zusammenhang klärende Hauptstelle ist: 1,9-10. Es handelt sich um eine *absolute Umwendung*, näher um eine *Hin*wendung zu Gott und eine *Weg*wendung von den Götzenbildern. Die absolute Hinwendung innerhalb des Vollzugssinns des faktischen Lebens ist in zwei Richtungen expliziert: δουλευειν und αναμενειν, ein Wandeln vor Gott und ein Erharren"[705].

This characterisation of the basic experience of Paul resembles in an astonishing way Barth's analysis of the time-consciousness of the Apostles in their remembering anticipation of the final parousia of Jesus Christ as the risen crucified. Like Barth, Heidegger points out

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[702] GA 60, 82f.
[703] GA 60, 80.
[704] GA 60, 73f.
[705] GA 60, 95.

that according to 1,9-10 "*the turn towards God takes place first. Only through and with it occurs the turning away from the* ειδολα"[706]. The coming of God, urging man to await the second parousia of Jesus Christ, shatters man's previous world and self.[707] Heidegger understands here the term parousia – in accordance with his methodological presuppositions – not according to the classical Greek meaning as "presence", but according to the particular Christian experience of *the "reappearance of the already appeared Messiah"*[708].

This hopeful anticipation of the return of Jesus Christ, in His presence as the God who has come and will come again as the end and horizon of time, causes distress (*Bedrängnis*), which determines every "Augenblick"[709] of the Christian's life.[710] It is thereby important that the Christian endures this feeling of distress, accompanied by the mood of sadness, to drive him into radical conversion. This conversion constitutes his new and proper temporality in which he anticipates Jesus Christ's return, remembering Him as the One who has come before. This new, genuine historical form of existence is characterised according to Heidegger by the mood of joy, "which comes from the Holy Spirit and is incomprehensible to life"[711]. This joy arises once man is freed from securing his life but surrenders it in order to regain it as authentic temporality by remembering and anticipating the parousia of the Lord.

The relation between the parousia of the risen crucified and the Christian's distress is further explicated by Heidegger's exegesis of the second letter to the Thessalonians: in the experience of Jesus Christ's parousia each Christian stands "alone ... before God"[712] – in all his weakness, deprived of any possibility to secure and justify his judgement about self, world, and not least about God: "Nur ... wenn er die Nöte seines Lebens durchhält, kann er in einen Zusammenhang mit Gott treten"[713]. "Für das christliche Leben gibt es keine Sicherheit"[714].

Those who exist in *Bedrängnis* are thus contrasted with those who exist in peace and security. Heidegger's description of these people resembles the inauthentic, conscience-less

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[706] GA 60, 97.
[707] Ibid.
[708] GA 60, 102.
[709] Cf. footnote 695.
[710] GA 60, 98.
[711] GA 60, 95.
[712] GA 60, 112.
[713] GA 60, 100.
[714] GA 60, 105.

existence of those fallen into the Man, as described in SZ.[715] They will be overwhelmed by sudden ruin and will be lost.[716] For they do not genuinely take up their own existence as they are not ready to surrender their life (i.e. their existential understanding of world and self), waiting to receive it as a new gift out of the *Ereignis*[717], which they experience as the parousia of Jesus Christ. Yet those who exist authentically are the ones who exist in the "clearness of genuine knowing (Wissen)"[718].

Anticipating SZ and Heidegger's later works, we hear here: they are Da-sein, the clearing for the *Ereignis* in so far as they have a conscience (*Ge-wissen*). Being addressed by the call into their future authentic temporality in their encounter with Jesus Christ, they disclose a new world for which they are responsible. Genuine Christian faith is thus characterised by Heidegger as authentic knowledge of Jesus Christ as the risen *Zu-künftige* (coming one) in His having-been as the crucified, and correspondingly of self as the result of Him encountering us. Faith is thus for Heidegger "*dying with Christ*", acknowledging that he is the risen Messiah. This acknowledgement includes our "running toward the end" in "hope for the fulfilment of the beginning"[719].[720]

Here we see the relation between faith, knowledge, and historical Dasein. Faith means to die with Christ, to allow one's existence to be shattered. This happens once man recognises the presence of Jesus Christ. He as the risen crucified calls us to turn away from our manifestations of our understanding of world and self, and to run toward Him as the limit of our existence in hope of the fulfilment of His salvation work, of our own eschatological existence as children of God. We thereby authentically temporalise our existence. We gain ourselves out of the future, out of our running toward Christ by authentically retrieving our past as we allow it to be re-ordered and re–structured by Jesus Christ.

What he means by such a re-structured retrieval of our previous existence, Heidegger explains with respect to I. Corinthians 7,20: "Diese auf die Umwelt gehenden Sinnrichtungen, auf den Beruf und auf das, was man ist (Selbstwelt), bestimmen in keiner

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[715] cf. GA 60 103, 105.
[716] GA 60, 103.
[717] Cf. footnote 1.
[718] GA 60, 103.
[719] GA 60, 128.
[720] The similarity to Heidegger's notion of running toward death in SZ is striking.

Weise die Faktizität des Christen. Trotzdem sind sie da, sie werden da behalten und erst eigentlich zugeeignet“[721].

By “Sinnrichtungen”, Heidegger means, I think, the directions of our world-disclosing projections, that is, our focus on those ultimate possibilities of being in the light of which we interpret our world. While non-Christians project themselves into the various aims, events and things of their already disclosed world, Christians project themselves instead into their authentic temporality in remembering anticipation of Jesus Christ: ”Alle primären Vollzugszusammenhänge laufen auf Gott zusammen und vollziehen sich vor Gott“[722]. As the One who, in His temporal self-presencing as A and O, cannot be reduced to being the guarantor of our present status quo[723], God sets Himself in Jesus Christ as the horizon and focus of our existence, driving us to reorder our disclosing relations to world and self, and to retrieve them genuinely: “Durch die Zurücknahme der Bezugszusammenhänge in den eigentlichen Vollzug wird die Bedeutsamkeit der Welt – auch die der eigenen – in eigentümlicher Weise gehabt und erfahren“[724]. We therefore cannot retrieve ourselves authentically by our own means.[725]

Authentic existence depends upon the coming God. Christian existence, consisting in lived temporality, has to originate always anew from the hearing of the Word of God in its “proclamation”[726]. This means that we can own our lives solely in so far as we allow God in His self-presencing as A and O to be the determining focus and horizon of our relational existence. Within the so temporalised *Entwurfsbereich*, we experience the genuine meaningfulness of others and things within our world. We see therefore that the question for authentic existence in faith is the necessary presupposition of the particular question for concrete ethical decisions, as it discloses the meaningfulness of others and things and so enables them to place us under ethical obligations.

To sum up: Heidegger's phenomenology of the Christian religion attempts to allow the matter of its testimony to present itself. This matter is then perceived by Heidegger as

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[721] GA 60, 119.
[722] GA 60, 117.
[723] GA 60, 122.
[724] Ibid.
[725] Ibid.
[726] GA 60, 116.

the Christian temporal existence which anticipates Jesus Christ's final *parousia* in remembrance of His first coming. This state of existence is bound up with the experience of distress and the moods of sadness and joy. As such, it radically transforms man's previous existence in so far as the latter is re-directed towards and thus re-determined by Jesus Christ's transcending history.

The relation between theology and phenomenology

We have seen how Heidegger's phenomenology gains its early form as a phenomenology of Christian existence. But the interrelation between Heidegger's thoughts and Christian theology also pervades – though in a more indirect way – most of his later writings: for Heidegger understands his entire work as a de-construction of the history of Western philosophy and poetry, and the latter is deeply grounded in Christendom. So, for Heidegger, Protestant scholasticism forms - stemming from a combination of genuine Christian (i.e. Lutheran) and Greek-Aristotelian motives - the basis of modern philosophy.[727]

Yet we have to ask how Heidegger perceived the ideal relation between theology and philosophy. His general view on this matter seems to be that Christian faith is an authentic historical existence in which existential phenomena – which are universal and not bound to a particular religious existence – are disclosed. A genuine understanding of Christian faith can thus assist a phenomenological inquiry into the meaning of being as such. While the fundamental phenomena of human existence are for Heidegger universal, it is nevertheless the experience of the temporality of Christian life, which has disclosed some of them for the first time.[728] And, in turn, a better understanding of the existential presupposition of man's existence can help Christian faith to understand itself better.[729]

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[727] Cf. GA 61, 7. It is particularly worth remembering Hoelderlin's theological roots.
[728] E.g. the phenomenon of 'temptation', cf. GA 61, 154.
[729] So Bernhard Casper: "Will christliches Glauben als sich zur menschlichen Sprache bringendes wahrhaftig bleiben, so ist es auf das "Korrektiv" des gegenruinanten, d.h. des Sich-Hinwegschleichen zu den Götzen durchkreuzenden Denkens angewiesen" (*Caspar, 1998*, 80). The same is argued by Paul Hemming, 2002. The first and still most interesting application of Heidegger's phenomenology for a Christian self-understanding is the theology of Rudolf Bultmann.

However, in order to be able to assist each other in this way, theology and philosophy must affirm their limits and distinctiveness. Yet this distinctiveness is grounded for Heidegger in their common origin within the *Ereignis*. With respect to Augustine, Heidegger therefore says: "Das Theologische und Philosophische soll dabei nicht in seinen Grenzen verwischt werden ... . Vielmehr soll gerade der Rückgang hinter beide exemplarischen Ausformungen faktischen Lebens 1. prinzipiell einmal hinzeigen, inwiefern und was ‚hinter' beiden liegt, 2. wie sich daraus eine genuine Problematik ergibt".[730]

In SZ, Heidegger seems to suddenly subordinate theology under the conceptual guide of philosophy. But such a subordination of theology under a primary philosophical-ontological clarification of the meaning of being is only justified and necessary if theology intends to understand itself as a positive science. But Heidegger particularly questions this self-understanding of theology as science, as we have seen, from the very beginning.[731] Theology as science has in Heidegger's eyes lost its power to disclose the truth of being – and is therefore in need of a redirection toward its genuine task by phenomenology. Heidegger therefore considers it necessary for any fruitful dialogue with theology that "theology once and for all get clear about the requisite of its major task not to borrow the categories of its thinking and the form of its speech from philosophy or the sciences, but to think and to speak out of faith for faith with fidelity to its subject matter"[732].

Heidegger could conduct a fruitful dialogue from a phenomenological perspective with Paul's letters because Paul existed in faith and allowed this existence to genuinely come to speech. I take this as the direction that a proper theological dialogue partner for Heidegger must be conscious of his particular theological terminology and method as determined by his subject matter, that is, God Himself. I therefore think that Heidegger would approve of Barth as a proper dialogue partner.

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[730] GA 60, 173.
[731] Cf. PM, 42.
[732] PM, 55.

Part II

A historical reading of Sein und Zeit

I now turn to an interpretation of Heidegger's main work SZ. I will read it as part of Heidegger's *Denkweg* from his phenomenology of religion to his thinking of the *Er-eignis*, simultaneously remembering into which region of thought Heidegger's phenomenology of Christian faith has pointed us, and anticipating its further exploration by the later Heidegger.

The basic question of Heidegger's thinking

In his entire work, Heidegger raises one set of interrelated questions: "How could Da-sein, despite its responsibility to exist as the openness in which beings can show themselves according to their own being, lose just this ability to let beings be?" "How could Dasein turn out of its being the open realm of genuine disclosure,□*aletheia*, into the *Ge-Stell*, the fossilised disclosure of world, in which the coming forth of beings in their being is restrained by Dasein's neglecting the question of the truth of being? How can we regain our genuine being as the ec-static openness in which beings may show themselves in their being – and the god in his divinity?"

Heidegger perceives the possibility of the unconcealment of world in Dasein's temporality. Beings can encounter Dasein merely within the clearance opened up by Dasein's projection into a particular understanding of its being. It is thus a matter of Dasein's freedom "*what* it each time, in *which* direction, *how far* and *in which way* discovers and discloses"[733]. This poses the problem that the disclosing projection of world (*Entwurf*) can fail to let beings be, and be instead a "veil" (*Überwurf*): a world-view that covers beings.[734] Heidegger's work thus identifies the world-disclosing function of our temporal-historical existence, calls us into responsibility for the way we let beings appear, and reminds us to stay faithful to the *potentiality* of being that transcends our momentary disclosure or world.

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[733] SZ, 366.
[734] WM, 54f.

The basic method of Heidegger

The first two divisions of SZ as published were written out of a pre-understanding of the meaning of being and with the aim in mind to be retrieved (*wiederholt*) in the light of the thought of the truth of being. Such retrieval would have consisted in the disclosure of the possibilities of thinking the truth of being, inherent to the previous divisions, out of a *turn of thinking* (as marked by the planned title "Zeit und Sein"). Such a procedure would have been a repetition of the relation between the first and the second division, whereby the second division discloses the possibilities of the analysis of the existential care-structure of Dasein within the horizon of temporality for a genuine thinking of being. Heidegger remarks thus in *Brief über den Humanismus*: in the unpublished third part "the whole turns itself around"[735]. Intended was a "Kehre", a turning to speak not only in anticipation of the meaning of being, but *out* of our "dwelling in the dimension, out of which 'BT' is experienced", that is to say, out of our experience of the "oblivion of the truth of being"[736].

Heidegger's method can thus be described as follows: he firstly analyses the particular existentiell (ontic) phenomena, as they appear within our everyday life, aiming to disclose their existential (ontological) possibilities in order to retrieve them for a genuine thinking of the truth of being. Yet this analysis already anticipates a pre-understanding of the existential possibilities of human existence and a prior glimpse of the truth of being, the primordial event of concealment and unconcealment. SZ was thus written in order to provoke the reader's questioning of the meaning of being, yet already out of an anticipated pre-understanding of the latter. Whereby it is crucial to add that for Heidegger any understanding of the truth of being can come to pass solely through the experience of the *oblivion* of being, which has its transcendental cause within the happening of the truth of being itself.

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[735] WM, 159.
[736] Ibid.

The meaning and importance of a de-construction of the history of Western thought

Heidegger gains a clarification of his guiding understanding of the meaning of being from his de-construction of the history of the understanding of being. He intends to return to the origin of Western philosophy[737] in order to rediscover the "original experiences, in which the first and henceforth guiding determinations of being have been won"[738]. He intends thus not to break with the history of philosophy, but to disclose its possibilities for the thinking of being as such in the light of the question of the meaning of being. For this purpose, Heidegger investigates *how* being has been traditionally understood, and how this understanding could have come about. Heidegger consequently pursues a transcendental critique of ontology.

Hence, it is not a sustainable thesis that Heidegger's interest and indebtedness to the Pre-Socratics Parmenides and Heraclitus characterises a later turn in his thinking. On the contrary, he develops his guiding pre-understanding of being by de-constructing their notion of *phusis*[739]: interpreted as the radiant presencing of beings-in-total which captivates Dasein in the mood of amazement, this term points Heidegger's thinking about being into the context of time: "[D]ie Destruktion sieht sich vor die Aufgabe der Interpretation des Bodens der antiken Ontologie im Lichte der Problematik der Temporalität gestellt. Hierbei wird offenbar, daß die antike Auslegung des Seins des Seienden an der „Welt" bzw. „Natur" im weitesten Sinne orientiert ist und daß sie in der Tat das Verständnis des Seins aus der „Zeit" gewinnt"[740].

Yet in humankind's first conscious encounter with being as such, the latter has been understood solely with respect to the particular time-modus "presence" ("*ousia*").[741] If we remember that Heidegger has gained, through his phenomenological analysis of the Christian experience of the parousia□, an understanding of being's presencing that transcends a mere static present, we can expect him to critically transform the Greek understanding of being accordingly.

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[737] SZ, 21.
[738] SZ, 22.
[739] Cf. footnote 1.
[740] SZ, 25.
[741] SZ, 25.

The relation between the Greek thinker and the presencing of being is characterised by Parmenides as *noein*, as "the plain perceiving of something present". *Noein* thus has "the temporal structure of pure "making present" of something"[742]. The term denotes the process in which Greek Dasein receives being in the way in which it shines forth as *phusis* and beholds it as *idea*. A deconstruction of this relation of the Greeks to being reveals thus firstly a positive indication of the way in which being must be perceived: by letting it present itself and beholding it accordingly. But in remembrance of the transcending character of being, the fatal mistake of the Greeks shows itself: being itself was not understood in its self-transcending, forth-bringing character, but got interpreted "with respect to – present"[743].

In so far as there is, for Heidegger, no understanding without pre-understanding, it seems important to anticipate here Heidegger's further clarifications of the phenomena *phusis*, *noein*, and *ousia*.

The Greek *noein* discloses beings as *phusis*, as "the blossoming and self-opening, which, as the presencing, comes over man, i.e. over him, who opens himself to the presencing by perceiving it"[744]. The Greek *noein* is therefore fundamentally different from modern scientific representation. The latter means for Heidegger "to manifest and posit the present opposite oneself, by referring it back to oneself as the representing one, and by forcing-it-back into this relation to oneself as the decisive sphere"[745]. The representation of the self-affirming subject thus pre-determines the way in which beings can present themselves.

The Greek *noein* on the other hand has been able to let beings present themselves freely because it has been not the determining act of a self-affirmed subject, but the "event, in which man first comes to being as the one he is"[746]. Hence, if it is *Dasein's* true destiny to exist as the being that discloses beings according to the way they reveal themselves, it is obvious why Heidegger calls his investigation into the meaning of being as prepared in SZ "phenomenology"[747]. For phenomenology means, according to Heidegger, "to let that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself"[748].

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[742] SZ, 26.
[743] SZ, 26f.
[744] HW, 83.
[745] HW, 84.
[746] EM, 108.
[747] SZ, 27.
[748] Ibid.

Again, we see here the fundamental reciprocal relation between Dasein and being: while the way in which Dasein encounters the phenomena determines the way they can show themselves, and can so reduce their appearance to mere sham, the reason why they can appear at all lies nevertheless in their self-blossoming. Furthermore, we must note that the original self-giving act of being in the first blossoming of *phusis* is, for Heidegger, the primary event that has determined *Dasein's* original being and the history of its interpretation.

The disclosing relation between Dasein and the phenomena

SZ converges with Heidegger's earlier and later thoughts in the conviction that Dasein must retrieve its being out of its historical relation to being itself. So Heidegger's existential analysis of Dasein intends to show that the preposition of a "first of all given I and subject" is misleading.[749] Instead, Dasein's "essencing ... must be grasped [received] out of its existence (existentia)"[750]. For Heidegger, the way in which self and world *are for us* depends upon the way in which we disclose beings in their being, on the way in which we let things arrive into their unconcealment. Dasein exists essentially *as* unconcealment by disclosing and actualising possibilities of being within its historical existence. Dasein therefore exists as "nearness"[751]: it discloses beings within its world by "letting beings, as the beings they are, closely encounter itself"[752].

However, Dasein can fail to let beings be "the beings they are" but force them to show themselves obscured within a heteronomously imposed context of meaning. In turn, as Dasein finds itself always already encountered by the things it discloses, it is endangered to allow its self-understanding to be determined by them, forgetting thereby that it is itself responsible for their present and all possible future ways of appearance.

This marks a dangerous problem: for the most part, we do not find ourselves encountered by the things as they reveal themselves. Instead, our everyday disclosing relation to things is determined by what Heidegger calls "circumspective dealings

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[749] SZ, 46.
[750] SZ, 42.
[751] SZ, 105.
[752] Ibid.

(umsichtige Besorgen)"[753]. Within an already (although unconsciously) disclosed wider context of significance, we disclose things according to their functionality and meaning within this context, and with the final aim in mind to secure our own role within it.[754]

We can see how the disclosure of things by modern everyday Dasein differs from the original disclosing encounter with the blossoming of world, or the parousia of Jesus Christ. In the Greek beginning, the presence of things was received, not intentionally disclosed for the sake of the functionality of Dasein within its work-world. In Christian faith, the context of significance is not enfolded and determined by Dasein's projection into its securing of its own functionality within its work-world, but into an understanding of its being as self-sacrificial for the sake of the reception of a new being-in-the-world in the encounter with Jesus Christ.

Heidegger's phenomenological analysis of our existence points out that the ways we handle things are always already formed by the disclosed nexus of interrelated aims (*in-order-tos*), which is enfolded and determined by Dasein's understanding of its own being as the *ultimate for-the-sake-of-which*. Hence, we see clearly that alongside the question of the meaning of being is not only the being and self-understanding of Dasein at stake, but simultaneously the understanding of the determinations and possibilities of our actions, which is an essential task of any philosophical ethics.[755] Has Heidegger's phenomenological ontology

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[753] SZ, 107.

[754] It is this notion of pragmatic temporality and of contextual practical reasoning that appeals most to, and is most easily incorporated into, a pragmatist interpretation of Heidegger. Whilst this line of interpretation illuminates the inherent relation between Heidegger's project and practical reasoning and acting, it nevertheless feels uncomfortable with Heidegger's insistence that there is more to being than our current contingent language-games: a meaning of world which is independent of our actions and decisions but determines the way in which we actually disclose our situation. Instead, pragmatism is akin to the modern doctrine of self-constitution (by the contextual though *free* and *purely self-conscious choice* of tasks, roles or language-games) – a doctrine Heidegger contests. This difference is seen e.g. by Richard Rorty. As Rorty considers our world-disclosing vocabularies contingent, it appears to him inappropriate to perceive the history of the understanding of being as "a *downward* escalator" (Rorty, 1992, 217). But this notion of Heidegger's reading of history as a "downward escalator" fails to see that Heidegger understands the different phases of the Western understanding of being not solely in chronological terms, but also according to the primordial temporality of being, according to which our past, i.e. also the genuine beginning, encounters us as our future. This encounter is for Heidegger mediated by our moods – a phenomenon pragmatists generally avoid, as William Blattner has rightly perceived (cf. Blattner, 1992, esp. 107-110).

[755] Within recent scholarship, the previously often ignored importance of Heidegger's ontology for ethics, or even the inherently ethical character of his ontology, has been pointed out. Joanna Hodge has disclosed the ethical dimensions with respect to many themes of Heidegger's thinking. Hodge sees e.g. Heidegger's analysis of Dasein in SZ "as a description of what it is to be human for which there are three ethical concerns: taking responsibility for oneself, refusing the temptation to take responsibility for others, ... and recognising

thus an ethical dimension? Those fundamentally opposed to a positive answer to this question must not ignore the fact that Heidegger himself raises the question of the relation between ontology and ethics by asking: "What is the ontological meaning of value?"[756]

Prior to any positive construction of the ontological possibilities of a new ethics, Heidegger conceives it necessary to point out the ontological problems of any ethics. So ethics appears essentially problematic due to the reciprocal relation between Dasein's disclosure of world and its finding itself already within it, so that Dasein's actions are always already formed by the disclosed nexus of in-order-tos of the things it encounters within a public and historically grown context of significance. With Dasein's being in-the world is thus "always simultaneously given "being at" the world", in the "meaning of a being-wrapped-up in the world (*Aufgehen*)"[757].

However, Dasein is essentially in danger of losing its disclosing freedom and responsibility to the beings already disclosed: it is in danger of perceiving itself not as the disclosing agent, but as an already disclosed thing, determined by the presently disclosed world. Hence, Dasein is thrown, it is in-the-world in so far as it is "in its "Geschick" attached to the being of beings, which encounter it within its own world"[758]. The German term "Geschick" must be understood here in its literal meaning of 'that-which-has-been-sent' (*geschickt*) from being in its first event of the unconcealment of beings. Heidegger thus wants to bring to our attention that Dasein is in its relation to being determined by the way in which being has been disclosed previously as the being of beings, whereby this history of disclosure has its primordial possibility and determination within the *Ereignis* itself.

The thinking of SZ therefore speaks out of the knowledge that "being itself (das Seyn) is in, out and for itself the danger as such"[759]. Being as the primordial happening of unconcealment causes its own oblivion. By letting beings reveal themselves in unconcealment, being itself as the happening of this unconcealment conceals itself: "Welt

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differences between self and others" (Hodge, 1995, 202). Her second point, however, misses the differentiation Heidegger makes between inauthentic and authentic responsibility for the existence of others.

And Julian Young perceives rightly that Heidegger's statement ""he who ... knows what is knows what he wills in the midst of what is" ... conveys his fundamental thought: how you (roughly speaking) see things is how you act. The character of a culture's fundamental horizon of disclosure is the 'essence', the explanatory ground, of the fundamental character of its action" (Young, 2002, 40).

[756] SZ, 68.
[757] SZ, 54.
[758] SZ, 56.
[759] GA 79, 54.

aber, die weltend das Dingen des Dinges ereignet, bleibt verborgen, obzwar ihre Verborgenheit gerade die Unverborgenheit des Anwesenden und so das Anwesen, das Sein des Seienden, gewährt"[760]. In order to encounter us, a thing must be unconcealed. This means that it necessarily conceals the dimension of nothingness and potentiality, ithat is, of fading and transformation, which belongs to the being of each thing. Furthermore, the disclosing *Er-eignis* is seductive as it presents things to man's urge to represent, to produce, and to dominate objects in a way that makes it possible for him to forget their self-presencing. Hence, it must be acknowledged as the origin of the possibility of man's manipulation of the earth by means of representation and toiling. Heidegger expresses this thought in SZ by calling Dasein ontologically fallen.

Yet we must hold in mind that being as the unconcealment of beings happens not in and for itself, but solely as the being of Dasein: in and through Dasein's existence. Dasein's thrownness into unconcealment means therefore that it is thrown into its very own disclosed "Da". The term *Da* means, for Heidegger, Dasein's essential openness (which consists, as we will see soon in more detail, in Dasein's ek-static temporality), the clearing in which Dasein and the totality of beings are there, disclosed and given free for their presencing.[761] Hence, Dasein is for Heidegger ontologically fallen not because it is thrown into darkness, but into light, into being the "clearing (*Lichtung*)" in which beings can show themselves.[762] The new destruction of the history of philosophy in search of the *Ereignis* as the genuine happening of the disclosure of beings is therefore necessary. Otherwise, Dasein will be able to encounter things within its inherited public world solely as sham-appearances: "Das Seiende ... zeigt sich – aber im Modus des Scheins. Imgleichen sinkt das vordem Entdeckte wieder in die Verstelltheit und Verborgenheit zurück"[763]. "Daher muß das Dasein wesenhaft das auch schon Entdeckte gegen den Schein und die Verstellung sich ausdrücklich zueignen und sich der Entdecktheit immer wieder versichern"[764].

In SZ, Heidegger sketches a very dark picture of modern society, presenting it as being caught up in the problems brought forth by Dasein's failure to face up to its responsibility to disclose being authentically. However, this critique of the modern age must

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[760] GA 79, 51.
[761] SZ, 132.
[762] SZ, 133.
[763] SZ, 222.
[764] SZ, 222.

not be seen as the mere product of Heidegger's nostalgic love for traditional country life. He presents a transcendental critique of ontology and ethics: within a public world - disclosed by shared language and commonly accepted basic laws like the cause-effect-nexus, based on a common understanding of time and space as mathematical parameters - things are not allowed to show themselves in the fullness of their being, to which also the not-yet understandable belongs, but are reduced to mere measurable objects.

The world out of which we understand ourselves in modern times, into which we are thrown, is the world opened up by Dasein's projection into its pre-understanding of being as "continuous presence (*Vorhandenheit*)"[765] (which is for Heidegger the tragic consequence of the failure of the early Greeks to inquire into the origin of the presencing of beings). Being as continuous presence is disclosed by "mathematics"[766]. Our modern world is thus for Heidegger disclosed by a common acceptance of mathematical-science as the final standard and measure of what counts as being.[767]

The nature of modern science is "research"[768]. Research discloses a particular realm of reality by projecting "a particular outline of the natural process. The projection prescribes how the perceiving proceeding has to bind itself to the disclosed district"[769]. This disclosing projection is the already known measure and standard of that which shall count as being: "[T]he closed nexus of the motion of spatially-temporally related masspoints (*Massepunkte*)"[770]. Being is thus understood merely as that which shows itself and can be calculated within this projected horizon.[771] Within the field of vision opened up by the final law of the cause-effect-relation between entities measured by time and space understood as parameters, scientific research discloses beings further by establishing and verifying rules and laws based on causality.[772]

It thus '*stellt-fest*' what is – this means literally: research discloses beings as measurable, continuously present-at-hand objects by bringing to a standstill the temporal event of being, so that their potentiality cannot transcend their present actuality anymore.

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[765] SZ, 96.
[766] Ibid.
[767] Cf. HW, 69 – 104.
[768] HW, 71.
[769] HW, 71f.
[770] HW, 72.
[771] Ibid.
[772] HW, 74.

This ontological critique of science by the later Heidegger is already expressed in SZ: "Dieser [mathematisch-physikalische] Entwurf entdeckt vorgängig ein ständig Vorhandenes (Materie) und öffnet den Horizont für den leitenden Hinblick auf seine quantitativ bestimmbaren konstitutiven Momente (Bewegung, Kraft, Ort und Zeit). Erst „im Licht" einer dergestalt entworfenen Natur kann so etwas wie eine „Tatsache" gefunden und für einen aus dem Entwurf regulativ umgrenzten Versuch angesetzt werden"[773].

Science is, for Heidegger, the predominant way in which modern man exists as subject (*hupokeimenon*): "Das Vor-liegende, das als Grund alles auf sich sammelt"[774]. Modern Dasein exists thus as the projector and affirmer of a particular understanding of being by which it determines and structures its world, the context of meaning according to which things can present themselves; it has turned into the producer of world-views. "World-views" represent for Heidegger "being-in-total, as it is definitive and compulsory for us"[775], but in such a way that we "are *in the picture*", that we have perfect knowledge and thus control over the totality of that which is. We put the totality of beings as a system before us[776] in order to gain knowledge and control over it. But once Dasein has gained the position to be the creative artist and therefore master of its world, it wants to defend it against other basic understandings of being and their corresponding world-views. The modern world is thus inherently challenged by a clash of world-views, leading to war.

Hence, we can see why Heidegger could perceive World War II as a manifestation of Dasein's fallenness, but was unwilling to consider it as a contingent, unique event: "Der Grundvorgang der Neuzeit ist die Eroberung der Welt als Bild. Das Wort Bild bedeutet jetzt: das Gebild des vorstellenden Herstellens. In diesem kämpft der Mensch um die Stellung, in der er dasjenige Seiende sein kann, das allem Seienden das Maß gibt und die Richtschnur zieht. Weil diese Stellung sich als Weltanschauung sichert, gliedert und ausspricht, wird das neuzeitliche Verhältnis zum Seienden ... zur Auseinandersetzung von Weltanschauungen"[777].

The mainly scientific attitude towards being fosters the oblivion, even willing ignorance of the un-calculable potentiality of being. The manifestation of this oblivion of

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[773] SZ, 362.
[774] HW, 81.
[775] HW, 82.
[776] Ibid.
[777] HW, 86f.

being calls Heidegger later: "das Ge-Stell".[778] The term is derived from the verb *stellen* as "zum Sichstellen zwingen" or "be-stellen"[779]. Scientific modern Daein orders things to present themselves with respect to success, efficiency, functionality, and their ability to be calculable.[780] It thereby brings the disclosing *Ereignis*, the historical interplay between being's self-manifestations, to a stand-still. As a result, beings are reduced to being providers of resources.[781] Things are no longer seen in their self-presencing nature, but are reduced to their usefulness for the final aim of the particular world-view shared by members of a particular social-national group.

This turn away from man's existence as the disclosing guardian of the truth of being into a manifestation of the *Gestell* is characterized by Heidegger as "evil and disastrous"[782]. It seems thus that Heidegger is indeed ready to make a moral qualification with respect to our modern situation – once this moral qualification denotes our fundamental relation to being, and not simply contemporary issues. An ultimate challenge for the possibility of ethics is thereby Heidegger's argument that once Dasein exists within and understands itself out of the *Gestell*, it will understand itself according to its manifestations, that is, as a present entity, which gains its value according to its functionality within the process of sustaining the *Gestell*.

Nevertheless, Heidegger urges us to ask: "What would Dasein's being-in-the-world look like once Dasein encounters things in authentic ek-sistence, gaining the standard of its disclosing projection from the happening of the truth of being?" Such things which have their being not within the *Gestell* are for Heidegger works of art. Works of art, to which the words of the poet belong in a distinguished way, challenge man's self-understanding out of his existence within the *Gestell*, and bring him back into the opening of the truth of being.[783]

The work of art points us into the happening of truth. Heidegger exemplifies this by pointing us toward an – poetically imagined - temple. This building gathers, opens up and determines the relations and ways of the historical people by opening up a world as it gathers the earth, the God and the mortals and brings them into an open, reciprocal *play*, out

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[778] Cf. GA 79, 24-45.
[779] GA 79, 27.
[780] cf. GA 79, 40.
[781] GA 79, 27.
[782] GA 79, 37.
[783] HW, 28.

of which every thing can show itself freely in its being and Dasein receives its adequate self-understanding – as long as the god is present within His withdrawal: "Das Tempelwerk eröffnet dastehend eine Welt und stellt diese zugleich zurück auf die Erde, die dergestalt selbst erst als der heimatliche Grund herauskommt"[784]. "Der Tempel gibt in seinem Dastehen den Dingen erst ihr Gesicht und den Menschen erst die Aussicht auf sich selbst. Diese Sicht bleibt solange offen, als das Werk ein Werk ist, solange als der Gott nicht aus ihm geflohen"[785]. So the artwork lets the order of the world reorder and show itself.[786]

The artwork worlds a world and lets blossom a new earth. It lets the environment present itself, and the material out of which it has been created. And first and foremost: it allows words to speak and so disclose beings in their being. As the opening of the creative interplay of world (the historical happening of unconcealment) and earth (the presencing of beings), art is fundamentally different from science. While science is a further detailed discovery of a particular realm within an already disclosed earth (whereby it secures this disclosure and thus misses the opportunity to disclose a new manifestation of the potentiality of being), art is an act of disclosure, in which a new earth is received.

Art does thereby not forcefully prevent this earth from withdrawing itself again, so that out of the temporal event of being a new earth can blossom. It retrieves our *Geschick*, our historical possibilities of existence sent by the *Ereignis* itself[787] by calling us out of the ordinary into the event of a new worlding of world by alienating us, making us wonder about our world and its origin[788], and by calling us to suspend our estimations and judgements about being "in order to dwell in the truth, which happens within the work"[789].

The question that arises now is how far Heidegger's later analysis of the work of art is foreshadowed by his thinking in SZ. A pointer into the dimension of the work of art can be found, I think, in Heidegger's analysis of the nature of a product. A product bears in itself "the context of significance", within which it encounters us, reveals the "in-order-to of its usability", and discloses the possibility of existence in which Dasein as its producer and user has projected itself.[790] A produced work is thus – like a work of art – thought of as a means

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[784] HW, 32.
[785] HW, 32.
[786] HW, 34.
[787] Cf. HW, 62f.
[788] Cf. HW, 54.
[789] Ibid.
[790] SZ, 70.

of manifesting and revealing Dasein's understanding of self and world, as a means of letting things and others appear for Dasein.

But in so far as a product results from Dasein's *seinsvergessene* fabrication in accordance to its scientific understanding of being, it will disclose a world in which things appear as objects of Dasein's industrial interest. So will nature encounter us as a mere resource for production, while her enrapturing character as free "landscape" remains "concealed"[791]. We can see therefore that a work of art is for Heidegger a gift of the *Ereignis*, while a fabricated work is the product of the *Gestell*. Both kinds of works emerge not only from a different human relation to being, but therewith from a different way in which being essences itself as unconcealment.

My reading of the first division of SZ, emerging from Heidegger's phenomenological analysis of Christian existence and anticipating his later thoughts about the truth of being should shed some light on the meaning of the following questions Heidegger has placed as thought-provoking stumbling-blocks in SZ. Firstly, we must ask: "Why was it that in the origin of our ontological tradition, explicitly by Parmenides, the phenomenon of world has been overlooked? Why does this necessarily happen again and again?" Secondly, we must ask: "Why does the understanding of being orientate itself instead at innerworldly beings?" Thirdly, we must ask: "Why is this innerworldly being found first of all in 'nature' (*phusis*)?" And finally, we must ask: "Why is such ontology in need to complete itself through the employment of the phenomenon of values?"[792]

We must presume that Heidegger has raised these questions not out of the blue but out of his leading pre-understanding, towards which he wants to turn his readers. After my previous inquiry into the latter, I suggest the following answers: firstly, we have seen above that being means for Heidegger the worlding of world as the *happening* of unconcealment of beings-in-total, and how this happening bears in itself the danger of being overlooked once man is captured by the manifestations of being.

Secondly, we have seen that Dasein discloses beings and thus finds itself ontologically encountered by them in such a way that these beings in turn disclose and determine Dasein's world and respectively Dasein's self-understanding. Above I have shown

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[791] Ibid.
[792] SZ, 100.

that while there are beings that are grounded within the *Gestell* and therefore affirm Dasein's inauthentic existence, there are also beings (works of art, particular poetry), which challenge Dasein's oblivion of being by calling it into the Ereignis.

Thirdly, we have seen that for Parmenides, 'nature' meant the self-presencing of things as they gave themselves to Dasein's receptive thinking. And finally, we have seen that once things are not perceived in their genuine relation to each other but according to the structures determined by Dasein's projection into its scientific understanding of being, a projection of values becomes necessary in order to counterbalance the resulted interchangability of all things. A necessary value consists then in the usefulness of a thing within the world whose essence is the *Gestell*. The final value is therefore that possibility of being, which affirms and safeguards the *Gestell* and our corresponding existence.[793]

To sum up: so far, I have intended to show that Heidegger perceives Dasein as existing simultaneously in truth and un-truth. It is in truth in so far as it obeys its duty of disclosing world, tuned (*gestimmt*) and directed by the being of beings, and thereby surrenders its own preconceptions. This happens for Heidegger through a process of de-constructing the words of previous thinkers, poets and Scripture within the *Entwurfsbereich* opened up by the question of the meaning of being. But because Dasein finds itself always already within its disclosed world, it is also in untruth. It is always tempted to forget about the openness of the temporal event of being to which also the not-yet and the having-been belongs.

Once this happens, it is left "with its own world-productions (Gemächten)" according to its "intentions and plans"[794]. Once Dasein projects itself into its subjective values and aims as the final for-the-sake-of-which of its existence, these subjective values and aims appear as the objective standard of its accordingly disclosed world. All things encountered within this world therefore lack any inherent value; they are solely judged with respect to convergence with Dasein's final aim. The results are ethical misjudgements and

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[793] Heidegger's introduction of the term value in SZ foreshadows his later intensive discourse with Nietzsche, to which I will later turn to.
[794] SZ, 91.

conflicts between different projections of ethical values: "Er vermißt sich, je ausschließlicher es sich selbst als das Subjekt für alles Seiende zum Maß nimmt"[795].

The problem which we have to face is therefore: "How can *Dasein* overcome itself as the subjective standard by which it discloses and judges everything?" Heidegger faces this problem in SZ by raising the question how *Dasein* can turn out of its inauthentic existence into authenticity. [796]

Dasein's existence as care-for

The possibility of Dasein's turn into authenticity is first addressed by Heidegger regarding Dasein's being-with. That Dasein is essentially "being-with"[797] means two things for Heidegger: first it means simply that Dasein encounters other Daseins within its world. But it means furthermore, that this world as the sphere of encounter is already disclosed by Dasein's existence in relation to others. This relation to other Dasein in its world-disclosing significance Heidegger calls "caring-for (*Fürsorge*)". It can have two possible extremes: either, we "stand in (*einspringen*)" for the other with respect to his responsibility to disclose his world and self, so that the other becomes dependent upon our world-view. This is perceived by Heidegger as the most common form of being-with.[798] Or, we "leap ahead (*vorausspringen*)" of the other, that is, into our own authentic existence, in order to call him into awareness of and freedom for his responsibility to disclose his world and self. This way of being-with is for Heidegger authentic care (*eigentliche Sorge*[799])[800] – and obviously the aim for his relation to his readers.

While authentic being-with puts everyone into a personal responsible relation to being, it is far from producing solipsistic existences. On the contrary, it allows the different

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[795] Ibid.
[796] The misunderstanding that Heidegger falls in SZ prone to a subjective voluntarism may well have been caused by the term "eigentlich", as the word implies the notion of possessing oneself. The further presentation of Heidegger's argument will however try to show that Dasein can own itself solely in so far as it receives itself 'as given' (*zugeeignet*) by the *Ereignis* itself.
[797] SZ, 118.
[798] SZ, 122.
[799] Ibid.
[800] We ca see therefore that it is a – although rather common and persistent – misconception to regard Heidegger's conception of being-with as necessary inauthentic, and authentic existence as radically solipsistic.

Daseins to share one world, disclosed according to the truth of being itself. Heidegger states thus that "common endeavours for the same cause" can emerge solely "out of each personally seized Dasein", and that such an "authentic closeness" enables in turn "proper objectivity, which releases the other into his freedom for himself"[801]. Dasein's essence is thus characterised by Heidegger as essentially ministerial with respect to being itself and others. Dasein is called to be the guardian of being by relating itself authentically to the *Ereignis* and thereby encouraging others to do the same, liberating them thereby for their own authentic existence. However, the public character of world hinders Dasein in fulfilling its responsibility. As it is always possible to judge and decide 'as one does', the *Man* (our publicly disclosed Dasein) "deprives each Dasein of its responsibility"[802].

The ontological constitution of Dasein's existence as care

Dasein's ecstatic openness for the truth of being is for Heidegger co-primordially constituted by "the mood in which one finds himself", by "understanding", and by "speech".

Firstly, Dasein always finds itself already "tuned (*gestimmt*)" by a particular mood.[803] Our present mood (*Gestimmtsein*) not only determines the way in which we perceive ourselves and the things which we encounter, but makes these perceptions possible in the first place.[804] Above, we could see how the concept of mood as an essential factor of Dasein's world-disclosing existence featured dominantly in Heidegger's phenomenology of the Christian existence. Only in his experience of distress, accompanied by the feelings of sadness and joy, does man become aware of Jesus Christ's *parousia* and of his corresponding existence and able to turn away from his fallenness in the world, towards Jesus Christ.

Mood thus reveals Dasein's "being delivered over to the Da"[805], to its disclosed world and its hidden potentiality, for which – although not its author - it has to be responsible. Because Dasein is essentially tuned, every projection of world is already *tuned* by beings in their being. So directed by them, Dasein can turn toward them disclosingly. We might think

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[801] SZ, 122.
[802] SZ, 127.
[803] SZ, 134.
[804] Ibid.
[805] SZ, 135.

here of the phenomenon that we can actually feel the presence of another person entering silently a dark room. This shows that we can be aware of the presence of something prior to its entering our field of vision, and feel urged to direct ourselves toward it.

Our "being tuned" therefore constitutes our "world-openness"[806]. As the presupposition that Dasein can disclose something at all, our mood also determines *the way in which* we disclose things. So the mood of the first beginning of the history of Western philosophy had, for Heidegger, the character of genuine "amazement"[807] about beings-in-total in their self-presenting character. This mood could lead to two ways of existence: factually, it tempted Dasein to lose its existence in truth as it bound Dasein to the things themselves in their presencing. But understood genuinely out of the question of the meaning of being, this mood could reawaken our sense of wonder about the presence of being.

Our present inauthentic existence is characterised according to Heidegger by the mood of *fear*. This mood causes us to escape from our existence as authentically disclosing being-in-the-world[808], and to seek instead refuge within the securely disclosed world of the Man. The authentic counter-mood is for Heidegger angst, or "dread". This mood causes us to "leap back out of the ordinary", "back into the openness of the onrush of the self-concealing, in whose openness the so far familiar shows itself as both the uncanny and the binding"[809]. Angst drives Dasein out of its public world into nothingness, into the openness in which Dasein as the guardian of the truth of being can temporalise a new world.

However, this genuinely liberating power of angst can also have the opposite effect: the experience of the dread of self- and world-loss can actually cause Dasein to affirm its self and disclosed public world, so becoming enslaved by it. SZ does not solve this dilemma explicitly. In *Beiträge zur Philosophie* however, Heidegger goes one important step further as he explores moods which not only bring about Dasein's world-crisis, but also encourage Dasein to surrender its old Da, and to follow the call of being into its authentic existence. Heidegger identifies them as "restraint" and "reference". In restraint, Dasein gives up its self-affirmation and gives in to "self-denial as the direction of being (Seyn)"[810]. Reference, as a form of loving

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[806] SZ, 137.
[807] SZ, 172; GA 65, 15.
[808] SZ, 135f.
[809] GA 65, 15.
[810] GA 65, 15.

respect for the spontaneous freedom of the *Ereignis*, causes Dasein to let being be "as *Ereignis*"[811].

Secondly, Dasein is, as tuned, equally primordial "understanding"[812]. This means for Heidegger, that Dasein discloses world by its projection into its *possibilities of being* as the for-the-sake-of its existence.[813] Dasein is thus always more than its present state. In its being potentiality always belongs.[814] It "finds itself essentially attuned to particular possibilities"[815]. Dasein has been handed over and made responsible for these possibilities of its own existence, disclosed according to its present mood.[816]

Essential for Heidegger is therefore the question, *how* Dasein relates to the possibilities of its historical public existence. Either, Dasein can understand its being inauthentically, that is out of the possibilities already disclosed in its world - and it does so for the most part. Or, Dasein understands itself authentically. Dasein would exercise its being then as "being-free *for* its very own potentiality-for-being"[817]. Again, Heidegger points out that the way in which we relate to our possibilities of existence – authentically by a genuine disclosure out of our existence in the light of the truth of being or inauthentically out of our fallenness into our public world, depends on our mood.[818]

Understanding as tuned (*gestimmte*) world-disclosing projection into the possibilities into which Dasein finds itself thrown is for Heidegger always already "interpretation"[819]: Dasein discloses and understands "*something as something*"[820]. It understands beings always out of the totality of significance *as* something, being thereby already let by a vision of the final end with respect to which the being in question shall be interpreted and conceptualised within its teleologically determined context. For example, the "circumspection of our daily dealings" discloses things *as* handy instruments with respect to their usability in our daily business-world. The phenomenon of interpretation brings us thus back to Heidegger's basic

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[811] GA 65, 16.
[812] SZ, 142.
[813] SZ, 143.
[814] SZ, 145.
[815] SZ, 144.
[816] SZ, 144.
[817] Ibid.
[818] Cf. SZ, 148; WM, 62.
[819] SZ, 148.
[820] SZ, 149.

problem: the danger of beings becoming concealed by Dasein's overwhelming world-views: "Die Auslegung kann die dem auszulegenden Seienden zugehörige Begrifflichkeit aus diesem selbst schöpfen oder aber in Begriffe zwängen, denen sich das Seiende gemäß seiner Seinsart widersetzt"[821].

The possibility of "scooping" the concepts of a being from its very own being thus depends on our being opened up (er-schlossen) for being itself. This happens once we start asking the question of the meaning of being. "Meaning (Sinn)" represents for Heidegger in SZ the envisaged "*whereof of the projection, out of which something becomes understandable as something*"[822]. It is thus "the formal-existential framework ... of disclosure"[823]. Only if we project ourselves into the happening of the truth of being itself by asking the question of the meaning of being, do we exist in the openness for being itself as the happening of the unconcealment of beings in their being. Hence, the question of the meaning of being "asks about [being] itself, in so far as it stands in Dasein's understanding"[824].

Heidegger remarks later, that "understanding" was thought in SZ out of the "unconcealment of being". "Meaning" thus denotes the openness of the projection (*Entwurfsbereich*), in which "something (here being) shows itself as something (here being itself in its unconcealment)". ""Meaning of being" and "truth of being" say the same"[825]. Authentic interpretation demands therefore Dasein's preliminary vision of the truth of being as the opening in which being manifests itself and gives itself to Dasein's receptive understanding and speech, according to its present mood, as a particular unconcealment of beings-in-total. We see thus that Dasein's being, as tuned (gestimmte) understanding and interpretation, is grounded equally primordially, and expresses itself, in speech[826]: "Rede ist die Artikulation der Verständlichkeit. Sie liegt daher der Auslegung und Aussage schon zugrunde"[827]. "Die befindliche Verständlichkeit des In-der-Welt-seins *spricht sich als Rede aus*"[828].

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[821] SZ, 150.
[822] SZ, 151.
[823] Ibid.
[824] SZ 152.
[825] WM, 206.
[826] SZ, 160.
[827] SZ, 161.
[828] Ibid.

Thirdly, *speech* is for Heidegger the *gift* in which Dasein receives its *Da*, its being the unconcealment of beings, as beings represent themselves within Dasein's words. Thus, we can see how SZ aims to bring to our attention the essential relation between being as the historical event of unconcealment and language. Language is, as the later Heidegger says, "the house of being"[829]. Speech is grounded in Dasein's openness for the truth of being, as it is the medium in which being, as the unconcealment of things, comes to human apprehension. Authentic speech is thus grounded in obedient hearkening to the address of the truth of being and bears witness to it. Hence, *expression* primarily means, for Heidegger, "showing": "[L]etting-beings-be-seen from themselves"[830]. *Expression* is thereby, according to Heidegger, a showing in the form of "letting-others-see-also (*Mitsehenlassen*)"[831]. It intends to share with the other one's being towards this particular being in its being.

Speech therefore ontologically constitutes Dasein's existence as being-with. It bears in itself the possibility for both inauthentic and authentic being-with: firstly, speech as "letting see" bears the danger of rendering the disclosing existence of the other toward the named being superfluous. The authentic mode of speech bears therefore the danger of degeneration. Heidegger identifies this degenerated inauthentic mood of speech as idle talk.[832] Consequently, the shared expressions in public talk start to determine the way in which we understand reality and our possibilities of existence. Speech as belonging genuinely to the openness of Dasein as the clearing of being can thus itself become the reason for Dasein's tendency to conceal beings in their being: "Die Rede, die zur wesenhaften Seinsverfassung des Daseins gehört und dessen Erschlossenheit mit ausmacht, hat die Möglichkeit, zum Gerede zu werden und als dieses das In-der-Welt-sein nicht so sehr in einem gegliederten Verständnis offenzuhalten, sondern zu verschließen und das innerweltlich Seiende zu verdecken".[833]

But in so far as speech is grounded in Dasein's hearkening to the truth of being itself, it also constitutes Dasein's authentic openness for the Other, and for its own projection into its future authentic existence as the guardian of the truth of being: "Das Hören ist für das Reden konstitutiv [...] Das Hören auf ... ist das existenziale Offensein des Daseins als Mitsein

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[829] WM, 164.
[830] SZ, 154.
[831] SZ, 155.
[832] SZ, 168.
[833] SZ, 169.

für den Anderen. Das Hören konstituiert sogar die primäre und eigentliche Offenheit des Daseins für sein eigenstes Seinkönnen, als Hören der Stimme des Freundes, den jedes Dasein bei sich trägt. Das Dasein hört, weil es versteht. Als verstehendes In-der-Welt-sein mit den Anderen ist es dem Mitdasein und ihm selbst „hörig" und in dieser Hörigkeit zugehörig"[834].

This passage provokes the question concerning the way in which the hearing of the voice of the other and of my conscience, as my authentic potentiality to exist as the guardian of the truth of being, relate. It seems that for Heidegger, the voice of being is always a mediated voice – a voice that addresses me personally out of my future existence, but not apart from my encounter with the world and other Dasein. The inner voice of my authentic existence is understood in SZ as being provoked by a listening to the voices of previous thinkers and – for the reader – as being provoked by our listening to Heidegger while asking ourselves the question of the meaning of being. In the writings following SZ, the most important voice which Dasein has to listen to in order to become addressed by its own proper possibility of existence as the guardian of being, becomes, for Heidegger, the voice of the poet who, in remembering anticipation, allows the god to come to speech.

Heidegger summarises Dasein's threefold existential constitution by the term "care (*Sorge*)". The term is intended to denote that Dasein exists for-the-sake of a possible way of its own being. By projecting itself into a possibility of its existence, Dasein is *always ahead of itself*. As being ahead of itself, Dasein is by no means outside of its world, but it relates to the world into which it has *been thrown* by way of a particular means of disclosure. This means that its projection discloses and thereby determines and directs the context of significance, made up by the in-order-tos of the disclosed things in relation to the 'for-the-sake-of-which' as Dasein's chosen possibility of existence. Dasein therefore never creates its world out of nothing, but projects itself into inherited possibilities of existence, and discloses thereby the things it encounters within its world, in accordance to which it, in return, always understands itself. Dasein's existence as care therefore means: "being-ahead-of-oneself-already-in(-the-world) as being-alongside (innerworldly encountering beings)"[835].

Here it becomes obvious how Heidegger's phenomenological analysis of Dasein has aimed the entire time at the phenomenon of authentic temporality, to which he has introduced us already in his phenomenology of the Christian existence. Accordingly, the

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[834] SZ, 163.
[835] SZ, 192.

second division of SZ intends to expose temporality and historicity as the underlying phenomena of the care-structure. But alongside this exposition, Heidegger further pursues the crucial question of SZ: "If Dasein always understands itself out of the world into which it is thrown – how is an authentic existence then possible, in which Dasein transcends a projection into a possibility of the public world?" We will see how he answers this question by discussing the mood of angst as the mood in which we encounter the withdrawal of the public world, and our death as our final possibility of self-and world-loss. Confronted with its final possibility of death, Dasein is "entirely referred to its ownmost potentiality-for-being. Standing in this way before itself, all its relations to other *Daseins* are loosened. This ownmost, unrelational possibility is at the same time the final (*äußerste*) one"[836].

Being-toward-death: Dasein's projection into authenticity

Heidegger perceives death as the unsurpassable final possibility of our existence, in which we cannot be represented by anyone else. By anticipating our death, we become therefore aware of our Dasein as our very own potentiality, for which we are personally responsible as a whole in each moment. For once I let myself be encountered by the possibility of my death, the structure of the world, which has been established by my projection into my possibility of self- and world-affirmation, collapses. In this way I become aware of the fact that I am responsible for the totality of my existence within my world, due to my world-disclosing and -structuring projection.

The relation to death as my most personal, unrelational, and unsurpassable possibility is provoked and accompanied by the mood of angst. Dasein is always tuned by the disclosure of its uncannyness, of its potentiality-for-being. But it is precisely this disclosure that haunts us in the mood of angst, and drives us to cling to the 'real' world of the Man, which we can master to some degree. This means that Dasein's being toward its own death happens "first and foremost *by way of falling*", that is by "escaping" the uncannyness of our "ownmost being-toward-death"[837]. Consequently, we try to suppress our angstful relation to our death by rendering our ownmost possibility into a single event that happens to 'one' (but

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[836] SZ, 250.
[837] SZ, 251f.

first and foremost not to ourselves) at the end of one's life. By so doing, Dasein falls out of truth into untruth.[838] This means however, that "inauthenticity is grounded in the possibility for authenticity"[839].

Again, we can see here how Heidegger's phenomenological analysis of Dasein coherently exposes, within each existential, the inherent danger of Dasein's falling out of the truth, which lies in the event of the unconcealment of being itself. And precisely because this is the case, Dasein's being-toward-death, as its ownmost, unrelational, unsurpassable and undetermined possibility, is, as the possibility to encounter the *Ereignis* itself, also the chance for Dasein's authenticity. Heidegger gives three reasons for this: firstly, because death is Dasein's unrelational possibility, Dasein becomes aware of the fact "that it has to take on its ownmost potentiality-for-being solely from itself"[840]: "Das Vorlaufen in die unbezügliche Möglichkeit zwingt das vorlaufende Seiende in die Möglichkeit, sein eigenstes Sein von ihm selbst her aus ihm selbst zu übernehmen"[841].

Secondly, projecting itself into its final unsurpassable possibility, Dasein discloses all its other possibilities within the limits of its finite existence, and thus with a sense of responsibility and urgency toward its existence as a finite whole. Running toward death, Dasein's entire existence seems to be at stake in each decision. In this way, Dasein's "anticipatory liberation for its ownmost death liberates it from its forlornness into the contingently onrushing possibilities; in such a way, that it learns to understand and choose authentically the factical possibilities, which precede the unsurpassable one"[842]. And finally, running-towards-death discloses Dasein's "final possibility of self-surrender, and in this way shatters any hardening of its gained existence"[843].

The leading question of my reading of SZ has been so far: "How can we perceive beings in their free presencing out of the truth of being?" The urgency of this question is given with the result of Heidegger's phenomenological analysis of Dasein's understanding of being, that is, that Dasein discloses beings as something according to its projection into its final possibility-to-be. If this final possibility is now understood by Dasein as its ownmost existence as self-sacrifice for the sake of being, this question could be answered.

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[838] SZ, 258.
[839] SZ, 259.
[840] SZ, 263.
[841] Ibid.
[842] SZ, 264.
[843] SZ, 264.

But critically we have to ask here: "Who would be willing to sacrifice himself for the sake of the temporal event of the truth of being?" "What would be gained by such a sacrifice?" "Is it even ethically legitimate?" In Heidegger's eyes, such a sacrifice would enable an authentic being-with and being-in-the-world: we would become able to perceive other Dasein, nature and things in their self-giving freedom and potentiality, and so could allow our actions to be guided and formed by their needs and directions: "Als unbezügliche Möglichkeit vereinzelt der Tod aber nur, um als unüberholbare das Dasein als Mitsein verstehend zu machen für das Seinkönnen der Anderen"[844].

Thus, Dasein's '*Eigentlichkeit*' takes place as Dasein's "*Enteignis*"[845]. Dasein can own itself solely by letting go of itself as the controlling power over its world, solely in so far as it is entrusted by the truth of being with its duty to be the disclosing being of its with-world in accordance with the truth of being itself. Heidegger stresses therefore that the "solipsism" of Dasein's running into its unrelational possibility "does not place an isolated subject in the harmless emptiness of a worldless there-being, but actually brings Dasein in an extreme way before its world as world, and with that before itself as being-in-the-world"[846].

Heidegger further describes Dasein's "*Enteignis*" in the postscript to "Was ist Metaphysik"[847]. Here he states that Dasein's authentic disclosure of beings must be an answer to the address of being itself in so far as Dasein gains in and through this address the freedom to sacrifice itself, and with it its world, ambitions, categories, expectations and plans in order to guard the truth of being: "Das Opfer ist die allem Zwang enthobene, weil aus dem Abgrund der Freiheit entstehende Verschwendung des Menschenwesens in die Wahrung der Wahrheit des Seins für das Seiende. Im Opfer ereignet sich der verborgene Dank, der einzig die Huld würdigt, als welche das Sein sich dem Wesen des Menschen im Denken übereignet hat, damit dieser in den Bezug zum Sein die Wächterschaft übernehme"[848] [849].

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[844] Ibid.
[845] SZ, 189.
[846] SZ, 188.
[847] Heidegger, 1943.
[848] WIM, 105.
[849] Bernhard Casper perceives Heidegger's predominant concern in *Was ist Metaphysik* as "becoming liberated from idols". This cannot happen by human merit, but solely "by letting oneself be encountered" by the question of the meaning of being, and "by becoming tuned by this question in angst, restraint and reference" (Casper, 1998, 78). "Das Freiwerden von den Götzen geschieht gerade nicht als das worin das Dasein seiner selbst

The call of conscience

Dasein's very own potentiality-for-being is witnessed to Dasein by its call of conscience. Heidegger is here interested in giving an explanation of how Dasein can existentially modify its ontological fallenness[850], and in securing Dasein's self-responsible freedom for its own way of existence. For Heidegger, Dasein has to freely choose its ownmost possibility to be as the openness for the truth of being. He thus wants to affirm Dasein's possibility to make a decision for its "potentiality-for-being out of its own self-being"[851]. He perceives this possibility in the testimony of Dasein's authentic potentiality-for-being by the "voice of conscience"[852].

The voice of conscience is grounded – as we have already seen above - in the phenomenon of speech: it is the "*call (Anruf)* of Dasein into its ownmost potentiality-for-being"[853], and the "*appeal* (*Aufruf)* for its ownmost indebtedness"[854]. To the call of conscience corresponds a "possible hearkening", of what Heidegger calls a "wanting-to-have-a-conscience"[855]. The latter characterises Dasein's "disclosure for decision-making (Entschlossenheit)"[856]. Now we have seen above that *Dasein* is as existentially hearkening open for its with-world. It thus listens first and foremost to the idle talk of the Man and thereby overhears the voice of its conscience, of its uncanny potentiality-for-being.[857]

It is therefore necessary that *Dasein's* listening to the Man is interrupted by another kind of listening that is grounded in Dasein itself, as it is "directly called"[858] by its conscience. This call of conscience is in contrast to idle talk "silent, unambiguous, without any grounds for curiosity"[859]. The address of conscience therefore lets the Man-self literally collapse[860], as it does not utter anything on which Dasein's self-understanding could itself be

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mächtig ist, wie das Sichwegschleichen zu den Götzen. Es geschieht vielmehr als „Sichloslassen in das Nichts", als Erleiden des Zerbrechens der „Vormacht aller fraglosen Selbstsicherheit und Sicherungsgewißheit" (78).

[850] SZ, 268.
[851] Ibid.
[852] Ibid.
[853] SZ, 269.
[854] Ibid.
[855] SZ, 270.
[856]Ibid.
[857] SZ, 271.
[858] Ibid.
[859] Ibid.
[860] SZ, 273.

grounded but calls Dasein into its very own potentiality-for-being.[861] This void address comes from Dasein itself.[862]

Heidegger does not intend to say that we simply call ourselves out of our forlornness, as we might in an act of self-discipline call ourselves to attention. The call cannot be planned or brought about by ourselves.[863]"It" calls". "The call comes *out of* myself but nevertheless *over* me"[864]. Because the caller is "Dasein as it finds itself in the origin of its uncanniness"[865], "attuned to the mood of angst"[866]: "*Das Gewissen offenbart sich als Ruf der Sorge*: der Rufer ist das Dasein, sich ängstigend in der Geworfenheit ... um sein Seinkönnen. Der Angerufene ist eben dieses Dasein, aufgerufen zu seinem eigensten Seinkönnen .... Und aufgerufen ist das Dasein durch den Anruf aus dem Verfallen in das Man"[867]. Addressed by and called into its authentic existence as the guardian of the truth of being, Dasein can freely and responsibly choose itself.

However, this act of free self-election is by no means an act of self-affirmation. It is rather an act in which I choose myself as obedient to my thrown potentiality-(and-responsibility)-for-being. Heidegger thus employs consistently the passive: "Rufverstehend *läßt* das Dasein das eigenste Selbst aus seinem gewählten Seinkönnen *in sich handeln*. Nur so kann es verantwortlich sein"[868]. The uncannyness of Dasein's existence, its potentiality-for-being, comes to speech. We saw above how genuine speech is characterised by the fact that with the naming of a thing, its tuned context-of-significance comes to speech. In the instance of the call of conscience, it is the *vanishing* of Dasein's context-of-significance, which comes to speech. Genuine speech is consequently something that we cannot control, but that comes from beyond us, out of the temporal event of the truth of being, which bestows on us our new authentic existence as its guardian. Thus, our conscience is the call of our future authentic existence.

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[861] Ibid.
[862] SZ, 275.
[863] Ibid.
[864] Ibid.
[865] SZ, 276.
[866] SZ, 277.
[867] Ibid.
[868] SZ, 288.

The call of conscience reveals to Dasein that it is thrown into factical, historically inherited, possibilities, yet that it has to take them up responsibly into its own existence. Dasein is therefore always "nugatory (*nichtig*)" in a twofold sense: firstly, because it is not the author of itself and of its factical possibilities, and secondly, because it is, as the thrown ground of its existence, entrusted with its factical possibilities-for-being. Dasein is thus potentially always something, which it is *not* yet; it is always "indebted"[869] with regard to its full potential: "Grund-seiend, das heißt als geworfenes existierend, bleibt das Dasein ständig hinter seinen Möglichkeiten zurück. Es ist nie existent vor seinem Grunde, sondern je nur aus ihm und als dieser. Grundsein besagt demnach, des eigensten Seins von Grund auf *nie* mächtig sein"[870]. In the course of the discussion of Dasein's indebtedness, Heidegger points out that the full understanding of this existential depends on an ontological clarification of nothingness, whereby the meaning of the latter can be found solely in a "*clarification of the meaning of being as such*"[871].

This task has been approached by Heidegger in his lecture *Was ist Metaphysik?* Here Heidegger exposes, how, in the mood of angst, beings-as-a-whole, and Dasein itself, "slip away"[872]. Rendered incapable of projecting itself into any already disclosed possibility of existence, Dasein has a genuine experience with nothingness. However, "nothingness encounters in angst, together with beings-in-total"[873]: for once the context of meaning imposed by us is dissolved, beings can reveal themselves according to their own being. The negating power of nothingness thus causes Dasein to lose itself and its world and to become powerless towards the presencing of beings-in-total. It thereby opens Dasein for the presencing of beings-in-total: "Das Wesen des ursprünglich nichtenden Nichts liegt in dem: es bringt das Dasein allererst vor das Seiende als ein solches"[874].

If Dasein tries to escape from this encounter with nothingness, it cannot transcend its current world by re-disclosing it according to the way it gives itself; it cannot encounter other Daseins and things in their wealth of being, which transcends their present state of disclosure. But if Dasein follows the call of its conscience into nothingness, it is brought into

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[869] SZ, 285.
[870] SZ, 284.
[871] SZ, 286.
[872] WIM, 9.
[873] WIM, 10.
[874] WIM, 12.

an authentic understanding and practical relation to other Daseins and things: "Den Ruf eigentlich hören bedeutet, sich in das faktische Handeln bringen"[875]. Dasein's anxious existence in accordance to the call of conscience is thus the authentic modification of Dasein's existence as care. Heidegger calls authentic care "the silent [speech], angst-embracing [mood] projection into one's ownmost indebtedness to ones potentiality-for-being [understanding]": "resolute disclosure (*Ent-schlossenheit*)"[876].

In this way, Dasein exists as "*genuine truth*"[877]. "Diese *eigentliche* Erschlossenheit modifiziert aber dann gleichursprünglich die in ihr fundierte Entdecktheit der „Welt" und die Erschlossenheit des Mitdaseins der Anderen. Die zuhandene Welt wird nicht „inhaltlich" eine andere, der Kreis der Anderen wird nicht ausgewechselt, und doch ist das verstehende besorgende Sein zum Zuhandenen und das fürsorgende Mitsein mit den Anderen jetzt aus deren eigenstem Selbsteinkönnen heraus bestimmt"[878]. "Die Entschlossenheit zu sich selbst bringt das Dasein erst in die Möglichkeit, die mitseienden Anderen „sein" zu lassen in ihrem eigensten Seinkönnen und dieses in der vorspringend-befreienden Fürsorge mitzuerschließen. Das entschlossene Dasein kann zum „Gewissen" der Anderen werden. Aus dem eigentlichen Selbstsein der Entschlossenheit entspringt allererst das eigentliche Miteinander"[879].

To sum up: being-toward-one's-unsurpassable-unrelational-possibility-of-death, in the mood of angst, listening to the call of conscience as the call of the *Ereignis* into one's authentic future existence as the guardian of the truth of being within one's thrown potentiality-for-being: this is Heidegger's answer to the question, how things and others can show themselves in their transcending being, so that a true understanding, an honest being-with, and an attentive acting to the demands of the situation can take place. In so far as the final end of Dasein's existence changes, Dasein's world, as the way in which things and other's can show themselves, changes. Dasein's world-disclosing projection gives others freedom now for their very own potentiality-for-being, no longer reducing them to a

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[875] SZ, 294.
[876] SZ, 297.
[877] Ibid.
[878] SZ, 298.
[879] Ibid.

particular function within the public world. Hence, Dasein discloses the actual situation in which it exists in all its possibilities and urgent demands.

In this way, Dasein is made responsible for this situation. It is both genuinely enabled and factually called to act according to the way in which the disclosed beings call upon Dasein according to their own inherent meaningfulness: The situation "*is* ... only through and in resolute disclosure. Resolutely disclosed for the Da, as which the self has to exist, the particularly factical and relational meaning (faktische Bewandtnischarakter) of the circumstances discloses itself to it"[880]. The situation is thus not the world-view produced by Dasein's calculations. Instead, it is a perception of world brought forth by being itself: fhe final end of Dasein's disclosing projection, having lost all particular content in our anticipation of our death, gains a new content which is this time formed by the being of the beings disclosed in the situation. The resulting context of significance is the sphere, which determines the possibilities of Dasein's actions.

Dasein is thus, for Heidegger, always already acting in correspondence to its disclosure: "Als entschlossenes *handelt* das Dasein schon"[881]. Heidegger's phenomenological concern is therefore already in and for itself ethical in scope. For Heidegger, something is of ethical value in so far as it entrusts itself to Dasein and forms its action by calling Dasein into the '*augenblickliche*' disclosure of the situation. Heidegger can thus later say without self-contradiction: the thinking that thinks "the truth of being as the genuine element of ek-sistent human beings" is "in itself already genuine ethics"[882]. For only when human beings exist authentically, can they receive from being itself "the direction, which has to become humankind's law and rule"[883]. Existing authentically, each person can become the conscience of the other, calling him to take up his responsible vocation to exist authentically as the clearing of the truth of being.

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[880] SZ, 300.
[881] Ibid.
[882] WM, 187.
[883] WM, 191.

Dasein's temporality

So far, Heidegger has analysed Dasein's authentic wholeness as *forerunning resolute disclosure*: anticipating its own end as its most personal moment and responsibly retrieving its inherited possibilities, Dasein discloses the meaning and ethical obligations of its present situation. This analysis exposes the phenomenon of temporality as the most fundamental meaning of Dasein's existence. Consequently, all previously analysed ontological structures of Dasein can be perceived as modes in which Dasein temporalises itself as the unconcealment into which beings can become present out of the temporal event of the truth of being.[884]

Heidegger's previous analysis of Dasein intended to correct our conception of the self as a continuously present entity.[885] Heidegger understands Dasein rather as essentially eccentric temporal existence, and thus as a form of existence in which Dasein as the established self gives up its place as the Atlas of its world in order to be re-gifted with its world in obedient hearkening to being: Dasein is temporal ec-sistence as its own *Zu-kunft* in so far as it comes "in its ownmost potentiality-for-being toward itself"[886]. As future, Dasein comes out of its final possibility of self-surrender back to its factical possibilities. By projecting itself into its final futural and as such most personal moment, Dasein can retrieve authentically its past[887]: "Das Vorlaufen in die äußerste und eigenste Möglichkeit ist das verstehende Zurückkommen auf das eigenste Gewesen"[888]. Projecting itself into its authentic future in order to encounter genuinely beings in their potentiality, among which Dasein is thrown, Dasein lets the situation present itself.[889]

Temporality is thus the ontological meaning of Dasein's existence as authentic care[890]: "Das Sich-vorweg gründet in der Zukunft. Das Schon-sein in... bekundet in sich die Gewesenheit. Das Sein-bei ... wird ermöglicht im Gegenwärtigen"[891]. As essentially temporal, Dasein always transcends its momentarily disclosed self. It is open to being as the genuine

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[884] SZ, 304.
[885] SZ, 323.
[886] SZ, 325.
[887] SZ, 325f.
[888] SZ, 326.
[889] Ibid.
[890] Ibid.
[891] SZ, 327.

temporal event and thus always already beyond itself as particular momentary manifestation of being's unconcealment. It is ec-static. Hence, Heidegger calls the three modes of Dasein's temporality "ecstasies"[892]. While all three are equally primordial, Dasein's future has, as we have seen, priority within authentic temporality.[893]

For a more genuine understanding of Dasein's ontological character, Heidegger repeats the results of the existential analysis of Dasein within the horizon of temporality. I will limit my exposition of this repetition at this point to the temporality of Dasein's understanding. Understanding means "to be *projecting into a potentiality-for-being, for-the-sake-of-which Dasein exists*"[894]. Understanding is therefore primarily futural, as Dasein comes toward itself out of the final end of its existence.[895]

By understanding itself out of its possibility of death, Dasein gains its authentic future.[896] Dasein's authentic future discloses thus the authentic present, the "*Augenblick*"[897]. As authentic present (*Gegen-wart*), the *augenblickliche* Dasein encounters beings[898] - unobscured by its projection of world-views. Bringing itself into the present moment out of its authentic future, Dasein becomes able to authentically retrieve its inherited possibilities as it becomes aware of its potential character for whose actualisation or non-actualisation it is personally responsible.[899] [900] Inauthentic understanding, on the contrary, projects itself into the immediate demands of Dasein's everyday businesses. Temporalising itself out of the present, it has therefore the character of inauthentic futurity as *making present*.[901]

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[892] SZ, 329.
[893] Ibid.
[894] SZ, 336.
[895] Ibid.
[896] SZ, 337.
[897] SZ, 338.
[898] Ibid.
[899] SZ, 339.
[900] Niels Eriksen has pointed out that whilst Heidegger's notion of temporality, especially his notion of recollection, is indebted to Kierkegaard's category of repetition, it is nonetheless very different from Kierkegaard's notion. For Kierkegaard's notion of repetition "means coming into being", while Heidegger's notion of recollection involves "the labour of the self to maintain itself as a meaningful whole" (Eriksen, 2000, 134). Repetition can bring a new beginning, Eriksen argues, because it is not the recurrence of a single event of the past, but the event in which "the entire past ... becomes new" (111). However, this understanding of repetition is very similar to Heidegger's own intention. Heidegger wants to say that once we encounter the Ereignis in an attitude of self-surrender, we receive a new manifestation of being, in the light of which our entire world, i.e. also our past, appears anew, that is, in a new, previously hidden, potentiality. However, as I will continue to illustrate within this chapter, Heidegger's reciprocal structure between human, fallen existence and the Ereignis renders it questionable whether such a fundamental transformation of our world can be conceived of, without the intervention of the totally Other, as Kierkegaard argues.
[901] Ibid.

Consequently, Dasein forgets about its thrown possibilities. It is its past in an inauthentic, forgetful way.[902]

Dasein can thus be its *Da*, the clearing in which the temporal event of the truth of being can take place and manifest itself, solely in so far as it is tuned (*gestimmte*) ec-static temporality: "Die ekstatische Einheit der Zeitlichkeit, das heißt die Einheit des "Außer-sich" in den Entrückungen von Zukunft, Gewesenheit und Gegenwart, ist die Bedingung der Möglichkeit dafür, daß ein Seiendes sein kann, das als sein „Da" existiert. Das Seiende, das den Titel Da-sein trägt, ist „gelichtet""[903]. As ec-static temporality, Dasein opens up its Da as the finite clearing for the *Ereignis*, by setting up horizons. These horizons are set up by Dasein's foresight into its understanding of the being of itself and of those beings which it encounters.

The final unifying horizon of the threefold temporality is, however, set up by Dasein's projecting foresight into the *Ereignis* itself and into its ownmost possibility for existing as its guardian: "Der Horizont der ganzen Zeitlichkeit bestimmt das, *woraufhin* das faktisch existierende Seiende wesenhaft *erschlossen* ist. Mit dem faktischen Da-sein ist je im Horizont der Zukunft je ein Seinkönnen entworfen, im Horizont der Gewesenheit das „Schon sein" erschlossen und im Horizont der Gegenwart Besorgtes entdeckt. Die horizontale Einheit der Schemata der Ekstasen ermöglicht den ursprünglichen Zusammenhang der Um-zu-Bezüge mit dem Umwillen. Darin liegt: auf dem Grunde der horizontalen Verfassung der ekstatischen Einheit der Zeitlichkeit gehört zum Seienden, das je sein Da ist, so etwas wie erschlossene Welt"[904].

To sum up: world temporalises itself through Dasein's temporal existence as the unity of its temporal schemes (projection into the final in-order-to, retrieving the possibilities of the past, and so disclosing the present situation), which constitutes the unified context-of-significance, in which entities can be disclosed in their presencing. We can see this here more clearly then ever before: because Dasein temporalises the context-of-significance as the presupposition of the way in which things can become present, it is a matter of Dasein's freedom "*what* it each time, in *which* direction, *how far* and *in which way*

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[902] Ibid.
[903] SZ, 350.
[904] SZ, 365.

discovers and discloses“[905]. Being the temporal origin of its world as the horizon in which beings are set free in a particular way, Dasein is responsible for the way in which 'the world' appears.

Temporality and Historicity

Dasein's temporality is the transcendental possibility of Dasein's historicity: in so far as Dasein temporalises itself authentically, that is, in so far as it projects itself into its authentic future and retrieves its inherited possibilities, it gains a genuine relation to its history and consequently to its present. If Dasein exists as the temporal ec-static clearing for the *Ereignis*, it will not arbitrarily choose an inherited possibility, but will responsibly receive one as the *augenblickliche* self-manifestation of being. So Dasein is brought into its 'fate': in anxious being-toward-death, obeying the call of conscience, Dasein's eye is opened to "the *Zufälle* of the disclosed situation"[906]. We have to read 'Zu-fall' here with respect to its literal meaning as *be-fall*: Dasein becomes perceptive 'for the way being itself *gives itself* (*befalls*) to Dasein in the moment of vision as the being of beings as a whole.

The way in which being gives itself to Dasein in its temporal ec-sistence is for Heidegger a reciprocal happening. While unconcealment of beings in their being must occur in personal responsibility, it is not an individualised task. It occurs in the *Ereignis*, in a cosmic interplay which encompasses the future and the past. The later Heidegger describes this as the fourfold: the creative interplay between the gods, the humans in their existence towards death, the disclosed earth as beings-in-total, and the heaven as truth, as the way in which being itself gives itself to man by blossoming into new manifestations of possibilities of existence to be received by Dasein within this interplay. In SZ, Heidegger focuses primarily on the role of Dasein's being-with, as he points out "fateful Dasein exists as being-in-the-world essentially as being-with Others"[907].

This notion is congruent with the fundamental procedure of SZ: SZ is no self-enclosed meditation on concepts, but a historical dialogue aimed to provoke the authentic

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[905] SZ, 366.
[906] SZ, 384.
[907] SZ, 384.

response of the reader. The 'result' of such a disclosure of being is therefore always a social, historical, even cosmic product, and the possibilities of relating to this disclosed situation are always possibilities within this social, historical, cosmic context and determined by it. The happening of Dasein's existence is thus always "a co-happening and determined as *Geschick*"[908].

Yet while the possibilities which Dasein has to retrieve are historically, socially and even cosmically determined, they are no static inescapable traditions or even eternal laws: if Dasein de-constructs its shared history with the honest interest in mind to understand the meaning of being out of an authentic encounter with the happening of the truth of being, it does not simply repeat a realised possibility of the past but "rather reciprocates the possibility of the existence which has-been-there before"[909]. Dasein must be faithful to its tradition in order to possibly retrieve the ec-sistence of the heroes it chooses[910], by repeating the anxious encounter with being of those men and women who allowed their disclosed world to fall into pieces, and so witnessed the worlding of a new world. Thus, what Dasein has to repeat is not the way in which these previous thinkers have understood being, but their moment of openness towards the happening of the truth of being – the moment in which they found themselves called to disclose being as the being of beings-in-total.

The way in which being will present itself as the being of beings-in-total will not lie in Dasein's hands, nor is it pre-determined by its particular tradition in a narrow sense. But the new *Ereignis* will not happen apart from Dasein's disclosing relation to its history as the history of being as such (nor apart from its actual encounter with others, the gods, art and nature). Hence, Dasein is called to stand in an authentic historical relation to the original ways in which being has been understood before. It must not cling to a particular historical interpretation of being but must allow its tradition to challenge its affirmation of self- and world by reminding Dasein of its freedom "for the possibly demanded surrendering of a particular disclosure according to the situation"[911].

This said, Heidegger does not mean that the deconstruction of the history of Western Philosophy does not also make a positive material contribution to the way in which we disclose being as our present *Geschick*. We will come to understand more precisely how

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[908] Ibid.
[909] SZ, 386.
[910] SZ, 391.
[911] SZ, 391.

Heidegger perceives the relation between *Dasein*'s existence as the disclosing guardian of being and its history as we turn now to his long and intense struggle with the thoughts of Friedrich Nietzsche.

Part III

Heidegger and Nietzsche

The possibility, aim and method of the de-construction of history

Heidegger's exposition of Dasein's authentic temporality as the existential ground of its authentic historicity in SZ concludes with a very positive reference to Nietzsche. According to Heidegger, Nietzsche "acknowledged and unambiguously-insistently stated"[912] the relation between authentic temporality and authentic historicity in his essay *Vom Nutzen und Nachteil der Historie fuer das Leben.* For it is in authentic forerunning disclosure that Dasein retrieves and thus antiquates the monumental possibilities of its history in order to take a critical stance towards the present public opinion. This positive reference to Nietzsche raises many questions. If we consider the critical stance which 'the later Heidegger' takes towards Nietzsche[913], this affirmative reference may seem to be proof for the thesis that Heidegger not only advanced in his thinking, but that he made a decisive turn. For is not this alliance with Nietzsche a sure proof that the Heidegger of SZ still endorsed a voluntaristic subjectivism similar to Nietzsche of which he became increasingly critical once he turned from phenomenology to the thought of being?[914]

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[912] SZ, 396.

[913] Heidegger interprets Nietzsche's *Vom Nutzen und Nachteil der Historie für das* Leben in a 1938/39 lecture course (GA 46) as being grounded in Dasein's *in*authentic temporality.

[914] As the most influential theory of Heidegger's turn, cf. Richardson, 1967.

William Richardson's thesis was rightly contested by Laurence Hemming. In *Heidegger's Atheism*, Hemming shows convincingly that the term 'turn (Kehre)' denotes not an external shift concerning the object of Heidegger's thought, but the internal structure of Heidegger's entire path of thinking.

Frederick Olafson presents another attempt to challenge the paradigm of the Kehre. It is thereby Interesting to see how even his original and deep understanding of Heidegger's project has to free itself from the predominance of this paradigm. For Olafson, the main thesis of SZ states that "existence as the mode of being of Dasein is the ground of presence as the mode of being of the world and of entities" (Olafson, 1993, 101). The problem arose then for Heidegger that "he had associated being too closely with individual Dasein and as a result was unable to reconcile the singularity and unity of the one with the plurality of the other" (109).

Now I do not think that such an explanation is appropriate. Instead, I take Heidegger's differentiated, even dialectical relation to Nietzsche as an indication of the dialectical structure of his interpretation of the history of metaphysics. Heidegger's work on Nietzsche is thus in my eyes eminently important for any understanding of Heidegger's interpretation of this history. Furthermore, it is for Heidegger in Nietzsche, where "the previous tradition of Western thought" "gathers and fulfils itself"[915]. Hence, a "discourse with Nietzsche" constitutes „a discourse with the previous Western thinking"[916].

Heidegger's thinking about the philosophy of Nietzsche is thus first and foremost the concrete, laborious task which SZ demands: the authentic disclosure of the possibilities of our shared inherited past. But how is Heidegger's disclosing thinking characterised, and how does it proceed? The disclosing thinking is characterised as "discourse (*Aus-einander-setzung*)" and as such as "real critique"[917]. Any thinking about Nietzsche is solely then a proper critique once it sets apart, once it differentiates. But what is to be set apart? This will become clear once we consider how this thinking proceeds: the differentiating discourse with Nietzsche's thinking must proceed under the "basic question (*Grundfrage*)" under which already the thinking of "Sein und Zeit" has taken place, that is, the question "of the "meaning of being" as

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Olafson concludes that Heidegger dealt with this problem "by simply dropping the active and projective character of Dasein" (109) and so attempting to make "being as presence independent" of Dasein's existence (109f). Heidegger thus turns from a perception of Dasein's existence as the ground of being as presence toward a perception of being as the ground of Dasein. However, he did so for the sake of his understanding of being as presence, which did not change after SZ (110). Olafson rightly perceives that Heidegger's understanding of presence, or unconcealment, is a continuous concept. And he is also rightly aware of Heidegger's struggle to prevent being from becoming totally dependent upon Dasein's existence, as he associates Dasein's existence "with the obscuration of being" (111).

However, I do not agree with his separation of Heidegger's work into one phase of voluntaristic human agency and one of sole receptiveness, nor with his claim that the later Heidegger disconnected unconcealment from Dasein's actual existence. The constant question of Heidegger's work is instead, as I have attempted to show: How are we to exist in order to let being be? Olafson himself has to concede therefore that Heidegger's later writings "subsequently qualif[y]" "the independence of being as presence ... in quite substantial ways which in effect reintroduce the element of dependence upon Dasein" (112). "These qualifications are very similar to those that, in the period of Being and Time, limited the independence of Dasein by showing that it was as dependent upon being as presenc and upon the world as they were upon it" (112f).

Olafson's analysis of Heidegger's understanding of language allows him finally to free himself from the distorting paradigm of the *Kehre* as a change in Heidegger from Dasein's voluntaristic existence to its receptive contemplation on being. He comes to understand "that what is really important is the special character of the dependence [of being on Dasein]" – "it is, in the first place, reciprocal" (120). Olafson finally concludes therefore correctly that "the unity of Heidegger's thought must be understood as his continuing effort to find a satisfactory way of bringing that interdependence to conceptual expression" (120).

[915] NI, 3.
[916] Ibid.
[917] Ibid.

such, not only of the being of beings"[918]. What is to be set apart, differentiated, is thus: that, what Nietzsche *actually* did think under his "guiding question (*Leitfrage*)" of the being of *beings*, from that, what *can* be disclosed in Nietzsche's thoughts once they are analysed in the light of the question of the meaning of *being as such.*[919]

A thoughtful response to Nietzsche's thoughts, guided by the question of the "meaning of being", thus goes beyond Nietzsche and all previous philosophy – but it is for Heidegger this transcending projection into the *Ereignis* itself which "first enables us to return to Nietzsche"[920]. Such a responsive reading of Nietzsche aims to retrieve its possibilities for our present thinking of being and thus for our understanding of the present situation. It is a response which acknowledges its dependence and seeks for guidance in its attempt to understand itself and its historical situation in relation to being itself. For it knows that there can be no knowledge about being, no new authentic encounter with the *Ereignis*, if our thinking is not directed into the genuine beginning of the history of *Dasein's* relation to being by this history itself. But it is, as such, at the same time thoroughly critical – in order that Nietzsche's thoughts can become an authoritative critique of our present thinking, and thus an authoritative directive.

I intend to show that Heidegger's differentiating discourse with Nietzsche reveals its possibilities for our present thinking of being within the *Entwurfsbereich* of the question of the meaning of being in a fourfold dialectical way: firstly, I intend to show that Nietzsche's thinking reveals itself as a pointer into the *Ereignis*. Secondly, I intend to show that in the light of the *Ereignis* itself, Nietzsche's thoughts reveal the oblivion of being which pervades the history of metaphysics and therefore first and foremost our present situation. Thirdly, I intend to show that the oblivion of being, which essentially threatens our being, reveals itself within the thoughts of Nietzsche as grounded in a change of truth from unconcealment to righteousness, in which being can reveal itself as will to power.

And finally, I intend to show that the revelation of the history of the oblivion of being in its character as a change of the essencing of truth means not only a necessary critical warning to the way in which we presently exist. Moreover, it bears in itself the promise of our future authentic existence. For once the history of the oblivion of being is thought as

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[918] NI, 15
[919] NII, 13.
[920] NII, 22.

grounded in the happening of the truth of being, we come to understand that we have been urged into our present misery and peril by being itself, which has been giving itself to us throughout the history of metaphysics for the sake of our future existence as the *Da* of the unconcealment of being.

Nietzsche's thoughts: the horizon at which being appears

I will firstly show how much Heidegger has retrieved from Nietzsche's thinking possibilities for his personal thoughtful encounter with the *Ereignis*: Heidegger interprets Nietzsche as having thought the being of beings-in-total as the *eternal recurrence of the same*. This thought directs us into the *Entwurfsbereich* within which we become able "to think being as time"[921]. For Heidegger, Nietzsche does not consider the eternal recurrence of the same as the tragic circulation of a heteronomous fate. Instead, he names the event in which man exists as the disclosing "*Augenblick*". The future *Übermensch* must exist as the one who "*is himself* the *Augenblick*, who acts into the future and thereby takes over and approves ... what has been"[922]. In this way, the *Augenblick* determines "how everything returns"[923]. Nietzsche's thought of the eternal recurrence of the same, as resolute disclosure of the present situation, places us therefore into a position of responsibility for the disclosure of beings-in-total, for the way in which our having-been claims us anew as our future.

In my previous interpretations of Heidegger's phenomenology of Christian faith and of SZ, I intended to show how Heidegger experienced being's call to exist as its guardian, as the clearing in which beings can freely reveal themselves, and how he has perceived the necessary presupposition of such a responsible way of disclosing existence within our self-surrender. But it is now Nietzsche, who leads Heidegger further into the realm out of which his earlier thoughts have been kindled, and in which now further possibilities appear for *Dasein's* existence as a being that lets beings be in their being. According to Nietzsche, the disclosure of the concealed possibilities within our having-been as focus-points for new world-disclosing projections occurs in art as Dionysian ecstasy. Nietzsche directs us

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[921] NI, 17.
[922] NI, 277.
[923] NI, 278.

therefore into the thinking of the essence of art as *transfiguration*. Art is the event which "lifts a being, which has become fixed and rigid, up into new possibilities"[924].

Heidegger shows how Nietzsche's understanding of art as letting new possibilities of being shine forth originates in the experience of the Greek. For Plato, art occurs as the reception of being as *phusis*, in its blossoming, and self-withdrawing prevailing. Being, as *phusis*, gives itself to the artist in its self-manifestation as *eidos* and calls him to guard it and let it shine forth in his work of art. Art means thus for Plato: "Letting arrive: the already presencing"[925]. The artist receives being in its free manifestation as *eidos*, and offers it – guarded within his work - as the focus-point for their joint projection, so that a new world may appear in which a genuine being-with is possible. The beautiful work of art is thus a manifestation of being itself in its blossoming. As such, it has the power to direct and draw the onlooker into the essencing of the truth of being.

Correspondingly, "the beautiful" has been understood by Plato as "that, which comes most directly toward us and enchants us. By encountering us as a being, it simultaneously translates us into the sight of being"[926]. Similarly, Nietzsche perceives beauty as "that, which determines us and our behaviour and ability, in so far ... as we transgress beyond ourselves"[927]. Like Plato, Nietzsche understands beauty as that, which translates us beyond ourselves into the openness of the happening of the truth of being. This translation happens within the art which prevails in Dionysian ecstasy "as the being-beyond-oneself, and in this way as the coming-toward-oneself within the highest clarity of being"[928].

We see here how the world-disclosing happening of art is inherently bound up firstly with the mood which comes over us, and secondly with the encounter with the divine.

Firstly, the ecstasy in which the translation beyond our presently disclosed self and world into the *Ereignis* happens, befalls us as mood. Accordingly, Heidegger rightly sees Nietzsche describing "feeling" as the way "in which man withstands the "Da", the openness and concealment of being, in which he stands[929]: "Im Gefühl eröffnet sich und hält sich der

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[924] NI, 511.
[925] NI, 80.
[926] NI, 199.
[927] NI, 113.
[928] NI, 214.
[929] NI, 48.

Zustand offen, in dem wir jeweils zugleich zu den Dingen, zu uns selbst und zu den Menschen mit uns stehen"[930].

Human beings' tuned openness for the *Ereignis* in Dionysian ecstasy includes a moment of nothingness. According to Heidegger, Nietzsche knew therefore that "to the essence of being belongs nothingness, although not as the mere nothing of emptiness, but as the powerful No"[931]. The power of this No against our affirmation of self as the producers of world-views and corresponding values brings forth "a new world-order by itself"[932]. The main interest is thus for both Nietzsche and Heidegger alike: "To *see* the things, *as they are*!"[933]

This perception of things as they are, enabled by our becoming ecstatically tuned, is for Nietzsche the foundation of any authentic ethics. Hence, Heidegger perceives Nietzsche as an important guide for his very own endeavour to show that being, as such, must be allowed to ground and determine our ethical obligations: "„Wille zur Macht" ist in sich selbst schon ein Schätzen und Wertsetzen. Wenn das Seiende als Wille zur Macht begriffen ist, dann wird ein Sollen überflüssig, das zuerst dem Seienden aufgehängt werden müßte, damit sich das Seiende an ihm messe [...] Dann bestimmt nicht ein Sollen das Sein, sondern das Sein ein Sollen"[934].

Secondly, we have seen so far how Nietzsche thinks that when the essence of art befalls us, it translates us into a state of ec-static existence in which we surpass our rigid self and world-views and become open to a new encounter with the *Ereignis*. These thoughts correspond to Heidegger, who in SZ perceived our being as ontologically grounded in our ec-static, projecting temporality, determined and opened up by art and mood within the experience of nothingness. But we are again faced with the problem identified within the previous reading of SZ, namely that authenticity and inauthenticity are not only equally primordial, but that inauthenticity is actually grounded in the possibility of authenticity: human beings are always tempted to react inauthentically to their encounter with being by trying to affirm the status quo which they pretend to be masters of. [935]

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[930] Ibid.
[931] NI, 58.
[932] NII, 27f.
[933] NII, 29.
[934] Ibid.
[935] Heidegger knows very well about man's corruptibility. Man is existentially inauthentic. Heidegger's own biography illustrates this: In the moment when he acknowledges the need for a new world as a gift by being, he failed utterly by projecting his desires for this new gift unto Hitler.

It thus seems that man cannot, by his own means, bring himself into a new authentic encounter with being. We can never start again with the beginning – according to Heidegger, "only a god"[936] can do this. It is this dimension of the divine which Heidegger perceives in Nietzsche. For Nietzsche, it is the god Dionysus who comes over us, annuls our old self and world, calls us into ec-static existence, and so liberates us for a new encounter with the *Ereignis*. Nietzsche's thoughts confront us here with the last god. The last god is the god who is no human idol cast in accordance to our "need for reward"[937], but for whose free coming in his self-withdrawal, we can reverently ask "solely out of the *Augenblick*"[938].

The last god has his being in the *Ereignis* itself. For Heidegger, being itself is divine in so far as it manifests itself freely, and in so far as it has the character of an unearthing and re-directing divine call by which it opens up and determines man's ec-sistence as the place where a whole new world appears. The final whereof of our disclosing ec-sistence is thus for Heidegger the manifestation of being as the last god who approaches us out of the *Ereignis* and holds us in midst of being in its negating character. Heidegger thus finds Nietzsche sharing his hope that human temporality can be determined by being itself, in so far as being itself is the divine origin of the god who is above and breaks through human projections and

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Rüdiger Safranski therefore argues that Heidegger interprets the Nazi-movement as an event of the history of being. Yet this interpretation takes the form of a projection of meaning unto the factual events. Thus, Heidegger fails to acknowledge reality but acts according to a philosophical world-view: "Heidegger wird zum Gefangenen der Bedeutungen, die er in die Wirklichkeit hineinlegt" (Safranski, 1994, 308).

Herman Philipse argues that Heidegger collapsed into an inauthentic Nazi-Religion, after his search for authentic individuality has failed. However, Philipse wrongly interprets Heidegger's notion of authentic mineness as individualism, and I cannot see any endorsement of Nazi-ideology in SZ (Cf. Zimmermann, 1981 and Young, 2002). But Philipse is right in suggesting that Heidegger's strife for authenticity let him to cling to Hitler as a means (i.e. as the expected Statesman) to reach his goal (Philipse, 1998). Thus, in 1945, Heidegger testifies that he saw in the Nazi-movement the possibility for an authentic renewal of the German people and of *Wissenschaft* (R, 23), as long as this movement would be "geläutert" and "gemäßigt" by people like him (R, 25).

We must conclude that Heidegger saw the nihilistic danger of the Nazi-movement. Yet because, for Heidegger, this danger pervaded the whole of history, he intended to tackle it in an "Auseinandersetzung" with the particular NSDAP-movement, which was supposed to set free its possibilities for authenticity (R, 25). However, this "Auseinandersetzung" took on the form of collaboration.

Heidegger's collaboration with the NSDAP as Rector was therefore the consequence of the turning of his questioning philosophy into a world-view of being, which let to a naïve judgement about the political situation, and was accompanied by hubris and sheer fear of an open clash with the manifestations of power. Yet this 'fall' of Heidegger into inauthenticity does not prove that his philosophy endorses the actual ideology and actions of the NSDAP. However, it shows that even (or perhaps: especially) a philosophy about the disclosure of reality can be turned into a means of concealment.

[936] GA 39, 3f.
[937] NI, 286.
[938] NI, 288.

redirects our temporality to become the place of the Holy, the openness in which to encounter the god and to disclose beings accordingly, in their divine self-blossoming.

Heidegger thus perceives Nietzsche's thoughts as a positive witness of the truth of being itself, which calls him into questioning and into the openness of a longing expectation of the last god. But in order to retrieve this quality within Nietzsche's text, Heidegger needed already some pre-understanding of that to which Nietzsche's text bears witness. He could only deconstruct Nietzsche's text within the *Entwurfsbereich*, opened up by the question of the meaning of being. Above we could see that a primary glance into the *Entwurfsbereich* opened up by the question of the meaning of being took place for Heidegger in his phenomenological analysis of Christian existence. A further essential eye opener for him was his reading of Hölderlin's poetry.

Hölderlin's poetry: the coming to speech of the god and the truth of being

For Heidegger, Hölderlin accomplished through his poetry the "*revelation of being* "[939]. His poetry achieved this revelation because it is "a saying by way of a signifying revealing"[940]. In this way, the poetic word gives free "that which is original for its own advent"[941]. The poet is thus not master but „*witness of being*"[942]. However, true poetry as direction into the *Ereignis* depends upon the coming of the god. Heidegger therefore interprets the following verses of Hölderlin[943] as follows:

Doch uns gebührt es, unter Gottes Gewittern,
Ihr Dichter! Mit entblößtem Haupte zu stehen,
Des Vaters Stral, ihn selbst, mit eigner Hand
Zu fassen und dem Volk ins Lied
Gehüllt die himmlische Gabe zu reichen.[944]

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[939] GA 39, 6.
[940] GA 39, 30.
[941] GA 52, 7.
[942] GA 39, 61.
[943] Wie wenn am Feiertage ... (IV, 153, v.56ff).
[944] GA 39, 30.

The poet binds the god's lightning in his word and offers it to his people. Lightning splits and tears open the clouds and thereby enlightens the darkness. If the poet receives this lightning, his Dasein is opened up for the encounter with the coming gods and thus for the happening of the truth of being, which he has to bring to speech as a gift for his people. Heidegger interprets the god's lightning as their self-revelations in their coming. Within lightning, the gods proclaim themselves as those who are coming, as the ones who have been there before, as those whose coming can be anticipated solely by remembering them in their 'having been'. They call human beings thereby to partake in their authentic temporality. As authentic temporality, the gods participate in the same essence as the *Ereignis* itself - and because they draw the poet into this essence, the poet then in turn can, through his poetry, point the reader, or even an entire people, into the *Ereignis*, into authentic temporality. Gods are therefore, as Hölderlin's poems disclose, "nothing other than time", authentic temporality.

Hölderlin also calls the self-revelation of the gods "Winke". Poetry is thus "the waving of these wavings into the people", "a signifying, a pointing, in which the gods become manifest ... in their waving (*Winken*)"[945]. The German word "winken" opens up a field of playfully interrelated meanings. Firstly, "winken" means to wave both goodbye and hello. The term brings to mind that the gods are there as those who welcome us out of the future, but already in their parting, as having-been. The gods are thus not simply present, but are there as "Winke"[946]. "Winken" also means to give away a hint. The gods bestow on us a new knowledge about ourselves and our world in so far as they point us towards the *Ereignis* and direct us (*einwinken*) into the happening of the truth of being, out of which we receive our new self and the standard and horizon of our world.

Hölderlin perceives authentic human existence essentially as witness: "Wer ist der Mensch? Jener, der Zeugen muß, was er sei. Zeugen bedeutet einmal ein Bekunden; aber zugleich meint es für das Bekundete in der Bekundung einstehen"[947]. Man exists, in being a witness of the coming god and thus of the *Ereignis* into which he directs man. He has to exist in correspondence to the *Ereignis* as authentic historicity. "Das Zeugesein der Zugehörigkeit

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[945] GA 39, 32.
[946] Ibid.
[947] E, 34.

in das Seiende im Ganzen geschieht als Geschichte"[948]. As a responsible witness, Dasein is a "Zeuge" in the German term's third meaning of "begetting"[949]: Dasein's being consists essentially in giving rise to a new world, which it has conceived from being as such – and this always includes Dasein's witness to the world's self-transcendent character, to its "downfall"[950].

This witness presupposes Dasein's witness of the death of the God, as the surrender of self and world by a socio-historical community can happen solely "by denying the old gods"[951] in the moment of the dawning of the new gods. The denial of the old gods does thus not mean that they 'are' no longer. Instead, it means that "their saga "now dawns on us doubters""[952]. Once the dawning gods[953] approach man out of his future, Dasein's world-disclosing existence receives a new perspective, horizon and structure.[954]

For Hölderlin, the new god comes to speech within the word of the poet by addressing him first: the god calls the poet to anticipate him while remembering his previous revelations. This coming-to-speech of the god as the anticipated-remembered one "discloses"[955] being, the worlding of a new world, and our particular possibility to act in it. The address of the gods is accompanied by the mood of holy "mourning", in which the absence of the gods is experienced.[956] It is this mood, which "endows" "a new relation to the gods"[957], as it expresses the poet's love for the gods, which respects their divinity.[958] The poet allows the gods to withdrawal themselves, knowing that "their departure does not destroy their having-been, but creates and sustains it"[959].

In mourning-remembering renunciation, and in anticipating calling of the last god, the poet opens up the "space for a possible new encounter with the gods"[960]. While the old gods are not directly manifest, they are nevertheless *there* – "there not as present, but ...there

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[948] Ibid.
[949] Ibid.
[950] Ibid.
[951] GA 39, 42.
[952] Ibid.
[953] The plural denotes here not a "Vorhandensein einer Vielzahl gegenüber einem Einzigen, sondern bedeutet den Hinweis auf die Unentschiedenheit des Seins der Götter" (GA 65, 437).
[954] Cf. GA 65, 263f.
[955] E, 38.
[956] E, 80.
[957] E, 87.
[958] E, 97.
[959] E, 94.
[960] E, 97.

as those who have been, i.e. still are (Wesende)"[961]. In their having-been, they enter our Da-sein anew out of our anticipated future, as "futural (zu-künftig)"[962]. The gods encounter us thus as authentic temporality: "In diesem Nach-vorne-walten des Gewesenen in die Zukunft, die rückweisend das schon früher sich Bereitende als solches eröffnet, waltet das Zukommen und Nach-wesen (Zukunft und Gewesenheit) in einem: die ursprüngliche Zeit"[963].

The arrival of the new gods in anticipating remembrance allows us to come "together and to be with- and for each other – naturally (*von selbst*)"[964]. The reception of the coming of the new gods in anticipating remembrance of their having-been is thus the act of responsibility for the disclosure of being that Heidegger demands of us. We "must accept the responsibility for being, to which we are handed over"[965]. [966]

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[961] E, 107.
[962] E, 108.
[963] E, 109.
[964] GA 39, 73.
[965] GA 39, 175.
[966] Heidegger understood his ethical-political obligation during the Nazi-regime in raising his student's awareness of their responsibility to their world. Heidegger's aim was to transform Hölderlin into a power within the *Seinsgeschichte* of the German people: "Hierbei mitzuhalten ist 'Politik' im höchsten und eigentlichen Sinne, so sehr, daß wer hier etwas erwirkt, nicht nötig hat, über das 'Politische' zu reden" (GA 39, 214). According to Heidegger, Hölderlin reminded us that the German national character and homeland were essentially futural – both had yet to be received through – and even thereafter left open to - authentic thinking about the word of the poet in which the last god greets us and calls us fundamentally into question (GA 39, 220f).

Hence, the struggle for the German being cannot be won on the battlefield. On the contrary, the war policy, in its aim to affirm the present German nature by a planed and organised war-machinery, is the epitome of everything Heidegger understands as inauthentic and thus irresponsible. I therefore think that Heidegger's thoughts about the German nature and dwelling-place is not, as J. Hodge calls it a sacrifice of "both philosophy and those designated as non-Germans" (Hodge, 1995, 102). On the contrary, they call for a particularly responsible relation to philosophy within the particular German context, that is, as a critique of the present self-understanding and conduct, and pose a sharp critique on self-affirmation.

What sense can we make then of Heidegger's early positive excitement about Hitler? His naïve embracing of the early Nazi-movement was most probably due to his longing for a "Staatsschöpfer" who could create a new state according to the word of the poet and the thought of the thinker: "Die Grundstimmung, und das heißt die Wahrheit des Daseins eines Volkes, wird ursprünglich gestiftet durch den Dichter. Das so enthüllte Seyn des Seienden aber wird als Seyn begriffen und gefügt und damit erst eröffnet durch den Denker, und das so begriffene Seyn wird ... in die be-stimmte geschichtliche Wahrheit gestellt dadurch, daß das Volk zu sich selbst als Volk gebracht wird. Das geschieht durch die Schaffung des seinem Wesen zu-bestimmten Staates durch den Staatsschöpfer" (GA 39 144).

Heidegger hoped for some time that Hitler was this "Staatsschöpfer" – a hope that clearly shows his political naivety at this time (as a result of his projection of his metaphysics unto the political reality). It does not show, however, that his philosophy is in anyway comparable to, or even in favour of, a Nazi-world-view.

Vom Ereignis – Heidegger's futural testament

A summarizing presentation of the vision from which SZ has been written, and which has become clearer for Heidegger through his discourse with Nietzsche and Hölderlin, are his *Beiträge zur Philosophie* (GA 65). He started them in 1936, after his encounter with Nietzsche's unpublished works inspired him to prepare his own literary estate (Nachlaß).

The Beiträge stands for Heidegger in continuity with SZ: "The question of "meaning", i.e. after the comment in "Being and Time" the question of the foundation of the *Entwurfbereich* (space disclosed by Dasein's projection), short of the truth of being (Seyn) is, and remains, *my* question and is my *only one* (*einzige*), because it aims at the *only thing* (*Einzigste*)"[967]. However, the shift of perspective is obvious: SZ inquires into the way in which Da-sein temporalises its *Da*, its disclosing openness for the *Ereignis* – *The Beiträge* focuses primarily on the way in which being 'presences' out of its own temporality within the clearance of Dasein and thereby both determines and calls for Dasein's ec-static existence. It explores being as the "happening of the having-been-preserving and the futural-anticipating translation and i.e. disclosure and foundation of the Da and therefore of the essencing of truth"[968]. This "essencing" "opens itself solely in the *Augenblicklichkeit* of Dasein's pro-jection into the *Ereignis*"[969].

Heidegger's 'system' has 6 interrelated "Fugen", formed and loosely united as an interplay by the *Ereignis* itself: 1) the *opening*, 2) *the passing-on (Zuspiel)*, 3) the disclosing leap (*Sprung*) into the direction of being, 4) the *founding (Gründung) of Dasein*, 5) the being of the *future-ones (Zukünftigen)* 6) the *last god.*[970] The interplay of these *Fugen* is opened up and determined by the threefold mood "*presentiment*", experienced as "*startling*", "*restraint*" and "*reference*"[971]. "Startling", echoing angst, causes "our driving-back" out of the ordinary, into the *Ereignis.*[972] But Heidegger goes beyond the merely negative character of angst in SZ by further

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[967] GA 65, 10.
[968] GA 65, 74.
[969] GA 65, 75.
[970] GA 65, 82.
[971] GA 65, 14.
[972] GA 65, 15.

introducing "restraint" as the mood in which we find ourselves "turning-toward" the direction of being[973] and "reference" as the mood which causes us to let "being be as *Ereignis*"[974].

The *Ereignis* first encounters us, has its opening, once we become aware of the present "oblivion-of-being"[975]. This awareness allows us to experience being itself as the cause of its oblivion in so far as it withdraws itself into the world, which it has brought forth into unconcealment. Experiencing being in its self-withdrawal, we are urged to follow it by remembering its previous manifestations and awaiting a new happening of unconcealment. The experience of the oblivion of being is thus "as genuinely commemorating-expecting" the call of being. It is not merely a "not-having, but on the contrary, the ... *Augenblick*"[976].

Brought into this general state of commemorating-expectation by the experience of the withdrawal of being, we must prepare our new beginning with being as the happening of genuine disclosure by the passing-on (*Zuspiel*): by a questioning dialogue with the thinkers of the Western tradition, attempting to retrieve possibilities of thinking the anticipated *Ereignis*. Yet such a new encounter with the *Ereignis* demands Dasein's "leap". As we can only enter the *Ereignis* if we surrender our previous self and corresponding world-view, this leap consists in Dasein's self-sacrifice: "Je unseiender der Mensch, je weniger er sich auf das Seiende, als welches er sich vorfindet, versteift, um so näher kommt er dem Sein"[977].

This leap has thus the form of our "running-toward-death"[978], in which our present context-of-significance vanishes and each of us receives his or her new world in personal responsibility. The most fundamental and collective form of running-toward-death consists thereby in "the death of a god"[979]. The death of the god who has defined and unified the culture and ethos of a community breaks down their common world-view and their being-with. The death of the god provides a culture or nation therefore with the possibility of surrendering their collective being and to expect a new unifying and world-determining final means of existence.

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[973] Ibid.
[974] GA 65, 16.
[975] GA 65, 108.
[976] GA 65, 384.
[977] GA 65, 170f.
[978] GA 65, 283.
[979] GA 65, 230.

The necessary preparation for our encounter with the *Ereignis* demands that we anticipate our own death in order to gain a sense of personal responsibility for the world to be disclosed by us, but also to remember the death of the old god and our anticipation of his new coming, in order to receive a world in which a genuine being-with is possible on the premise of a mutual understanding. Existing as such, Dasein is the clearing of being.[980]

Existing as the clearing of being, Dasein must found its disclosed world as a manifestation of being, but also guard being as the openness which makes the unconcealment of world possible. Dasein must therefore allow its disclosed world to transgress itself into new possibilities by staying open for the truth of being in expectation of the coming of the last god in his self-withdrawal. This authentic existence is the existence of the "future-ones" who experience the "distancing and nearing of the last god". While the actual existence of these future(or: coming-)-ones lies beyond the human will, they are, for Heidegger nevertheless, more than empty hope. For if we understand future (*Zu-kunft)* as authentic encounter with our having-been, we come to see that the *Zu-künftigen are* already, that they encounter and transform us once we listen to their address from the past. "Hölderlin" is thus, for Heidegger, the "Zukünftigste"[981].

The *Zukünftige* witnesses to us the last god. Heidegger characterises him as the *wholly Other* with respect to those who have been, particularly the Christian God. However, if we consider the *historical* character of the last god and of his experience by Dasein in remembering-anticipation, we must not exclude all continuity with the ways in which the god has been experienced before. The last god has his "*essencing*" in both the "arrival and departure of the gods who have been"[982]. As deeply rooted in history, the last god *is* the "other beginning" in so far as he stems from and simultaneously opens up the "vast possibilities of our history".

We might understand what Heidegger means here by turning to the postscript of his essay *Das Ding* (GA 79), entitled *Brief an einen jungen Studenten 18/6/1950*, where he writes: "Der Fehl Gottes und des Göttlichen ist Abwesenheit. Allein Abwesenheit ist nicht nichts, sondern sie ist die gerade erst anzueignende Anwesenheit der verborgenen Fülle des Gewesenen und so versammelt Wesenden, des Göttlichen im Griechentum, im Prophetisch-

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[980] GA 65, 234.
[981] GA 65, 401.
[982] GA 65, 409.

Jüdischen, in der Predigt Jesu. Dieses Nichtmehr ist in sich ein Noch-nicht der verhüllten Ankunft seines unausschöpfbaren Wesens“[983].

The question for the coming of the last god is posed in its urgent need by Heidegger's awareness of our being incapable of overcoming our self-affirmations as the standard of everything that is: “Wie aber soll der Mensch aus seinem Festgefahrenen ... verrückt werden? Wenn er dieses von sich aus vollziehen muß, ist dann nicht die Anmaßung der Maßgabe *noch* größer als dort, wo er einfach als der Maßstab angesetzt bleibt?“[984] Our authentic future can thus be solely a new history “in which the lordship of the last god opens up and forms being”[985].

However, Heidegger is clear that the last god is neither the creator nor the lord over being: the last god is himself a sending of being in order to open up Dasein for its being the clearing of being. In turn, the gods need being as the holy, as the openness in which they can appear and encounter human Dasein.[986] The *Ereignis* is therefore “decision” about the way in which god and man ‘presence’ and “encounter” each other in differentiated communion.[987] [988]

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[983] GA 79, 177.
[984] GA 65, 25.
[985] GA 65, 34.
[986] Cf. GA 65, 470.
[987] Ibid.
[988] R. S. Gall perceives thus rightly that this passage indicates “the priority and primordiality of being itself, the clearing of being as holy, out of which the god ... comes forth and stands in the light of being” (Gall, 1987, 76). Equally John Caputo interprets Heidegger as follows: “God is not the lord of history for Heidegger” (Caputo, 1983, 455) but a mere “function of world-time” (457). His appearance “is dependent upon the *Ereignis*”, which is itself beyond the control of God” (455).

Caputo thus criticises Bernhard Welte for interpreting Heidegger's god as the Lord over the Holy as the clearing in which the Ereignis can take place (453). Now while I think that Caputo is right to claim that Heidegger's god does not possess the sovereign Lordship over history of the Christian God, I nevertheless think that Welte is right to point out that, for Heidegger, the god is not only the sending of the Ereignis, but also the one who “sends holiness out before Him as his trace” (Welte, 1982, 96).

A close reading of Heidegger's essay “Wozu Dichter?”, within the context of his wider work, shows us that he understands the relation between the god and being, like the relation between man and being, to be primordially reciprocal. However, it remains questionable whether the divinity of God is conceivable on such grounds.

The danger of the oblivion of being in Nietzsche's thoughts

In the following I will try to sketch out the way in which Heidegger perceives, in the light of this positive witness of being, Nietzsche's thoughts as the disclosure of our present situation characterised by the oblivion of being.

We have seen above, guided by Nietzsche himself, that art draws us, for the sake of the worlding of a new world, into the event of nothingness as it encounters us with the death of the old god and correspondingly with the loss of our old self and world. But Nietzsche reacts to this encounter by trying to affirm his self and world. He is determined to understand art as a "just-withstanding" of the danger of self- and world-loss.[989] Art thus appears as a human skill which intends to create "oversight, order, and those things which are controllable and fixed".[990]

Nietzsche brings to speech inauthentic existence, which does not endure the danger of self- and world-loss experienced in the event of art but intends to escape into self-affirmation. Confronted with the withdrawal of being and thus with a disclosed world which has lost its meaning and is threatened to drift away, Nietzsche suffers "the need to erect a new truth over beings-in-total", to set new world-disclosing focus-points in the sense of highest values.[991] His obedience to this need, however, leads to the murder of god. For as we have seen above, the where-of, the focus of our authentic disclosing projection is the space opened up by the coming of the last god in his withdrawal. While the withdrawal of this god is experienced and named by Nietzsche, he nevertheless does not endure it in commemorating-expectation of his new coming. Nietzsche knows himself "as the god-less one" in the character of Zarathrustra.[992] "As this godless one he experiences the uttermost need and thus the innermost compulsion to create the most necessary": a new god.[993]

This new god is, for Nietzsche, the overman in the form of Apollo. He is the artist who gives being its standard and law "in the overcoming and taming of the chaos and the ecstatic"[994]. The apollonian man wants to overcome actively the withdrawal of the manifestations of being as the whereof of man's world-disclosing projection (which

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[989] NI, 116.
[990] NI, 214.
[991] NII, 248.
[992] NI, 287.
[993] Ibid.
[994] NI, 127.

Nietzsche understands as highest values), by forming new static values within the event of art. This intervention into the "becoming" with the aim to bring it to a particular stand bears the character of "righteousness"[995].

Righteousness is essentially "erecting, eliminating, destructive thinking". In this way, righteousness "estimates, what is to be set as an essential presupposition for life"[996]. Righteousness is erecting, as it forms a focus-point within the withdrawal of the having-been, as the directive for our perceptive thinking, which aims at the disclosure of possibilities for the increase of power. As such, righteousness is "eliminating", as, in its decision about the disclosing perspective, it has to neglect other differently directed *Entwurfsbereiche*. And finally it is finally destructive, as it clears, within the previous establishment of power, a new path for man's new disclosing projection. Existing in this kind of self-righteousness, man becomes the lord over his self and world"[997].

We can thus see that every disclosed possibility has the same character: it is a possibility in which man can affirm himself against the threat of nothingness in the event of art, as it allows his self-transgression into a way of existence, in which he has more control over his present and past. What recurs within man's existence as the *Augenblick* is thus inherently the same: possibilities of self-affirmation. Nietzsche perceives the being of beings, the eternal recurrence of the same, thus as will to power: as dominion over oneself and one's world through a process of self-transgression into higher levels of control.

We can thus conclude that Nietzsche's thinking is the ontological grounding of "anthropomorphism"[998].[999] But because such an ontological anthropomorphism makes it impossible to hear "the free voice of being"[1000], humanity itself is endangered: the world-disclosing will to power allows both nature and human beings to solely be exploitable objects for technique, which is, for Heidegger, the manifestation of the will to power in its self-transgression into more power. Both nature and human beings therefore appear solely according to their ability to gain and to perpetuate power. The contexts-of-significance,

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[995] NI, 580.
[996] NI, 579.
[997] NI, 580.
[998] NI, 590.
[999] We can perceive this danger of the idolisation of man's existence also in Hölderlin who thinks of a *reciprocal* relation between the being of man and the gods, which grounds in being as such. He thinks the "*Er-eignis*" as the historical "Einander-Entgegnen of human beings and the gods" (GA 52, 77): "Entgegnung ist die wechselweise Übereignung des Wesens in den erst sich entbreitenden und zum Gefüge kommenden Wesensraum" (77).
[1000] NII, 5.

within which the judgement about the functionality of each person is made, are our different world-views. As each world-view has been the product of a calculation of possibilities to gain control, it necessarily comes to an "invention and affirmation of "world-views" by means of power"[1001]. Within a world disclosed according to different world-views as means of self-affirmation by gaining control and power, any authentic being-with and being-for-each-other is fundamentally threatened.

The change of truth

Yet in the same way as we are thrown into the situation of the essence of the will to power as anticipatingly-created by Nietzsche, Nietzsche himself was thrown into the history of metaphysics as a history of the oblivion of being. This means, that within his inauthentic relation to this history, in which truth prevailed as righteousness, being has come to speech as will to power. Heidegger is clear that the essencing of being as will to power is no merely human product, nor an illusion. It is the way in which being manifests itself and gives itself to man's perceptive thinking, according to the *truth* in which he exists. And it is the truth of man's existence which has changed throughout the history of metaphysics: from the early Greek existence in unconcealment (*aletheia*) of being as *phusis*, to Nietzsche's understanding of (self-)righteousness. The reason for this change is seen by Heidegger in our continuous will to secure our disclosed world and our own self.

Nietzsche's understanding of truth as righteousness is thereby the inauthentic retrieval of metaphysical possibilities to perceive truth. For the self-affirming self, truth has appeared within the history of metaphysics as the congruence between a thought and its object, as *analogia entis* between creator and creature, and finally in modern times as certainty, which originates from the representation of the *res cogitans*. Modern thinking is thus true solely as long as it conforms to the demands of self-affirmation and security. Nietzsche's perception of truth as righteousness, as the securing of the disclosed sphere of possibilities for power, appears thus in line with the development of the history of metaphysics.

[1001] NII, 14.

In accordance with this concept of truth, being must be understood as that fundamental principle, which guarantees this kind of affirmation and security of everything that is. Within the history of metaphysics, the totality-of-beings has thus been affirmed by an eternal creator, by the self-consciousness of the *ego cogito*, and finally by Nietzsche's perception of the will to power who wills and founds itself and the reality it discloses. Nietzsche thus retrieves the possibility to think being as will to power from Descartes by interpreting the "*ego cogito*" as "*ego volo*", and the *velle* as will to power.[1002]

Once being shows itself within the truth of righteousness as will to power, man's present, future and having-been show themselves within the *Entwurfsbereich* opened up by man's projection into the manifestation of being as will to power. Consequently, Nietzsche understands all the ways, in which being has given itself to man as humanly fixed values[1003]: "Die Metaphysik des Willens zur Macht ... läßt alles, was je und bisher in der Metaphysik über das Seiende als solches im Ganzen gedacht und gesagt wurde, im Lichte des Wertgedankens erscheinen"[1004]. From Heidegger's perspective of the question of the truth of being, Plato's ideas appear as being itself, which comes into unconcealment in order to give itself to human beings in its *eidos*, in order to be received and guarded in their artistic creations.

But the same appears from Nietzsche's perspective as the human establishment of a highest value, by forming the threatening break-in of chaos, according to the needs of life. Nietzsche thus understands being itself in its unconcealment as the where-of of man's world-disclosing projection as a humanly determined value. He thus reduces being to a presupposition set by the will to power for its own affirmation.[1005] Herewith seems any possible "to experience being itself" extinguished.[1006]

We therefore see that we are deeply entangled in the history of the oblivion of being. Historically cut off from the unconcealment of being, any attempt to overcome the oblivion of being by our own means will only lead us further away from being and entangle us further in our anthropomorphic production of world-views.

[1002] NII, 161.
[1003] HW, 209.
[1004] NII, 96.
[1005] HW, 338.
[1006] HW, 238.

Nietzsche's thoughts: a promise of being

But now Heidegger shifts perspective again: he perceives the possibilities disclosed by Nietzsche, within the history of metaphysics in the *Entwurfsbereich*, regarding the will to power, as having their final basis in the truth of being itself. Consequently, he perceives the history of metaphysics as the history of *the oblivion of being* as the sending, as the promise of being itself, which makes it possible and necessary for us to become the receiver and guardian of the unconcealment of being. The disclosure of the "opening beginning (*Anfänglichkeit*)"[1007] of being's relation to Dasein, within the history of metaphysics, is therefore demanded of us.

If we succeed in perceiving the possibilities interpreted by Nietzsche within the *Entwurfsbereich* of the will to power within the *Entwurfsbereich* of the *question of the truth of being*, the having-been (*Gewesenheit*) of the history of metaphysics as the history of the concealment of being might encounter us as our authentic future (*Zukünftigkeit*)[1008]: "Nietzsches Philosophie – in sich gegenwendig nach rückwärts – muß selbst für ein über sie wegblickendes Denken zur Gegenstellung nach vorne werden. Da aber die Grundstellung Nietzsches in der abendländischen Metaphysik deren Ende ist, kann sie für den anderen Anfang nur dann die Gegenstellung sein, wenn dieser sich dem ersten Anfang als einem in seiner eigenen Ursprünglichkeit anfangenden *fragend* gegenüberstellt"[1009].

If we want to receive the history of the forgetfulness of the happening of the truth of being as the sending of being itself, we must open ourselves up to the experience of the withdrawal of being within our times and inquire into its origin in the *Ereignis* itself: we must "experience the essence of metaphysics out of being itself"[1010]. By doing so, we see that metaphysics as "the history of being" begins "necessarily with the *oblivion of being*"[1011]: for in the original happening of the truth (which means for Heidegger in this context: the happening of both unconcealment and unconcealing) of being, being handed itself over into the custody of Dasein by way of presencing as the being of *beings-in-total* into unconcealment.

[1007] NII, 3.
[1008] NII, 2.
[1009] NI, 422.
[1010] NII, 316.
[1011] HW, 243.

"Within the appearance of beings-in-total", being itself, as the actual happening of the unconcealment of beings-in-total, remained unrecognised.[1012] Being, as the *event* of unconcealment, remains unrecognised in the seductive light of those beings, whose unconcealment being is: "Das Sein selbst entzieht sich in seine Wahrheit. Es birgt sich in diese und verbirgt sich selbst in solchem Bergen"[1013].

Yet this does not mean that being is absent. It is present in its self-withdrawal into the *unconcealment of beings* within our ek-sistence as the Da, as the clearing, which the happening of the truth of being has opened up, as the place where the unconcealment of beings can take place: "*Das Sein selbst begabt sich, indem es sich in die Unverborgenheit seiner selbst begibt ... mit der Ortschaft seiner Ankunft als der Unterkunft seines Ausbleibens.* Dieses Wo als das Da der Bleibe gehört zum Sein selbst, „*ist*" Sein selbst und heißt darum das Da-sein"[1014]. Being itself prevails thus in its self-withdrawal into the unconcealment of beings-in-total within Dasein as "nothingness"[1015]. Prevailing as nothingness, being itself tunes our existence as anxiety and urges us, as the call of conscience, to exist as the *Da* of its own arrival into its own unconcealment.[1016]

We must not then try to overcome or to ignore the history of metaphysics in its nihilistic character of the history of the oblivion of being. Instead, we must acknowledge it as the place, prepared by being itself in its self-withdrawal, where we can experience being itself as nothingness and thus as the call into our authentic ec-sistence as the Da, as the clearing in which a new encounter with being, in its unconcealment, becomes possible. "This kind of thinking, which, encouraged by being itself, thinks towards being itself in its fail to appear"[1017] is thus necessary: for being is simply as its self-withdrawal (*Entzug*) "the reference (*Bezug*), which claims the essencing of man as the home of its (being's) arrival"[1018].

By following being in its withdrawal, *Dasein* is thus brought back into its authentic temporality as the place in which it can expect the new arrival of being as our authentically retrieved having-been. The nihilistic history of metaphysics is therefore "the promise of being

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[1012] NII, 317.
[1013] HW, 244.
[1014] NII, 323.
[1015] HW, 244.
[1016] NII 322f; 354.
[1017] NII, 332.
[1018] Ibid.

in its unconcealment, in such a way, however, that it conceals itself as this promise, and causes its own oblivion by failing to appear"[1019]. "Dem Wesen nach ist der Nihilismus die Geschichte des Versprechens, als welches sich das Sein selbst in seinem Geheimnis spart, das, selber geschichtlich, aus jener Geschichte in der Gestalt der Metaphysik die Unverborgenheit des Seins verwahrt. Das Ganze dieses Wesens des Nihilismus gibt, insofern es sich als die Geschichte des Seins in das Wesen des Menschen zur Unterkunft begibt, dem Denken Alles zu denken"[1020].

Because being has destined itself for man originally in the way of withdrawing itself, being itself in its self-withdrawal has brought forth man's self-affirmation as subjectivity: "Der Mensch ist in diesem Geschehnis des Ausbleiben des Seins selbst in die Loslassung des Seienden aus der sich entziehenden Wahrheit des Seins geworfen. Er verfällt, das Sein im Sinne des Seienden als solchen vorstellend, auf das Seiende, um sich aus dem Seienden her, ihm verfallend, sich selbst als den Seienden aufzurichten, der vorstellend-herstellend sich des Seienden als des Gegenständlichen bemächtigt [und sichert]"[1021].

Human beings accordingly receive their destined possibilities of erecting their being as subjectivity within the horizon of the subject-object-relations.[1022] Consequently, everything, including the transcendence of god, is seen as represented objectivity. But in the light of the *Ereignis* itself, it must be said that this modern metaphysic of subjectivity is essentially "the permission of being itself"[1023]. Being permits humankind's fallenness into self-affirming subjectivity because it destines for humankind the experience that it cannot ground its existence in that way, the experience of its withdrawal and thus of the un-grounding of its being. While humankind has fled within the history of metaphysics from this experience, it has nevertheless intensified the thread to each person's self, which consists in the growing void on which each person founds her existence.

Being is thus inherently dangerous and distressing (*nötigende Not*). It causes the misery of humankind's *oblivion of being* and urges us thereby to become aware of the withdrawal of being and to follow it, to accept the void of our disclosed existences and worlds and to become again the clearing of a new event of the truth of being: "*Das Sein ist in*

[1019] NII, 333.
[1020] NII, 336.
[1021] NII, 342.
[1022] NII, 342f.
[1023] NII, 343.

dem zwiefach einigen Sinne nötigend: es ist das Un-ab-lässige und das Brauchende im Bezug der Unterkunft, als welche das Wesen west, dem der Mensch als das Gebrauchte gehört"[1024]. The dangerous character of the history of being must thereby not be underestimated. According to Heidegger, being goes in its quest for a new place of self-revelation so far "that it threatens the home of being, i.e. the essencing of man ... with destruction", endangering thereby its very own homecoming in self-revelation.[1025]

How can we correspond to this danger of the urging address of being? According to Heidegger, we have to let ourselves "in for the danger of the destruction of [our] essence"[1026]. Solely if we allow being itself to radically question our self-affirmation, will we become able to see what actually "is": "Der Mensch erführe, was seinsgeschichtlich aus der Notlosigkeit als der Not herkommt und dergestalt herkünftig schon gekommen ist, aber in verborgener Ankunft anwest, d.h. jedoch, für den Gesichtskreis der metaphysischen Erfahrung, abwest"[1027].

Final Conclusion

In his early phenomenological analysis of Christian existence, and in his following phenomenological analysis of our everyday existence, Heidegger discussed ways of existence that allow us to respond to, and become guided by, being's self-manifestation as the final paradigm of meaning and the horizon of our seeing, thinking and acting. Whilst the history both of beings self-manifestation and concealment remains, especially in SZ, in the background, it nonetheless forms Heidegger's focus point and horizon, which provokes, and gives a concrete form and direction to, his question regarding the meaning of being.

After SZ, Heidegger begins to articulate more thoroughly his vision of the *Ereignis*, of the historical event of being's self-manifestation and concealment. He shows that both authenticity and inauthenticity are responses to being: if we exist authentically, we respond to the historical movement of being itself, in so far as we allow being to withdraw itself in its

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[1024] NII, 354.
[1025] NII, 355.
[1026] NII, 356.
[1027] NII, 357.

present manifestation (in accepting anticipation of nothingness), and receive it in a new form in and through a questioning dialogue with the history of ideas, that is, of beings previous manifestations.

If we exist in inauthenticity, on the other hand, we also respond to being – but this time we do not respond to being's withdrawal, but to being's self-manifestation as *eidos*. Existence in inauthenticity means that we have received being in a particular form that gives meaning to our world and determines the way in which we see things and the other, and the way in which we subsequently act. If this paradigm and horizon of our being-in-the-world is challenged by being's very own withdrawal, we experience fear and try to cling to the meaningful context of our world. As a result of this, our once genuinely disclosed world becomes concealed by a world-view: by a picture of a world that no longer resembles being itself, but rather a collage of our nostalgic memories or visions of developments and progressions, of a world whose ground has already withdrawn.

Heidegger claims that we are all prone to exist inauthentically – and indeed do so most of the time. The reason for this is that inauthenticity is a genuine human response to being's self-disclosure. As beings who have language, we already exist within a context of meaning. The withdrawal of this meaning therefore threatens our entire existence-in-the-world. However, although confronted with the dilemma that human beings are prone to respond inauthentically to being's history of self-manifestation and self-withdrawal, Heidegger does not despair but retains hope.

This hope is grounded in Heidegger's conviction that the history of being is, although not independent of our attempts to affirm ourselves, ultimately beyond our control. Even the present situation of concealment and oblivion of being and of the other and of nature, in their inherent relation to the *Ereignis*, bears, for Heidegger, the promise of being. The misery of the present situation can urge us into conversion: it can cause us to experience our words, thoughts and actions losing any sense, and raises the question of whether there might be a new context of meaning, to be explored by us in dialogue with our contemporaries and processors, and to be embodied by our actions and works of art, behind the veil of our present world-views.

Hence, he instructs his readers about a way of existence that will lead to authenticity: to an existence that breaks through this veil in an act of self-sacrifice in the

hope of becoming the clearing of being, in the hope of becoming the place of being's new self-manifestation, and therefore the place in which the other and things can present themselves according to the character that they gain within the free historical play of the fourfold, uninterrupted by the projection of our world-views.

Such a way of authentic existence consists, for Heidegger, in the anticipation of our death as the final encounter with nothingness as the withdrawal of being, and in our questioning encounter with the 'voice of our friend' as a witness of the *Ereignis*. Nietzsche[1028] and Hölderlin in particular, played this role of 'friend' for Heidegger. A dialogue with the writings of these two historical figures, shaped by the openness to the self-manifestation of being, allowed Heidegger to develop his personal understanding of the meaning of being, and of the necessary human responses.

However, no inter-human dialogue and no way of existence in relation to our finitude and mortality can, on its own, bring forth an authentic encounter with being in the event of its self-manifestation. For Heidegger, authentic human existence, in a dialogue with thinkers and poets of the present and of the past, can only be a response to the history of being itself. What Heidegger therefore calls for is "Gelassenheit": relaxation, moments of contemplation in which we let being be, and in this way, are let into (*gelassen*) our new being-in-the-world, ordered and limited by being's self-manifestation.[1029]

Hence, Heidegger's work comes full circle in so far as he poses the following question to his readers: "How do you respond to the history of being?" "How do you understand your everyday existence as a way of concealing or unconcealing the truth, the self-manifestation of being?" "Do you exist in such a way that allows beings - the other, nature, art, and the god – to present themselves according to their being as a free, responsive yet also creative part of the *Ereignis*, of the historical interplay of interpretation and embodiment of truth?" "And do you respect their self-presentation by entering this historical interplay by way of engaging in a questioning dialogue with the thoughts and poetic works of your processors?"

It is this question that will guide the following and final chapter of this thesis. The following chapter will discuss the possibilities, limits and guidelines of a dialogue between

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[1028] Cf. Stephen Mulhall's inquiry in the course of his reading of Heidegger's lecture *What is Called Thinking?*: "Who, in short, was Heidegger's friend? According to his own view, his teacher could only be ... a thinker about thinking; and according to the development of his lecture course, that thinker was someone who had a vanishingly small but nonetheless similar role in *Being and Time* – Nietzsche" (Mulhall, 2001, 300).
[1029] Cf. Heidegger, 1959.

Barth and Heidegger that shares their experiences and expectations concerning the self-manifestation of the meaning of being, and concerning the corresponding human existence as the place where this self-disclosure can take place. The following dialogue intends to repeat the circles of thought of both Heidegger and Barth in such a way that the arising conflicts, questions, differences, but also similarities between their thoughts will help us to gain a new understanding of the relation between our experience of reality in time, and our corresponding historical existence that incorporates these two perspectives in their – critical-constructive – difference.

Chapter V
A Dialogue between Barth and Heidegger

Introduction

In the previous sections I aimed to present two different systems of thought that dealt in different ways with the question: "How can we disclose reality in such a way that it manifests itself to us according to its inherent truth, and thereby claims us to correspond to it in our conceptions and actions?" Yet this question, and the concepts of reality and of its existentiell disclosure (which I addressed in the previous sections), make it clear that these concepts cannot be an end in themselves. Rather they show that the disclosure of reality is an act of personal responsibility, which must continually be repeated in correspondence to the self-manifestation of reality, to avoid our present conceptions of realityl becoming a means of concealment, rather than unconcealment, of reality's self-presentation.

It is thereby essential that such a repetition of the act of world-disclosure becomes not a repetition of our present conceptions of reality, but transcends them by repeating the hermeneutical process in which these concepts are questioned and transformed by the encounter with reality as such. Yet both Barth and Heidegger have shown that we cannot exercise any control over the self-revelation of reality. Does this mean that a disclosure of reality in response to its self-revelation is not possible at all? It means, I think, that we cannot control the self-manifestation of reality and that we must incorporate this consciousness into our act of disclosure. Hermeneutical reasoning must therefore be

understood, in both its phenomenological and theological character, as a human responsibility towards the self-manifestation of reality. Hermeneutical reasoning must be alert to, make room for, and correspond to the spontaneous happening of being's self-manifestation.

An important presupposition of such a responsible relation towards reality is seen by both Barth and Heidegger in our being-addressed-by-the-other. For both agree that being does not give itself directly to our consciousness. It reveals itself to us, if we anticipate it's manifestation, in and through the words of the contemporary other and in and through our memory of the testimonies of previous eye-witnesses of being's self-manifestation. The testimonies of the other, present or past, must be acknowledged, according to Barth and Heidegger, in loving respect, in order that reality can manifest itself to us.[1030]

It therefore seems natural to explore the possibilities of a dialogue between Barth and Heidegger for the initiation of a repetition of the disclosure of reality. However, the way in which such a dialogue can be fruitfully conducted must not be arbitrarily adopted but must be developed on the basis of the shared principal presuppositions of Barth's and Heidegger's thoughts. These shared formal presuppositions are as follows: the disclosure of reality depends for both upon a particular way of existence in anticipation of a particular final paradigm of meaning, in remembrance of a particular history in which this final paradigm has manifested itself, and within a particular context, which is both structured and challenged by this final paradigm.

Both understand this paradigm as self-manifesting and self-giving: disclosure of reality therefore happens in so far as this final paradigm of meaning manifests itself to us and directs our disclosing existence. Both accounts therefore share the conviction that the disclosure of reality occurs solely through our historical existence, and in our thoughts, words, and deeds, but that this existential act of disclosure, and the forms in which this disclosure of reality manifests itself for us, are as such fundamentally different from, and dependent upon, reality in its spontaneous self-manifestation.

However, Heidegger and Barth hold the view that while there is a fundamental

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[1030] Barth thus demands of his students: "Ich sähe es gerne, wenn sie denen, die vor uns waren ... nun doch mehr Liebe zuwenden würden" (PT, VI). Heidegger also links hermeneutical thinking to loving memory: "Nur wenn wir das mögen, was in such das zu-Bedenkende ist, vermögen wir das Denken" (WHD, 1). The character of this love consists in its responsiveness to being's self-manifestation in and through the testimony of the other: "Um das Denken zu vermögen, müssen wir es lernen [...] Der Mensch lernt, insofern er sein Tun und Lassen zu dem in die Entsprechung bringt, was ihm jeweils an Wesenhaften zugesprochen wird" (WHD, 1).

differentiation between that which is disclosed, our existence as the realm of disclosure, and the manifestations of our acts of disclosure, there could be neither a disclosing existence nor a manifestation of reality's self-presentation in concrete thoughts, words and deeds outside of the relation to that which is to be disclosed. Barth and Heidegger even go so far as to state that that which is to be disclosed subsists in our disclosing existence and the manifestations of our disclosure. Barth understands this relation in terms of the Holy Spirit as the self-proclamation of Jesus Christ, who, as the origin, telos and ruler of everything, dwells in everything without losing Himself to His creation. And Heidegger understands this relation as the manifestation of being as the being of beings: each thing, first and foremost the word, within my world is the manifestation of the *Ereignis* as a whole, and points me back into it as the happening of the disclosure of reality.[1031]

These shared presuppositions pose limits, but also possibilities and guidelines for our understanding of an adequate dialogical method.

Part I

Enquiry into the limits and guidelines of a dialogue between Barth and Heidegger

The limits of the intended dialogue

Neither the theological *nor* the phenomenological perception of reality *can be* used to limit and/or legitimize the other position. This would not only be seemingly unfair but incomprehensible on both accounts: for the limit and guidance for the way in which disclosure happens is that which is to be disclosed in its self-manifestation – and that stands in sharp differentiation from both theology and philosophy as different acts of a particular disclosing agent. Barth formulates this as follows: "[W]eil die Theologie ihrem Gegenstand gegenüber selbst nur *ancilla* sein wollen kann, kann sie der Philosophie jedenfalls in ihrem Raum eine andere Rolle als diese auch nicht zuweisen"[1032].

The aim of such a dialogue cannot consist in adding the 'truth' from both

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[1031] Cf. Heidegger's essays *Bauen, Wohnen, Denken* and *Das Ding* (VA, 139-180).
[1032] I/2, 824.

perspectives of reality (as it might show itself from a third meta-perspective) together in order to manufacture a more fully explored picture of reality: for this would be a cramped world-view. Such a procedure would violate Barth and Heidegger's shared insight that disclosure of reality is an act that is grounded in a particular way of existence within a specific context. However, one might reply that such an approach would be justified if we could adopt a meta-perspective that is grounded in a meta-way-of-existence, for example within one's existentiell self-understanding as a philosophising theologian or a Christian philosopher.

However, both Heidegger and Barth have dismissed this possibility as a square circle and found themselves, on the ground of their existentiell understanding of faith and philosophy, called to make a responsible decision about their way of existence, about their basic question, and about their final paradigm of meaning. For Barth, this decision meant that he understood himself as a theologian of the church who has responsibility for the world, and who therefore prays for the revelation of God, in Jesus Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit, as the final orientation of his existence and world-understanding. For Heidegger, on the other hand, this decision meant that he understood himself as authentically questioning of the meaning of being, which radically questions all previous understandings of this meaning, including the Christian one.[1033]

The suggestion that phenomenology cannot be directly adopted by theology with respects to its material judgements about reality, but as a methodological aid for theological reasoning, is also problematic. Yet I think that the translation of a method into another perspective of reality poses the same problems as the translation of a material concept, because neither for phenomenology, nor for a christological theology, can there be any valid method of reality-disclosure in abstraction from the way in which the philosopher or the theologian has encountered this reality, from the context in which this encounter has occurred and from the way in which he responds to this encounter.

[1033] Cf. Heidegger's letter to Engelbert Krebs from 9. January 1919. Ruediger Safranski rightly interprets Heidegger's relation to God as follows: "Heidegger [...] will ... durch die Selbstdurchsichtigkeit des faktischen Lebens Gott verlieren, um ihn dann als unverfuegbares Ereignis ... wiederzugewinnen" (Safranski, 1994, 137. The same is argued by Hemming, 2002).
Furthermore, Safranski considers Heidegger's epoché of God as being consciously complementary to Barth's protest against a God of culture (137f).

The possibilities and guidelines of the intended dialogue

We can deduce from Barth and Heidegger's shared formal presuppositions of our disclosing existence in relation to reality that there is a limit but also a potential for a dialogue.

As the disclosure of reality's self-manifestation always occurs in and through the individual historical existence of the disclosing agent within his particular historical context and conceptual framework, and as there can therefore be no third meta-dialogue, we must conclude that there can only be two separated dialogues, each taking place within the context determined by one of the two particular perspectives of reality. Each dialogue would then be the result of a "translation" (*Übersetzung*) of either phenomenological or christological reasoning as a critical question into the opposite context.[1034]

However, one might reply that such segregation is exactly the opposite of the intention of a dialogue, as it neither happens on, nor produces, a common ground. Now, while the aim, with respect to the self-understanding of both Barth and Heidegger, cannot be to produce a common ground, it is nonetheless not the case that a subsequent conduction of two distinct dialogues between the two different perspectives within the boundaries of each of the two perspectives renders it impossible for either perspective to say something new and different from the other perspective. On the contrary, communication and mutual understanding between both perspectives become possible through the translation of one perspective of reality into the other, and thus through the translation of the conflict between both perspectives, in its critical-constructive potential, into each perspective.

The aim of such a translation of the conflict between two different perspectives of reality into each of the two perspectives lies firstly in the reawakening of our *Differenzbewußtsein*[1035]: for both Barth's and Heidegger's perceptions of reality, and of the way of its disclosure, call for a repetition of the process of disclosure in which the difference between the present conceptions of reality and reality itself is re-established within our consciousness, so that a new encounter with the self-manifestation of reality, and a new conceptualisation of this encounter, becomes possible. Yet we cannot become directly conscious of the difference between our conceptions of reality and reality as such, as

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[1034] Cf. Dalferth, 1997.
[1035] Cf. Dalferth, 1997.

Heidegger stresses in his statement that we are always inclined to forget the 'ontological difference' between being as such and its manifestation.[1036]

Coming from this Heideggerian insight, Dalferth rightly presupposes: „[Wir koennen] zwischen ... Wirklichkeitsthematisierung und thematisierter Wirklichkeit nur unterscheiden ..., weil und insofern wir zu *anderen* Deutungen und Darstellungen über- und weitergehen"[1037].

The first task of a dialogue between Barth and Heidegger should therefore consist in the translation of one perspective of reality (R2t) into the other (R2), in the form of a critical question. This translation causes our awareness of the difference between R2t and R2. Through this awareness of the difference between the two perspectives of reality, and of the challenge R2t poses to R2, we become aware of the difference between R2 and reality in its self-manifestation (R1).

The second task of a dialogue between Barth and Heidegger should consist in the attempt to refocus on R1 and to re-conceptualise its self-manifestation. Yet the problem is that R1 is never directly given to us but only mediated through our conceptions of it (through R2). And, as both Heidegger and Barth have stressed, it is our conceptions of R1 which not only unconceal but also conceal R1. Ingolf Dalferth interprets the relation between reality and our conceptions of reality therefore as follows: "Keine Deutung ist oder präsentiert Wirkliches so, wie sie ist, sondern nur in der Kombination verschiedener Deutungen und Darstellungen läßt sich die Differenz zwischen Deutung und Gedeutetem ... so zur Geltung bringen, daß sich die Selbigkeit und Wirklichkeit des Referenten in unterschiedlichen Deutungs- und Darstellungsperspektiven abzuzeichnen beginnt"[1038].

Dalferth therefore argues that we can come to perceive reality solely within and through a process of the combination of different perspectives of reality within one particular perspective, and within the consciousness of differentiation between the different perspectives of reality, and between these perspectives and reality as such, that is thereby gained.

What Dalferth calls here "combination", I would like to explore further with respect to the thoughts of Barth and Heidegger. Barth and Heidegger share the view that a

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[1036] A particularly illuminating treatment of the ontological difference between being and its manifestation is Heidegger's lecture *Einführung in die Metaphysik* (EM).
[1037] Dalferth, 1997, 187.
[1038] Dalferth, 1997, 188.

combination of different particular perspectives occurs within our disclosing existence in such a way that they are firstly redirected by and towards the self-manifestation of reality as the final focus-point and horizon of our perception of world and self (that is, according to the way in which this self-manifestation is given to us through our present conceptions of it). The different perspectives find thereby not only their proper relation to other particular perspectives of reality and to all the particular aspects of these perspectives, but are transformed: their particular content becomes a means in and through which the intended reality can manifest itself to us in a new way.

The repetition of the process of reality-disclosure therefore demands a transformation of particular aspects of R2t within R2 by R1, in so far as R1 comes to speech anew within the process of differentiation and transformation. This process does not annul the particular content of R2t – the latter is rather reinterpreted in so far as it is seen in relation to R1 (as R1 is given to us through our conceptions), and in relation to our other conceptions of R1, so that through this recombination the conceptual context of R1 changes in such a way that R1 can come to speech in a new way (as R3).

The translated concept of R2t has therefore not only a critical-formal, but also a constructive-material function: it offers our imaginative, conceptual and practical abilities new material (as it introduces either a concrete aspect of disclosed reality or a method of its disclosure), so that a new encounter with reality can - within the critical process of differentiation, and motivated by the introduction of R2t, - manifest itself through and within the process of transformation as a re-interpretation and re-disclosure of R2t.

The question arises then if this process of transformation violates the 'truth' of the translated and transformed perspective. Yet both Barth and Heidegger understand truth as the self-manifestation of reality. 'Being truthful' involves therefore allowing this self-manifestation to occur within the free reasoning of the other person with whom we are communicating 'the truth'.

This means that a perspective of reality, and its translation into, connection with, and transformation by another perspective, is 'true' if it disrupts our tendency to domesticate reality, by making us conscious of the difference between our conceptualisations of reality and reality in its act of self-manifestation, and thereby serves the self-manifestation of reality as the event of truth: "Auch Wahrheit hat daher einen operationalen Sinn: Was wir für wahr halten, muß an unsere eigene Lebensgeschichte, aber auch an die anderer anschließbar sein;

... kontrollierbar kann es an beide Punkte nur angeschlossen werden, wenn bei jedem Anschluß *intern* die Differenz zwischen *Kohärenz der Perspektive* und dabei thematisierter *Wirklichkeit* zur Geltung gebracht wird. Genau diese ontologisch relevante Differenz signalisiert die Rede von der Wahrheit; und insofern hat auch diese eine primär kritische Funktion: Sie dient dem Offenhalten einer Lücke, ohne die es keine Erkenntnis von Wirklichkeit und damit keine wirkliche Erkenntnis geben könnte"[1039].

The translation of Heidegger's perspective as a critical question to Barth

Barth's christological reasoning attempts to clarify the church's understanding of God's Lordship and of its own being-in-the-world under God's Lordship. As Barth has come to know God as God for the world, who is, as its reconciler and redeemer, also its creator and its present Lord, he expects God's presence as Lord everywhere, and finds himself commanded to attempt to recognise this Lordship in all aspects of his personal *Lebenswelt*, but also in the world-experiences of others. This view is shared by Dalferth: "Es gibt nichts, dem Gott nicht gegenwärtig wäre, weil es nur das gibt, dem Gott gegenwärtig ist. Und deshalb kann überall nach der (noch unbemerkten, verschütteten, ignorierten oder auch mehr oder weniger deutlich vollzogenen) Wahrnehmung von Gottes Gegenwart gefragt werden"[1040].

Yet Barth goes even one step further: he does not only ask for the relation between God's presence and our perceptions of reality and for signs of this relation within these perceptions. He also judges these perceptions *immediately* in the light of God's presence in Jesus Christ. Trutz Rendtorff therefore strongly criticises Barth's statement that Jesus Christ is, as the light of life, the "presupposition of all truth"[1041] and superior to every other "criterion of truth"[1042]: "Methodisch und inhaltlich wird die Wahrnehmung der Außenbeziehung der Kirche ... unter die erkenntnistheoretische Exklusivität der Christusoffenbarung gestellt."[1043]

Rendtorff understands Barth as dismissing the legitimacy of any way of

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[1039] Dalferth, 1997, 184.
[1040] Dalferth, 1997, 9.
[1041] IV/ 3, 182.
[1042] IV/3, 183.
[1043] Rendtorff, 1991, 142.

understanding reality that is independent of Jesus Christ as the light of life, and so to undermine the possibility for a dialogue between theology and the world. He therefore considers Barth's epistemological method as totalitarian and circular.[1044] Hence, he dismisses Barth's attempt to establish a theological perception of reality[1045] and calls, in line with Hendrik Berkhof, for the necessity "to reveal and analyse the factual convergence and interrelation of the church's confession and experience of the world"[1046].

Whilst I acknowledge that Rendtorff's critique is not totally off the mark, I first of all agree strongly with Barth that it would be inconsistent within the framework of theological self-reflection on the church's faith in the triune God to question the truth of *God's self-revelation* in Jesus Christ by the standards of our intellectual or practical world-experience. Yet, as I have said above, theology must distinguish between God's self-revelation and its conceptualisation. The latter can not of course expect to remain unchallenged by other world-experiences, as this would endanger theologies perception of God's self-revelation as its final criterion of truth.

Rendtorff fails to see that Barth clearly states that he considers both philosophical and theological thoughts to be the conceptions of fallen human beings that stand under the judgement of Jesus Christ who is – from the standpoint of faith – the Lord of the church and the world, and therefore of christological and philosophical conceptions alike. Under the presupposition that the conceptions of reality from all theological and non-theological sources are radically called into question, a critical dialogue between the different perceptions of reality is possible that would translate their conflict into the theological context, in which the theologian must treat both conceptions equally in so far as he asks for, and tries to perceive, the object and final criterion of his faith within and through the discussion, connections and associations that arise from the conflict of different world-perceptions within the context of faith's self-explication.

The aim of such a discussion, in which the different concepts of reality are connected in relation to each other and, primarily, according to the way in which the final subject matter of theology appears, consists in the transformation of the philosophical concepts to such an extend that the subject matter of theology can come to speech within them in a new

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[1044] Rendtorff, 1991, 142.
[1045] Rendtorff, 1991, 143.
[1046] Rendtorff, 1991, 142. Cf. Berkhof, 1978, 36ff, esp. 41.

way. Barth's theological reason for the possibility of such a transformation consists in his belief that Jesus Christ expresses Himself in and through our prayerful exegesis of Scripture, which always occurs within our material and formal conceptual capacities and demands us to also make use of non-biblical concepts. Barth thereby presupposes that Jesus Christ possesses "the power, to assimilate and to utilize the alien elements"[1047].

Jesus Christ's self-proclamation can therefore manifest itself "in the language of the most different political and philosophical systems"[1048]. The self-manifestation of Jesus Christ occurs within and through our re-thinking of the biblical witnesses in non-biblical concepts. It therefore demands no "*sacrificium intellectus*" but occurs through our own reasoning within the horizon of our individual "*philosophy*, i.e. any self-made conception"[1049]. It is therefore essential, for Barth, that we remain conscious of the difference between our "Denkschematismus"[1050] and Jesus Christ's self-proclamation.

Yet Barth is quite ambiguous at this point. Rendtorff's critique is fair regarding the extent to which Barth fails to make a distinction between our concepts of God and God's self-revelation. It is consistent with Barth's understanding of God's Lordship to state: "Die Philosophie, und zwar grundsätzlich jede Philosophie kann im Dienst des Wort Gottes kritisiert werden und dann auch legitime kritische Kraft gewinnen, kann erleuchtet werden und dann auch wirklich erleuchten, kann in Bewegung gebracht werden und dann auch selbst bewegen"[1051]. However, Barth has to make explicit that it is the Word of God that criticises a philosophical concept for the sake of His own self-manifestation, and not our christological concepts. A theological critique of philosophy that is not rooted in Christian existence in hope, faith and love, and thus in God's self-proclamation to man, and that does not aim at redirecting this existence towards God, could only lead to an uncritical circular Christianisation of the translated philosophical concept.

Barth is thus not always explicit enough about the necessary critical function of philosophy for theological self-understanding in its differentiation from its subject-matter: the Word, as Jesus Christ's self-proclamation, is never given directly to us, but only in its fourfold mediation through the concepts of the prophets and apostles, through their written

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[1047] I/2, 764.
[1048] I/2, 765.
[1049] I/2, 816.
[1050] I/2, 818.
[1051] I/2, 824.

words, through theological conceptions of these words and the reality they signify, and finally through written or oral theological expressions of these concepts. If philosophical concepts are to gain the power to challenge these theological concepts for the sake of the reality they signify, then there must be a moment within the hermeneutical circle of theological reasoning in which the philosophical concepts are given their freedom to present themselves simply according to their own perspective of reality.

Yet once philosophy has caused this disruption to the closed theological perspective and has thus raised the question of the meaning of reality under the Lordship of Jesus Christ anew, it must – if it is not to dominate the outcome of this question - consent to its transformation within this process. It thereby does not lose its critical function, but gains a further critical-constructive dimension as the means through which a new conceptual manifestation of Jesus Christ's Lordship can appear.

It is at this point that the works of theologians like Ingolf Dalferth make an important step beyond Barth. My intention is therefore to go, with the help of Dalferth's analysis of the process of translation and differentiation, beyond Barth in a way that serves Barth's basic aim, that is, a new awareness of Jesus Christ's self-manifestation in and through a translated and transformed philosophical concept. My suggested procedure of such a translation of basic concepts of Heidegger's phenomenology into the context of Barth's Christology neither aims at a christological – or even worse: a Christian – critique of Heidegger's thoughts, nor at Christianizing them, but at a critical and better understanding of Barth's concepts of God's Lordship.

The first step within such a procedure involves a renewal of our consciousness of differentiation between our conceptions of God's self-manifestation (through a discussion of the differences between Heidegger's basic phenomenological concepts, as they have been explored and presented in their own right within the previous chapter), and Barth's corresponding christological concepts (within the conceptual framework of Barth's Christology and his corresponding understanding of Christian existence, as it has been explored and presented in Chapter II and III). The questions and problems that appear within this discussion must then be translated into the framework of Barth's christological analysis of Christian existence to open up a discourse in which basic concepts of Heidegger's phenomenological analysis of human existence can be transformed into a new expression of God's Lordship over reality and our correspondence to it.

The concrete method of this transformation process will be derived from my analysis of Barth's understanding of prayerful disclosure in listening to Jesus Christ's twofold history and I will draw particular methodological insights from my analysis of Barth's christological reading of Hegel. However, I will not simply repeat Barth's method, but attempt to open it up for a more authentic challenge by the translated and transformed Heideggerian concepts through the incorporation of the questions and challenges as they arose in the primary discussion.

Part II
A Dialogue between Heidegger and Barth: a process of differentiation, translation and transformation

Recapitulation of the basic concrete aspects of Heidegger's phenomenology

Heidegger understands Dasein's historical existence as the ecstatic openness in which the self-disclosure of being can take place. This self-disclosure of being happens in so far as the previous manifestation of being as the final focus and horizon of our world-disclosing existence withdraws itself in order to manifest itself anew according to the possibilities embedded within the history of its previous manifestations. This immanent process of being itself calls and directs Dasein's disclosing historical existence: it calls Dasein into the awareness that the present final focus and horizon of its world-disclosing existence is not absolute but historical, and therefore into the readiness to surrender this final focus and horizon in order to receive being's new self-manifestation as the new final paradigm of meaning, and to disclose its world anew in its light.

Yet such a reception of being's self-manifestation presupposes that Dasein retrieves the possibilities for being's new self-manifestation through an "Auseinander-setzung" with the history of being's previous manifestations – and this history is, for Heidegger, the history of Western philosophy and art.[1052] The problem is thereby that this history appears first and foremost as a history of the *oblivion* of being: Heidegger claims that the *event*-character of

[1052] Cf. SZ §6, GA 65, *Das Zuspiel*, 169-224.

being's self-manifestation as the final paradigm of meaning for Dasein's disclosing existence in the moment of its self-withdrawal as the unconcealment of Dasein's world and self has remained unnoticed.

The first reason for this oblivion is seen by Heidegger in the fact that Dasein's genuine experience has been the experience of unconcealment. It is precisely Dasein's genuine, albeit inexplicit, "Seinsverständnis"[1053], which curbs the need for further disclosure and hence prevents us from questioning into the transcendental possibilities of unconcealment. And the second reason for being's oblivion is identified by Heidegger as Dasein's angst to lose its disclosed world and self once it starts to radically inquire into the meaning of being. However, for Heidegger, the factual oblivion of being does not compromise being's controlling influence on the history of its existentiell understanding by Dasein: for Dasein's ignorance of its being destined to exist as the clearing for the self-manifestation of being fundamentally threatens its present existence - and it is this threat that manifests itself as the address of Dasein's conscience in the mood of angst and calls Dasein into its genuine potential to exist as the guardian of the truth of being.[1054]

From the viewpoint of Dasein's actual existence, being the guardian of the truth of being means the following: it presupposes Dasein's "running-towards-death"[1055], its anxious anticipation of its own death as its unsurpassable, isolated possibility of encountering the vanishing of its disclosed world and Dasein's inquiry into the meaning of being in order to become the ecstatic openness in which to receive being's new manifestation as the new final focus and horizon of being-in-the-world-with-other-Dasein. That it becomes this ecstatic openness for being's self-manifestation further demands of Dasein that it experiences angst as the fundamental threat of its present existence. This threat manifests itself in the call of Dasein's conscience, in which Dasein is confronted by its own potentiality to respond to being's self-withdrawal and new manifestation in an authentic critical-constructive discourse with history.[1056]

[1053] SZ, 4.
[1054] Heidegger calls us to experience "die äußerste Gefährdung des Menschen" (NII, 1st ed., 392). He perceives the reason for our inauthentic existence as our "uneingestandene Angst vor der Angst" (393). Only if we experience this angst, and thus the self-withdrawal of our disclosed world and self, can we experience "daß ist, was "ist" – im Sinne eines "ist, das sich aus der Wahrheit des Seins bestimmt" (394).
[1055] Cf. SZ, §53; GA 65, 283.
[1056] SZ, 296f.

If Dasein listens to this call, its present world-views and corresponding practices are challenged so that it is liberated to follow this call into its very own possibility of authentic ecstatic existence for the sake of being's self-manifestation. To follow this call of conscience into authentic ecstatic existence involves, for Heidegger, inquiring into the history of being in order to retrieve possibilities of being's new self-manifestation as the new focus and horizon of Dasein's disclosing existence and therefore as the standard and measure of the world, as disclosed by Dasein.

The world thus disclosed is Dasein's world. This means that Dasein is inherently related to, and responsible for, everything and everybody within its world, and the way in which they appear. Dasein's authentic disclosing existence is therefore the presupposition of a genuine being-with in which each Dasein does not reduce the other to a particular role or preconception but allows the other to present himself according to his inherent potential for authentic existence by actively encouraging him to listen to the address of his conscience as the address of his potential for authentic existence as the clearing for being's self-manifestation.[1057]

Once the other exists in this way, his authentic existence can, in turn, become Dasein's conscience as it threatens its present existence and invites it to inquire anew into the meaning of being.[1058] This task of calling Dasein into its potential for existing as the clearing of being is shared by Dasein's contemporaries and predecessors: for Heidegger, the directive into a new way of existence that challenges Dasein's present understanding of being meets Dasein in and through its remembrance of the voices of the Western tradition as well as in and through the address of the authentic other. Yet it is just this existence in remembrance of the voices of the past, and the struggle to repeat their authentic existence and to retrieve the possibilities for being's new self-manifestation that is necessary for the authentic existence of Dasein's contemporary other, and therefore for his ability to become Dasein's conscience.

However, Heidegger is aware that if the manifestation of being thus disclosed is to found a shared world in which authentic being-with is possible, it is insufficient for each

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[1057] Heidegger calls this '*vorrausspringende Fürsorge*' SZ, 122.

[1058] Cf. SZ, 163. Cf. also Stephen Mulhall's reference to Heidegger's claim that Dasein can become the conscience of the other. He argues that the notion of conscience is incomprehensible apart from the intervention of the other that "would constitute an external disruption of the hermeneutic, self-reinforcing dispersal of Dasein in the they-self" (Mulhall, 1996, 132).

Dasein to surrender its personal world-view. This surrender must rather happen together, by all members of society, in the common experience of the trembling of the common world-view, in the common experience of the "death of God" as the vanishing of the final paradigm that has been giving meaning to common language and common political, cultural and scientific practices.[1059] In this experience of the death of the god in personal authentic existence, and in the expectation of the new coming of the last God, of the new manifestation of being as the final focus and horizon that defines common language and practices, an entire society can become the ecstatic openness for being's self-disclosure according to its inherent factical meaning.[1060]

The process of differentiation

The following section intends to identify the conflicts between Heidegger's phenomenological and Barth's christological conceptions of human existence, and the questions and challenges that these conflicts can pose to a Christian self-understanding within the church and academic theology.

We have seen that Heidegger aims at a disclosure of being, that is, at the self-manifestation of reality according to its inherent factical meaning. In contrast, according to Barth, Christian existence in general, and theology in particular, should aim at the disclosure of reality under the Lordship of the triune God. Yet for Heidegger, such a qualification prohibits that kind of radical questioning which is needed for a new disclosure of being. The new coming of the 'last God' as the self-manifestation of the final focus and horizon of human existence presupposes for Heidegger the experience of the "death of God", of the meaninglessness of the Christian understanding of God. Theology is therefore challenged by Heidegger to ask if its presupposition that God, in His self-revelation, is the final paradigm of meaning, in the light of which Christian existence discloses its context in correspondence to God's command, radically questions the present understanding of God, world, and self.

Furthermore, we have seen that being is, for Heidegger, the historical happening of the self-manifestation of the final paradigm of meaning, that is, the coming of the last god, in

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[1059] Cf. GA 65, 230.
[1060] Cf. GA 65, 398f.

whose light and horizon reality can appear, according to its inherent meaning and potentiality. This new paradigm is grounded, despite its self-revelatory character, within the possibilities of the historical process of Western thought and art. With this conception of the revelation of the god as an event that is grounded within the historical process, Heidegger intends to challenge the Christian understanding of the eternity of God, of the self-identity of Jesus Christ as the final paradigm of meaning. Theology is therefore asked to respond to the charge that it falls prone – by proposing the self-identity of Jesus Christ – to a Platonist rejection of the reality of the historical process and of the historical nature of world-disclosure.

However, whilst Heidegger stresses the historical and reciprocal nature of the process of world-disclosure, he nevertheless affirms the primordial character and the unbroken influence of the event of being's self-manifestation on the history of world-disclosure. Heidegger is clear that the history of human world-disclosure appears primarily as a history of the oblivion and obscuration of being's self-manifestation. Yet we have seen above that he is convinced that this history of the oblivion of being cannot be understood except as the response to being's self-manifestation and as determined, challenged and controlled by this primordial event.[1061] Heidegger therefore challenges the self-understanding of a church that is unaware of the concealing character of her tradition, and/or does not acknowledge God's Lordship over the history of man's concealment of this Lordship within church and world.

Another conflict arises from the fact that Heidegger understands the possibility of authentic existence to be grounded in Dasein's anticipation of its death as its unsurpassable possibility of *isolated* (*vereinzelt*) existence. Heidegger's intention is to evoke in Dasein a sense of utter *personal* responsibility for its *entire finite* existence and world: "Im "Enden" und dem dadurch konstituierten Ganzsein des Daseins gibt es wesensmaessig keine Vertretung"[1062]. Heidegger thereby challenges the church's understanding of its existence as essentially *communal*, and raises the question if the church's perception of her communal existence, as well as her hope for eternal life, lessens the Christian's sense of his utter *personal* responsibility for his temporal existence.

[1061] Cf. NII (1st ed.), 335-398.
[1062] SZ, 240.

Heidegger's understanding of the call of Dasein's conscience poses a further challenge to Christian self-understanding. We have seen that for Heidegger, Dasein's authentic existence in anticipation of its individual death (and thus of the actual vanishing of its final personal focus and limit of its existence) and of the death of the god (of the vanishing of the final focus and horizon of cultural existence) is Dasein's response to the call of its conscience. This call of conscience is Dasein's confrontation with the threat of its present existence as the result of its failure to exist according to its destiny as the clearing of being. As this challenge, the call of conscience summons Dasein into its very own potentiality to exist as the guardian of being by surrendering itself and its entire world in order to become open for the reception of a new manifestation of being, as the final focus and horizon of its world-disclosing existence.

This perception therefore challenges the expectation of an uncontested continuity between the Christian's existence as a baptised member of the church, and his or her existence in Jesus Christ as heir of eternal life, by posing the question if the Christian's present reality and self-understanding is not already radically challenged.

As we have seen, the call of conscience manifests itself according to Heidegger in the mood of angst. A mood is thus for Heidegger the experience of the state of our existence-in-the-world that we cannot control – we find ourselves afflicted by a mood, and this mood determines the ways in which we perceive our worldly context, the other and ourselves, and consequently the way in which we exist.[1063] Heidegger's analysis of moods therefore poses a question to Christian theology regarding how it understands faith, love and hope. Heidegger's account of moods thereby contradicts any theological interpretations of these ways of existence that conceive them as spontaneous human acts and abstract them from their determining influence on our world-, self- and God-disclosing existence. Yet Heidegger's primary (at least in SZ) focus on angst, as the mood which pervades Dasein's anticipation of its death and enables its authentic existence, conflicts with a Christian understanding of faith, love and hope as the primordial experiences of authentic Christian existence and world-disclosure.

Heidegger concludes that because we are those beings who disclose world, those who finally decide by virtue of their existence how other Dasein, nature and historical events

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[1063] Cf. SZ, §29.

can present themselves, we are ultimately responsible for this very world, which presents itself according to our disclosing existence. 'Disclosing our world' thus involves, for Heidegger, being inherently related to, affected by, and ultimately responsible for the ways in which people and things 'are there' for us. Such a conclusion contrasts sharply with the self-understanding of a church that sees herself separated from, or even victimised by, the world; and it raises the question of how the church has to understand her responsibility for the world and the way in which worldly matters present themselves and are dealt with.

To exist in such a way that we encounter others, nature, and historical events in such a way that we find ourselves made responsible for them by their sheer presence, presupposes, according to Heidegger, our encounter with the self-manifestation of being as the final paradigm and horizon of our disclosing existence. This self-manifestation of being, the coming of the last god, comes to speech, and encounters us, in the word of the poet. For it is, for Heidegger, the virtue of poetry that lets being manifest itself to each individual Dasein in the openness that is established by its temporal ecstatic existence in anticipation and remembrance, and within the interplay of different experiences, associations, and memories of previous encounters with beings self-manifestation, and with others and nature in its light.[1064]

Heidegger's thoughts therefore raise the question of how theology lets God, and His Lordship over reality, come to speech. Heidegger accordingly challenges a theology that loses sight of either the event-character of God's *self*-manifestation, or (by stressing *God's* self-revelation) of the fact that this self-revelation happens for, within, and through the existence of each Christian, in his ecstatic openness to God's Word, in hopeful prayer, and faithful remembrance of the words of the prophets, apostles, and all other witnesses of God's Lordship, inside and outside the church, and in the interplay of his personal memories, associations, experiences, questions, conflicts, and hopes.

[1064] Cf. "...Dichterisch Wohnet Der Mensch ...", VA, 181-198.

Translation of the challenges and questions of Heidegger's confrontation with Barth into the framework of Christian existence in prayer

The prime aim of this section is not to defend either Barth or even Christianity as such against Heidegger's charges. Instead, I intend to clarify Barth's call to theology to perceive – from the standpoint of prayerful Christian existence within the church – the world under God's Lordship, and to make responsible decisions within this world by following the history of Jesus Christ according to the specific thought-forms of the biblical witnesses. However, one might argue that by responding to Heidegger's challenges, theology might lose sight of its subject matter: its thinking might become predetermined by the questions and charges to which it is called to respond. The danger of such an argument is that it can be misused in order to protect theology from having to listen to and respond to those who criticise and question it from outside its own context of faith.

Yet, as I have argued above, being questioned from outside her framework of thought is essential for the church's theological reasoning if she intends to redefine her framework with respect to her subject-matter, which transcends and challenges all theological and philosophical frameworks. The following discussion between Heidegger and Barth therefore translates Heidegger's questions and challenges into Barth's conceptual context of Christian existence in prayer for the coming of the Kingdom (as it has been explored previously in its own right) – yet under the presupposition that this conceptual context is allowed to be questioned in order to create the space for a new conceptualisation of Jesus Christ as the focus and horizon of Christian existence in prayer. As I have analysed Barth's account of this existentiell context in chapters I to III, it can be summarised here as follows.

The Christian existence is an existence in prayer. The congregation prays for God to universally reveal the covenant-reality that He has established in Jesus Christ. Prayer thereby breaks through the ways in which reality is commonly perceived, as it challenges the absolute dominion of common world-views and of the 'factual' needs and necessities that appear on the premise of these world-views. Prayer achieves this by elevating the praying congregation into the covenant-reality in Jesus Christ, establishing thereby the ontic

presupposition of its actual subjective perception.[1065] This subjective perception of the covenant-reality as the hidden ground and meaningful matrix of world-history, that is, the subjective perception of the history of Jesus Christ as the final focus and horizon of an existence that discloses reality under God's Lordship, happens in obedient listening to the biblical testimonies in their particular, and therefore challenging, character as the appointed means of Jesus Christ self-proclamation.

Among these witnesses of the one history of God with man in Jesus Christ, we can find two main lines of reasoning: we find firstly the synoptic line, which perceives *God* in Jesus[1066] and consequently narrates the story of God's free descent into His fallen creation and His – finally victorious – struggle against sin and nothingness as the incarnate Son. And we find secondly the Pauline-Johannine line, which testifies that this historical Jesus of Nazareth was the eternal Son of God[1067] and is therefore, as the bodily risen crucified, the Alpha and Omega of God's history with man. If the praying congregation makes herself liable for the coming of the Kingdom for which she prays, she is to act according to her historical judgements made under the presupposition that this twofold biblical witness of the history of Jesus Christ is the meaningful horizon in which to consider all matters of life in hopeful anticipation of Jesus Christ's final coming, in faithful remembrance of His first coming, and in the love of His earthly presence in the power of His Spirit.

This means that the congregation will perceive herself first of all as being confronted by her final judge to whom all her members are personally responsible, not only for their entire temporal life, but also for the eternal character of this temporal life in the unity with God and His redeemed creation. Each member will therefore look for signs of God's judgement within his previous life, and will consider if his future actions witness to this judgement by corresponding to his personal freedom and honour as God's redeemed child as well as to the freedom and honour of his neighbours within the church and the world as heirs of eternal life. Listening to the twofold biblical witness, he will encounter Jesus Christ as the A and O of his own existence as well as of the entire cosmos.

[1065] Human prayer in and with Christ is, for Barth, the ontic and noetic presuppusion of a Christian life in accordance to God's eternal election of grace: "Indem das göttliche Beharren in der Auferweckung und das menschliche Beharren im Gebet Jesu den Sinn und das Ziel seiner Erwählung bilden, ist diese der Inhalt des göttlichen Beschlusses" (II/2, 135).
[1066] I/1, 424.
[1067] I/2, 421.

He will consequently acknowledge the utterly serious character of his sin and of God's judgement over his sinful past, but trusting in Jesus Christ's victory over sin and nothingness, which determines all ages. He will therefore come to see God's judgement not as eternally condemning but as liberating him from the constraints that he has inflicted upon himself by his sinful conduct, and as redirecting all his acts and words, however sinful they may be on his account, towards God, re-determining them thereby as the means of God's Lordship.

Each Christian will therefore come to perceive his own history as the divinely appointed preparation for his journey as Jesus Christ's disciple, and his present situation as the proper place to witness to Jesus Christ as Alpha and Omega. This witness will happen in so far as he thinks, speaks, and acts as one who perceives all things as being created by and through God in Jesus Christ as means of His self-proclamation. Yet if he remembers that Jesus Christ's Lordship within this world has the character of a *Kampfgeschichte* against the remaining shadows of sin and nothingness, he will perceive first and foremost himself, but also all other events, things, and person as standing under Jesus Christ's judgement.

However, trusting in the justifying and sanctifying purpose of Jesus Christ's perfect judgement, he will find himself called to look out not only for signs of God's judgement, but first and foremost for the redeemed witnesses of Jesus Christ among the contemporary and past voices within the church and the world.[1068] Perceived in relation to the twofold biblical witness of Jesus Christ as their origin, judge, and redeemer, these witnesses gain the authority to challenge and instruct his present understanding of himself, world, and God by leading him into a new cycle of hopeful prayer and faithful remembrance for a new understanding of the reality of Jesus Christ's Lordship, and of the present situation as the place in which to witness to this Lordship in responsibility for the world.

The ontological possibility for man to be let into prayerful Christian existence, as a member of the church, in responsibility for the world, consists, according to Barth, in man's ultimate existence in communion with God and His redeemed creation in Jesus Christ. This reality of man is totally qualitatively different from his present existence, for it is grounded not in his own existence but in the existence of Jesus Christ. Yet, as such, it challenges man's present sinful existence by manifesting itself to him in the call of his conscience. In so far as

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[1068] Cf. PT, §1.

the address of man's ultimate reality meets him in the experience of faith, love, and hope, the address calls him into a new existence in hopeful prayer, faithful remembrance, and loving service, so that he corresponds and witnesses to the ultimate reality of God's communion with His redeemed creation in Jesus Christ.

Hence, it is obvious that Barth and Heidegger share a common interest: they both consider it to be the responsibility of man to lead a historical existence that serves the disclosure of reality, and witnesses to the actual possibilities and needs of this reality. On the basis of this shared interest, a translation of the challenges and questions as they arose in Heidegger's confrontation with Barth into the framework of Christian existence promises to be fruitful for the preparation of a new circle of Christian reflection on the actual meaning of human existence under divine Lordship.

The first challenge, to which theology has to respond within its own framework, consists in Heidegger's claim that it is Dasein's responsibility to exist in such a way that lets "the last god" – and in his light world and self – come to speech.[1069] Heidegger's main charge is thereby that theology fails to let the last god come to speech, as this requires theology first to experience the "death of god", the loss of the meaningfulness of its concepts of God as the final focus and horizon of its theoretical and practical understanding.

Theology is thus challenged to consider how its presupposition that God in His self-revelation is the final paradigm of meaning in the light of which the Christian existence can disclose its context in correspondence to God's command, can radically question the church's present understanding of God, and its present disclosure of world and self. Within the framework of Christian existence, theology can respond to this charge, I think, firstly by agreeing with Heidegger that it's conceptions of the living God lose their meaning once they become doctrines in their own right, unquestioned by, or even protected from, the reality of the living God.

It is rather the prime duty of christological theology to acknowledge Jesus Christ as the Alpha and Omega of God's history with man, and to rethink this history in such a way that it presents a challenge to theology's present understanding of God, church, and world. However, the possibility for such a self-critique of theology lies in the actual challenge posed by the *concrete* history of Jesus Christ, as it manifests itself in prayerful exegesis of the

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[1069] Cf. GA 65, 405-417.

concrete prophetic and apostolic witnesses. The possibility of Jesus Christ's concrete self-manifestation in and through the church's prayerful reading of His witnesses thereby lies in His self-identity: as the bodily risen crucified, in His concrete historical character and otherness, Jesus Christ confronts the church today in the same way as He has confronted the prophets and apostles in the past, and so effectively limits the process of Himself becoming assimilated into our preconceptions.

Yet this response apparently faces Heidegger's charge that theology is actually 'onto-theology': it renders God into a static entity and neglects His historical character. The question that arises for theology within the framework of Christian existence in prayer is then: "Does this Christian existence let the concrete eternal character of Jesus Christ appear as a-historical, or as the concrete reality of the descending God, as the concrete challenge of the God who has met man in the flesh, who has exposed man's sin by being murdered by him, who has proven His divinity in His bodily resurrection as the man Jesus of Nazareth, who has victoriously overcome the alienating and deadly consequences of man's sin, who has consummated the covenant between God and man for all times, who thus has exalted mankind into union with God and into His Lordship over His creation, and who continuously reveals the ultimate reality of this covenantal union in His ongoing fight against the last shadows of sin and nothingness?"

Heidegger's critique of the projection of an a-historical character upon God is related to his critique against a perception of the afterlife that prevents man from acknowledging the temporal and finite character of his earthly existence, and releases him from a sense of utter personal responsibility for it. Translated into the framework of Christian existence, this charge poses the question if each member of the praying congregation really anticipates Jesus Christ's coming as the final limit and judgement of his earthly existence, who calls him into personal responsibility for his entire existence?

Yet within the framework of Christian existence in prayerful anticipation and faithful remembrance, Jesus Christ's coming as each man's final judge is further qualified by His characteristics as man's creator and redeemer. This means that each member of the praying congregation cannot possibly understand his finite temporal existence in abstraction from his future existence as the child of God. Both forms of his existence are one in Jesus Christ who judges man's finite life and defines thereby its particular eternal

character. Under this presupposition, responsibility for one's finite temporal existence is not contradicted by, but appears even more urgent in, the hope of eternal life.

However, the perception of our future life as the mere result of our temporal existence under divine judgement would be challenged by Heidegger's phenomenological analysis of the call of conscience: for Heidegger, our existence as part of the *Ereignis*, as its clearing, as the fulfilment of our destiny, is, in its futural character, a reality that challenges our present existence and calls us into our authentic future. How can we respond, from within the framework of Christian self-understanding, to Heidegger's claim that our present existence is actually challenged by our authentic future? Heidegger's challenge leads us to rethink Jesus Christ as Alpha and Omega, who is, as our creator, judge, and redeemer, the Lord of our time.

This means that in Him our future as His redeemed children has the character of ultimate reality. As this reality is established by Jesus Christ's final justifying and sanctifying judgement, and has its ontological ground in Him and in His existence as the risen crucified, it is qualitatively totally different from our present temporal existence. It is truly our judged and redeemed future existence, yet our judged and redeemed existence in so far as it is not grounded in us but in the absolute reality of Jesus Christ. As such it can challenge us from beyond ourselves and call us to exist within our finite time as a witness of our ultimate reality in Christ.

We have seen that, for Heidegger, the call of conscience manifests itself in our mood of angst. This perception stems from Heidegger's more fundamental conviction that our state of being-in-the-world-with-other-Dasein-before-a-god-as-the-final-paradigm-of-the-meaning-of-our-disclosed-world always manifests itself in a mood. The mood, for Heidegger, is primordial, it expresses which state-of-existence we find ourselves in, how we perceive things, and how we actualise our existence accordingly. A mood is therefore never the result of a spontaneous decision – and neither is the state of our existence. This challenges a theological perspective that perceives faith, love, and hope as spontaneous human responses to the proclamation of the gospel, and suggests that faith, love, and hope are something more primordial.

This suggestion makes sense from a perspective that perceives Jesus Christ's history as the history between God and humankind as the ultimate reality and presupposes that this reality manifests itself to each person as her ultimate yet eschatological state-of-existence in

faith, hope, and love. Encountering Jesus Christ as the covenant-reality and his own state-of-existence within this covenant-reality in the mood of faith, love and hope, each Christian finds himself moved to exist according to his eschatological existence in Christ by hopefully anticipating this existence in Jesus Christ's coming, by faithfully remembering its ontological ground in Jesus Christ's death and resurrection, and by witnessing to it in the serving love of God and neighbour.

Because Heidegger understands our temporal existence to be the means by which, and the openness in which, our world manifests itself to us in its total spatiality[1070], he understands each of us to be necessarily confronted by, and responsible for, the actuality and potentiality of all persons, beings, and events within his world, however distant they appear to us in metric terms. This notion challenges a church that does not acknowledge her inherent relation to *her* world and thus her responsibility for this world and for the way in which worldly matters present themselves to her and each of her members.

Translated into the framework of Christian existence, this challenge poses the question of whether the congregation acknowledges the history of the covenant to be the inner ground of worldly reality as the ultimate reality that expands, orders, and governs space and history, and her own elevation into this covenant-history in prayer. For if she acknowledges this, she cannot but understand herself as exalted into the union with Jesus Christ and thus into His kingly office, and therefore as inherently related to all things according to the way in which Jesus Christ Himself relates to them.

Heidegger strives for the disclosure of a *common* world, according to being's self-manifestation in and through each Dasein's authentic existence, incited by the common experience of the withdrawal of being as the meaningfulness of a shared world. Such a commonly disclosed world would make authentic being-with possible: true communication, because everyone perceives worldly matters according to the way in which being manifests itself as the final focus and horizon of each Dasein's existence, and true testimony to being's *self*-manifestation by calling each other into questioning the meaning of being. Such disclosure of a common world in which authentic communication and existence are possible, demands for Heidegger a common inquiry into Dasein's *common* history.

[1070] Cf. SZ, §70.

Heidegger therefore challenges a church that has given up on her quest for human communion in truthful communication and authentic existence, and has become indifferent to its own history and to world-history. Within the framework of Christian existence, Heidegger's challenge might therefore pose the following questions to the church: "How does the church understand her own history and consequently her historical unity with the nations of the world?" "Is it the church's aim to disclose and witness to the unity and peace of the members of all different nations in Jesus Christ?" "Does she allow her words and actions to be ultimately determined by this unity and peace in Christ?"

Thus questioned, the congregation would have to ask herself what it means for her present judgement and actions to pray for the universal revelation of Jesus Christ's perfect work of reconciliation, in remembrance that this reconciliation has been brought forth by God's history with man in Jesus Christ and in responsible awareness of Jesus Christ's ongoing fight to bring this accomplished objective reality to universal subjective acknowledgement.

Asking this question, she might follow Heidegger's lead and start to inquire – within the framework of God's covenant history as the ground and telos of all history - into the historical relation between Christians, Jews, Moslems, and all the nations of the world. By searching for signs of God's concrete history with those peoples and by trying to understand in which particular ways His Lordship has been contradicted by all parties, the church might gain a better understanding of the historically developed conflicts and wounds between the peoples and disclose new possibilities for witnessing in the midst of these conflicts to the final union of the members of all peoples in Jesus Christ which has already been consummated in Jesus Christ's death and resurrection.

Heidegger perceives the history of being primarily as a history of the oblivion and obscuration of being as the event of disclosure.[1071] This stress of man's tendency to conceal, rather than to disclose, reality challenges the optimism of a theology that perceives history as a gradual process of enlightenment and refuses to radically question its tradition and present thinking and to take responsibility for its previous and present concealment of God's Lordship over the world. This challenge resonates with God's radical declaration of the

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[1071] SZ, 21.

thorough and all-prevailing character of human sinfulness in His own trial and death for the revelation and judgement of the sins of the world.

Yet while Heidegger stresses that human history is first and foremost a history of the oblivion of being, he does not dismiss being's controlling influence on the history in which its self-manifestation is obscured and concealed by Dasein's inauthentic existence.[1072] Translated into the framework of Christian existence, this conviction of Heidegger's raises the question of whether theology can take human sin seriously, and, as its consequence, human suffering (and also God's very own suffering in His Son), and finally God's victorious Lordship over, and even authorship of, all history. Indeed, Jesus Christ's Lordship over a world of suffering appears more than questionable from any standpoint outside the Christian existence in prayer for the universal revelation of the victorious character of Jesus Christ's suffering and death on the cross.

However, existing in this way, the congregation is challenged to take the universal and fundamental character of sin and suffering seriously, as it has genuinely afflicted God in Jesus Christ and therefore His creation for which God gave His Son to bear the deadly consequences of sin, yet under the presupposition that the reality of the resurrection constitutes God's Lordship through the risen Christ over all history once and for all.

If theology takes the church's confession of Jesus Christ's Lordship over all history as its Alpha and Omega seriously, it will find itself agreeing with Heidegger on its own grounds that the event of truth, understood by theology as the self-manifestation of Jesus Christ, as the final focus and horizon of man's understanding of God, world, and self, is, in and for itself, the transcendental possibility of man's ignorance and obscuration of this event. The theological argument would be thereby - as I have shown in more detail in Chapter III - that man always comes from Jesus Christ's self-manifestation. And it is only because we know Him in His self-proclamation that we can forget, obscure or even reject Him.

Heidegger's insight that the event of unconcealment is always in itself the danger of its oblivion can therefore be an important piece of advice for theology: confronted with Jesus Christ's self-manifestation, we might get so caught up in the feeling of immediacy and intimacy, that we simply forget about leading a Christian existence that always transcends afresh our experience of the presence of Jesus Christ's self-proclamation by praying for His

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[1072] Cf. NII (1st ed.), 335-398.

new and universal self-manifestation, by remembering faithfully His past revelation in its all-time encompassing character, and by following His present call into the world to encounter the other there as His witness.

Furthermore, Christian faith sees maybe even more clearly than Heidegger that man is not only inclined to forget the gracious character of Jesus Christ's self-proclamation, but that he wilfully rejects it: he is inclined to render this focus and horizon of his existence into an image congruent with his own judgements. Yet Christian faith agrees nevertheless on its own grounds that the primordial event of truth, that is, for the Christian faith, Jesus Christ, remains in charge of the process of its oblivion and works its final universal revelation through it.

Yet Heidegger does not only claim that being addresses Dasein and determines its existence by constituting its mood, but also that Dasein has the responsibility for responding to being's address by actually disclosing its world according to being's self-manifestation. This requires that Dasein radically re-orders its questioning existence with respect to the self-manifestation of being, so that it perceives everything in relation to it as its final telos and horizon. Translated into the framework of Christian existence, Heidegger's requirement for authentic existence poses the question to each Christian of whether he actually takes Jesus Christ's self-manifestation as the final focus and horizon of his existence seriously, and accordingly re-orders his existence towards Him and perceives everything within this perspective and horizon.

Such a reordering of existence happens, as we have seen, in prayer for God's revelation of His Kingdom and in listening to the testimonies of this Kingdom by the prophets, apostles, church, and the world, so that the order of God's heavenly Kingdom becomes the order and limit of our so disclosed world.

Being's self-manifestation as our final focus and horizon, the coming of the last god, happens for Heidegger in language, particularly in poetry.[1073] For it is, according to Heidegger, the virtue of poetry that lets being manifest itself to each Dasein in the openness that is established by its temporal existence in anticipation and remembrance through the interplay of different experiences, associations, and memories of being's previous self-manifestations.

[1073] GA 39, 30f.

These thoughts of Heidegger's therefore raise the question of how theology lets God and His Lordship over reality come to speech, and challenges a theology that loses sight of either the event-character of God's *self*-manifestation, or of the fact that this self-revelation happens for, within, and through the existence of each Christian, and in the interplay of his personal memories, associations, experiences, questions, conflicts, and hopes evoked by, integrated into, and transformed by this way of Christian ecstatic existence. And it is the aim of this chapter to deal with this challenge by allowing this interplay to happen.

The previous sections of this chapter intended to create the openness for such an interplay by identifying the conflicts between Heidegger and Barth, and to engage in such an interplay by translating these conflicts into the epistemological framework of Christian existence in order to challenge its self-evidence and to rethink its basic structures with respect to Jesus Christ, as He re-appears within the playful dialogue with Heidegger. Yet this playful re-conceptualisation of the basic structures of Christian existence during the previous process of translation accentuates some conflicts between the Christian's self-understanding with respect to its subject matter and Heidegger's phenomenological analysis of human existence.

The following section intends to highlight these conflicts and to articulate the questions and challenges that these conflicts pose within the epistemological framework of Barth's description of Christian existence. The aim is thereby not to affirm theology as the better philosophy. My intention is rather to take Heidegger's phenomenology seriously as a successful analysis of human existence apart from God's Lordship.

Yet if Barth is right, and it is primarily the church that is inclined to perceive reality apart from Jesus Christ, but according to her own preconceptions, then an analysis of the conflict of theses two perspectives can shed light on the present self-understanding of the church. Any critical questioning of Heidegger's account of human existence is therefore intended as a critical questioning of the church's present self-understanding and behaviour.

Identification of conflicts between the christological and the phenomenological perspective on reality as they appear within the hermeneutical framework of Christian existence

The first conflict between the christological and the phenomenological perspective arises within the framework of Christian existence from Heidegger's conviction that it is Dasein's responsibility to retrieve possibilities for being's new self-manifestation from the history of thought and art that challenge and redirect the consciousness of society. Yet Heidegger fails to show sufficiently how we can distinguish possibilities for authentic disclosing existence from possibilities whose actualisation conceals being's self-manifestation (Heidegger's naïve approval of Hitler illustrates this fatal danger). Theology is therefore challenged to give a clear account by which standard it adopts a concept (from either its own tradition, or from philosophy) as the means for its re-conceptualisation of Jesus Christ's self-manifestation, and by which standard it judges a historical event as a sign of divine providence.

We saw that Barth has defined this standard by demanding that any concept, derived from doctrine or worldly wisdom, and every historical event, must be perceived, evaluated, and reinterpreted within the epistemological framework of covenant-history. Such a procedure prevents the divinisation of any concept or event, as it points out its character of witness that stands under God's judgement. The christological analyses and reinterpretation will therefore always seek to acknowledge God's condemning judgement as well as a pointing towards His actual command.

Such a critical reinterpretation of Heidegger's phenomenological account of human existence is the intention of the following section. The aim is thereby to analyse conflicts within the Christian consciousness between a christologically restructured and an 'everyday' understanding of reality.

Among those accounts that conflict with an understanding of Christian existence in prayerful response to the history of Jesus Christ is Heidegger's account that being, in its new manifestation, encounters us from the future in and through *our* past.[1074] For Jesus Christ has

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[1074] Hence, according to Heidegger, any fresh encounter with the Ereignis presupposes our thoughtful *Auseinander-setzung* with the history of philosophy: "Der Einsprung in den anderen Anfang ist der Rueckgang in den ersten und umgekehrt" (GA 65, 185).

revealed Himself as a new reality which encounters us in its *self-identity* with *His* past, and is thereby absolutely independent of and thus free to radically challenge *our* past and to bring about a radically new future. Heidegger instead fails to explain how a totally new beginning could come about if the *Ereignis* itself remains bound to the historical ways of its previous manifestations.

Yet Heidegger's analysis shows that apart from the actual happening of the breaking-in of the eschatological reality, human longing for a totally new beginning remains unfulfilled. Yet the experience of our failure to bring about a radical new reality will only cause us to look vehemently for possibilities of a 'better' form of existence within our past or present and to absolutise them as means of our salvation. This explains why the church, in so far as she is always part of fallen man and loses sight of Jesus Christ as her focus and horizon, has always been and probably always will be inclined to treat a present movement, a rediscovery of a traditional virtue, or the entire process of history as a movement towards perfection.

Yet if her focus is the living Jesus Christ, she is challenged to acknowledge that, while Jesus Christ can manifest Himself in the unlikeliest witness, there is always an even greater differentiation between this witness and His actual reality. And for the Christian faith, it is only His actual reality that can save, not its witness.

Heidegger's phenomenological analysis of Dasein's existential structures disclosed the mood of angst as both the cause and the remedy of inauthentic existence. It causes inauthentic existence in so far as Dasein tries to affirm itself once it is confronted by the trembling of its world-views – yet for Heidegger it is just this trembling of Dasein's world-views that makes a new encounter with being, and thus authentic existence, possible.

This phenomenological analysis of angst can help us to understand the present existentiell state of the European churches: being confronted with declining numbers of churchgoers, with the challenges of a multi-cultural and multi-religious society, and with the decline of influence on all political, cultural and academic levels, the European churches experience serious distress. Caught up in the experience of this angst of self-loss, of the vanishing of Christianity as a final paradigm of meaning for European society, the European churches quite often choose to foster this angst within their members as a remedy for the present situation.

Hence, they often attempt to incite angst among their members in the hope that this angst will provoke them to turn away from the challenges of modern society and to lead an 'authentic Christian life'. The danger is thereby that such a strategy leads to inauthentic Christianity, as it can either provoke the self-affirmation of the church and its traditions, or lead her to escapism from her responsibilities as Jesus Christ's witness within the world.

Yet once we inquire into the meaning of angst within the framework of prayer for Jesus Christ's final coming as the universal revealer of His perfect work of reconciling and redeeming His fallen creation, the ambiguity of the mood of angst as the cause and possible remedy of inauthentic existence is radically challenged: because Jesus Christ encounters the Christian as A and O, as the One who is his final judge as the world's creator, reconciler and redeemer. The Christian confession of Jesus Christ's reality therefore exposes Heidegger's analysis of angst as the authentic mood in which to disclose man's final telos as non-referential to this very reality. Heidegger's analysis appears rather as a sign of God's judgement over the present conduct of His church: it reveals that the existence of the church is an existence that has lost sight of Jesus Christ as her author, telos and Lord.

Barth therefore calls the church to acknowledge her shift of focus and to exist according to her confession that the covenant between man and God, the heavenly Kingdom, has been established in Jesus Christ's victory on the cross. The church would then gain a realistic understanding of present reality in so far as she would see the divinely limited character of all worldly threats and therefore experience the courage and love to witness within the world joyfully to this victory and to join Jesus Christ responsibly in His ongoing fight against the last shadows of sin and nothingness in the hope of His final universal self-revelation.

Within the framework of Barth's description of Christian existence in prayer, Heidegger's concept of death as Dasein's final possibility of *isolated* (*vereinzelte*) existence raises some questions about its consistency. Heidegger's interest is, as we have seen, to urge Dasein into the awareness of its *personal* responsibility for its finite existence. However, ontologically, this existence is for Heidegger a being-with-other-Dasein-in-the-world. Heidegger's *final* aim is therefore to show how a personal responsible authentic existence can lead to a way of authentic being-with that discloses a common world in which true communication becomes possible as every Dasein discloses beings according to the final self-

manifestation of being, and not according to various or even contradicting personal world-views.

Yet what Heidegger fails to do is to link the ground of Dasein's authentic existence, that is, Dasein's resolute anticipation of its isolated existence in the moment of its death, with a concrete account of the transcendental possibility and the praxis of authentic being-with. To be fair, we must acknowledge that Heidegger explores this transcendental possibility by contemplating the common experience of the death of the god and on the potential of the other to be the voice of our conscience. Yet these ways of authentic being-with seem to be secondary to Dasein's isolated resolute existence. Indeed, it seems as if Heidegger is suggesting that these forms of authentic being-with demand Dasein to come individually to its authenticity, in order to exist then as the prophet of the death of the god, as the poet of the coming god, as the conscience of the other. Hence, it is individual resolute existence-toward-death that discloses a world in which authentic being-with and communication can develop.

This problem appears all the more sharply if it is considered within the context of the Christian existence in prayer. As we have seen, Barth is as eager as Heidegger to stress that the Christian existence in prayer and discipleship is an existence in *personal* responsibility before God. However, this cannot mean that man's existence before God as His final judge in the moment of his death in personal responsibility is an isolated existence. We must remember here that man's final judge is the creator, reconciler, and redeemer of the world. In man's final judge dwells therefore His redeemed creation as His witness.

Consequently, each person is in the final hour of her death not only confronted by God in Christ, but also by God's redeemed creation. Man's personal responsibility for his finite existence is therefore always a personal responsibility before God *and His creation*, and derives its strength from man's anticipation of his final authentic being-with-God-and-His-creation-in-Christ.

Yet Heidegger's phenomenological analysis of Dasein's struggle for authentic existence can shed light on the way in which theological ethics often proceed: the ethical decision is very often understood to be necessarily an autonomous and individual decision in abstraction from the actual community in which man finds himself. A christological reasoning that proceeds within the framework of the praying congregation must therefore

challenge this starting-point: it must show that *personal* responsibility is by no means compromised but indeed emphasised by locating ethical decision-making in one's existence as part of the praying congregation for the world in anticipation of one's final encounter with God and His redeemed creation in Jesus Christ. The same is true with respect to an ethical understanding of conscience: if ethics defines the call of conscience as man's encounter with his ultimate reality for which he is responsible, a theological ethics must understand this final reality to be man's existence in responsibility before God and His creation in Jesus Christ.

A further conflict between Heidegger and Barth arises once we consider that the Christian congregation prays that Jesus Christ might battle the last shadows of sin and nothingness in remembrance of His triumphant suffering on the cross. This consideration calls into question Heidegger's thesis that the history of the oblivion of being can, as an essential part and means of the history of being, bring forth authentic existence in truth. If the Christian congregation confesses God's radical No! against nothingness and sin in the death of His Son, she is compelled to comprehend the relation between the history of sin and the history of grace in terms of radical differentiation. John Caputo's critique in *Heidegger and Theology*, that Heidegger's narrating of the history of being as "Heilsgeschichte" is a form of mythologizing, seems therefore undeniable.[1075]

Heidegger is thereby unable to show how the history of being proceeds according to some patterns that can be trusted and are morally binding. The danger is therefore that man becomes – trusting in the saving power of history despite its errors and confusions – enslaved to the dictates of circumstances. Any imperative to act in accordance to being can solely be responsibly made, I think, if reality and its moral obligations are revealed to such an extent that allows the ethical agent to make a conscious decision about the proper response. This happens in Jesus Christ as He fully reveals human reality in relation to God, vouches in His own person for its deliberating character, and calls each person to freely and consciously acknowledge this reality in and through her acts of discipleship.

Here again, we can see the close connection between God's revelation in Jesus Christ and Christian ethics: Jesus Christ is, as the revelation of human existence in relation to God and the fellow human beings, the revelation of the ontological context that is as such morally

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[1075] Caputo, 1993, 280. For a more detailed argumentation, see Caputo's *Demythologizing Heidegger*.

binding. Yet it can be morally binding to the responsible agent only if he can comprehend it and make conscious decisions within this context.

It is therefore essential for responsible ethical decision-making that theology is aware of its task to continually explore and explicate the concrete character of Jesus Christ as the ontological field of ethical reasoning and responsible existence. Theology's primary tasks are thereby to establish a clear boundary of this moral field by differentiating sharply between the reality of the covenant and the reality of sin and nothingness, and to prevent any reduction of God's self-revelation to a rather abstract and void terminology by disconnecting theology from a prayerful praxis of exegesis.

Within the framework of Christian existence, the fundamental problem inherent in Heidegger's thought appears to be as follows: while Heidegger is eager to challenge the self-affirmation and idolatry of human beings by preparing the way for their encounter with a truly divine god, this god has – like humankind itself – his origin in the *Ereignis* as the event of unconcealment, whereby the latter is thought as inherently reciprocal with human history. Due to this reciprocity, Heidegger's thinking does *not* – against its own intentions – allow for the freedom and divinity of God and thus for a radical questioning of our self-affirmations by a free and concrete, objective other.

Caputo therefore rightly concludes: "Heidegger does talk about God (and the gods) but it is a God who, from a Judeo-Christian point of view, has lost his sovereign lordship over history and become a function of beings history".[1076] This has serious ethical implications: if the final reality to which we are called to conform in our acts is essentially reciprocal with our fallen history, ethical decision-making is genuinely compromised and more than likely to be overshadowed by the historically grown demands of the *Zeitgeist*. Heidegger's naïve misjudgement of the true character of the NSDAP documents this inherent danger of his philosophy.

Yet from within the framework of Christian faith, Heidegger's failure appears as the limit of anthropocentrical ethics. It is Barth's sharp insight that sees that only the unbroken focus on God and His Kingdom in its self-revelation in Jesus Christ can create the clearing in which the dangers of the moment can be perceived, and human beings are freed from their entanglement in history under the dominion of the lordless powers, of their domesticated

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[1076] Caputo, *Heidegger and Theology*, 283.

gods and divinised ideals. This focus needs to be constantly adopted – and I therefore hope that Barth will be, for many a theologian, the voice of conscience that calls him to make a new beginning with the disclosure of reality in prayerful remembrance of God's self-revelation.

The previous section aimed to highlight some problems and inconsistencies in Heidegger's phenomenological analysis of Dasein as they appear from within the conceptual framework of Barth's description of Christian existence in prayer in order to become aware of the possible pitfalls of the present self-understanding of the church and theology. Heidegger's phenomenology has thereby proven itself to be a good indication of human existence, as it manifests itself apart from an existentiell christological focus. The question about the relation between Heidegger's and Barth's account of human disclosing existence could therefore be settled by claiming that Heidegger analyses the fallen individual, while Barth analyses the individual as *justus et peccator*, as the individual who exists under Jesus Christ's call in its movement out of its sinful existence into its new being as God's child.

Yet there might be an inherent relation between the two accounts that appears once we perceive them in the light of Barth's christological anthropology. For Barth, our reality as sinners is fundamentally different from our reality as justified children of God. Yet this difference is established outside of ourselves: our qualitatively new existence as God's justified children is constituted by, and rests in, Jesus Christ. From the perspective of our finite existence, there exists indeed a continuity between our past and our eschatological future: our existence as justified sinners means that our previous existence is made right, that it is re-directed and re-ordered by and towards Jesus Christ as the ground of (or in some sense even as the earthly repetition of) our qualitatively different existence as God's redeemed children in Christ.

On the basis of these anthropological-soteriological considerations, a reading of Heidegger's phenomenology as merely an analysis of man's fallen existence cannot be the last word. From the standpoint of Barth's christological anthropology, Heidegger's phenomenological analysis of Dasein can rather be transformed (if translated into and critically questioned within the framework of Christian existence) into a description of, and a call into, human existence from *peccator* to *justus* under Jesus Christ's justifying and

sanctifying vocation. Such a transformation of Heidegger's witness is the intention of the following section.

Transformation of Heidegger's phenomenological analysis of Dasein into a witness of covenant-reality

Heidegger's actual inability to go – even against his own intentions - beyond man's self-affirmation and the primordial historical unity of God and man, can be – if perceived in the light of the covenant-history - understood as a twofold witness of exactly this history between God and humankind.

The perception of the conflicts between Heidegger's and Barth's analyses of human existence has made us aware of the fact that man in general, and therefore also and always the Christian, is inclined to turn away from God and to affirm himself as the final cause and master of his existence, even against his actual intentions. Thus, we see how fundamentally we are trapped by sin and how essential it is for theology, and for each Christian, to be aware of this inclination. Furthermore, we have seen that man's confrontation with the result of his inauthenticity, the mere sham-character of his disclosed world, can lead to anxiety and, hence, to the urge to affirm himself and his world-view, to erect the Kingdom of God by his own efforts.

Yet such a laborious strife will lead him only deeper into his fallen world. What can man therefore do? Let us look again at Heidegger's analysis of human existence. Is it not Heidegger's somehow unintentional expression of the primordial unity between God and man that can point us beyond our apparent entanglement in our sinfulness? What is it about this primordial unity that it manifests itself within the history of philosophy, even within the philosophies of those thinkers like Heidegger who aim at overcoming anthropocentric thought? Within the epistemological framework of Jesus Christ as the history between God and man, Heidegger's somehow unintentional confession of the primordial unity of God and man appears as a witness to the primordial unity between God and man in Jesus Christ who was, as the bodily risen man Jesus of Nazareth, in the beginning with God.

And it is the manifestation of this ultimate reality that can forcefully direct us out of our vicious circle of sin, anxiety, and self-affirmation. It does this by its sheer-self-manifestation, by its proclamation that the unity between God and ourselves has been established in Jesus Christ once and for all. All that is demanded of us is therefore to let this self-manifestation happen, and to witness to it in our existence in hope, faith, and love. "Gelassenheit"[1077], to use Heidegger's term, is therefore demanded of us: our joyful relaxation from any labour to bring forth salvation, our joining in God's celebration of the Sabbath as the perfection of His creation, our acceptance of our being-let(*gelassen*)-in-Christ-in-communion-with-God-and-His-redeemed-creation, as God's gracious and perfect gift, in thankful prayer, faithful remembrance, and loving witness.

In the following section I intend to provide a final re-conceptualisation of such a thankful existence in prayer, remembrance, and witness that discloses being as a being-let-in-Christ-in-communion-with-God-and-His-redeemed-creation, and thereby leads us out of our fallenness and into our existence as heirs of eternal life.

Final re-conceptualisation of Christian existence

Throughout the previous discourse with Heidegger, Christian existence in prayer for the universal revelation of covenant-history in remembrance of its perfect consummation in Jesus Christ has shown itself as the actualisation of our responsibility for disclosing our present world-historical context under the judgement and Lordship of Jesus Christ. This disclosure challenges and transforms the way our worldly context appears from a perspective that lacks Jesus Christ's self-manifestation as its final focus and horizon.

Two interrelated tasks are necessary for this disclosure: the first task consists of existing in response to the history of Jesus Christ, as the history of the consummation of the covenant between God and humankind, in order to disclose God's actual judgement and command. Such a responsive existence is initiated once we find ourselves addressed by Jesus Christ's self-proclamation as the covenant between God and His redeemed creation, so that we find ourselves encountered by our eschatological reality in unity with God and His

[1077] Heidegger, 1959.

redeemed creation in Christ. Jesus Christ's self-proclamation, and our encounter with our eschatological reality, manifest themselves in hope, faith, and love.

In hope, we find ourselves reaching out to God in order to receive and to thankfully accept our true existence in communion with God and His redeemed creation, and responding to this reception in prayer for the universal revelation of this communion as the ultimate reality. In faith, we find ourselves turning back to Scripture as the testimony of Jesus Christ's perfect establishment of this ultimate reality and thus as the place in which we encounter its actual revelation.

Turning back to Scripture in faith, we disclose the biblical testimonies of Jesus Christ as the hermeneutical framework in which to perceive our own existence within the wider context of world-history. This means that once we exist in prayerful anticipation of Jesus Christ's self-manifestation in faithful remembrance of the biblical testimonies of the history of the consummation of the covenant, Jesus Christ, the reality of the covenant between God and His redeemed creation, manifests Himself as the focus and horizon of our existence in love. This self-manifestation of Jesus Christ as our final focus and horizon in love calls us into personal responsibility before Jesus Christ as the final judge of our temporal existence and before God's redeemed creation, which we encounter in Him. Living up to this responsibility requires of us witnessing to the ultimate covenant-reality in our actual existence in love for God and our neighbour.

Such a personal witness of the ultimate covenant-reality calls for our disclosure of the particular possibility of existence in which to respond to the actual command of God. This disclosure is necessary as we have the tendency to conceal the actual event-character of Jesus Christ's self-manifestation and its imperative character. It happens in a threefold way: the first responsibility consists in reconstructing the history of the covenant, according to the biblical testimonies as the hermeneutical framework for our actual disclosure of our being-in-the-world-before-God-and-His-creation. We can see how Barth performed this reconstruction by critically evaluating and reinterpreting the diverse doctrinal material from different denominations and ages as different perceptions of particular moments of God's history with his creation, according to the two basic counter-posed apostolic perspectives of this history.

In this way, Barth became able to explore and depict each moment of the history between God and His creation in a most detailed and differentiated fashion by perceiving each moment and its traditional perceptions with respect to God's *Kampfgeschichte* against sin and nothingness, yet under the presupposition that the eschatological reality of God's victory over sin and nothingness and of the consummation of the covenant in Jesus Christ is not only the telos of God's history with humankind but, as its telos, also the origin, judgement, and hidden meaning of all history.

The second responsibility involves the reinterpretation of one's personal historical existence in the church and the world within the framework of covenant history, reconstructed in this way. This reinterpretation firstly requires perceiving one's personal historical existence in correspondence to God's covenant-history as His *Kampfgeschichte*, and therefore the identification of signs of this *Kampfgeschichte* within one's past and the acknowledgement of, and conversion from, one's so disclosed contradictions of God's providence. However, this perception of one's history as a contradiction of God's providence must be further qualified by the confession that this history of personal sin has been effectively limited by Jesus Christ's victory of sin and nothingness. This confession requires one to expect that his history has been, despite all personal sinful errors, directed by Jesus Christ's spiritual self-proclamation, and therefore that his present situation is the divinely appointed place to exist as Jesus Christ's witness and to follow Him according to His actual call.

Due to this reflection on history as the place of God's judgement and yet as the designated place for his step into the future as Jesus Christ's witness, he will find himself deliberated from his past and confident to disclose and to actualise within his present situation the one possibility to answer Jesus Christ's self-revealing address, towards which he is turned in hopeful prayer.

This process of reinterpretation of one's personal history in relation to the history of the world and the church, within the hermeneutical framework of the doctrinal conception of the history of Jesus Christ, according to the two counter-posed apostolic testimonies, involves a third obligation. This obligation consists in man's awareness and internalisation of as many external perspectives of reality as possible. To become aware of other perspectives of reality, and of the ways in which they conflict with one's christologically derived

perspective, is important as it makes one conscious of the fact that reality, in its self-manifestation, is given to man only mediated through its conceptualisation from a particular perspective.

One's awareness of different conflicting conceptualisations therefore creates the openness in which to inquire anew into the reason for one's particular perspective, in dialogue with the conflicts and questions raised by different perspectives, in order to encounter and conceptualise anew the self-manifestation of reality.

This re-conceptualisation of reality occurs in so far as the conflicts that arose between the Christian and the external perspectives are translated into the Christian perspective in order to stir within this perspective a dialogue through which a better understanding of the Christian perspective and its subject matter is achieved by way of a critical evaluation, transformation, and application of the external perspective within the hermeneutical framework of Christian existence in correspondence to covenant-history.

The internalisation of the external perspective has therefore not only a critical but also a constructive function: by enabling a new encounter with reality within the process of differentiation, translation, and dialogue between the different perspectives, the external perspective is critically evaluated, transformed, and applied within the reappearing hermeneutical framework of Christian existence, thereby becoming a witness of Jesus Christ as the focus and horizon of the Christian existence from a different perspective.

The inclusion of external perspectives of reality therefore represents a testimony of the church's prayer for Jesus Christ's universal revelation of His history as the ultimate reality and of the communion of all people and their perspectives of reality in Christ. It thus forms the basic presupposition of the church's active witness to their particular prayers in relation to the coming Kingdom within the cultural, political, academic, scientific, and trivial realms of the world.

Final conclusion

The presented thesis opened with an exposition of Barth's understanding of prayer. Prayer, as we have seen, incorporates, and redirects our entire temporal existence, for hopeful prayer for Jesus Christ's final universal revelation of Himself as the covenant-reality

always comes out of, and leads back into, faithful remembrance of the history of the perfect consummation of this reality, and so brings forth the readiness to love God and the other by witnessing to the ultimate covenant-reality within the world.

This perspective on the Christian existence in prayer has proven itself fruitful for an interpretation of Barth's work, as it allowed the inherent relations between its ethical, exegetical, doctrinal, and universally epistemological dimensions to manifest themselves.

As the chapter on prayer exposed the biblical witnesses as the place in which the coming Kingdom encounters us in the form of Jesus Christ's self-proclamation, it led us naturally to an analysis of Barth's exegetical understanding of these witnesses. This analysis in chapter two showed that Barth has identified two basic thought-forms within the New Testament: the catabasic synoptic and the anabasic Pauline-Johannine witness. Both witnesses are counter-posed perspectives of the one final reality Jesus Christ: the catabasic synoptic perspective perceives Jesus Christ in the descent of the Son, and in His *Kampfgeschichte* against sin and nothingness, whilst the anabasic Pauline-Johannine perspective perceives Jesus Christ as the victor over sin and nothingness in His bodily resurrection, and therefore as the author, Lord, and telos of all time.

The identification of these two thought-forms allowed for a re-reading of Barth's KD that explicated how these two exegetical derived thought-forms influenced his interpretation of traditional doctrinal material, and thereby allowed for a deeper and more differentiated account that was able to critically evaluate and include the wealth of the Christian tradition across all denominations and ages.

The third chapter explored the relation between Barth's understanding of prayer in remembrance of His covenant-history according to the two biblical thought-forms and ethics. This move was necessary as prayer leads us, according to Barth, into a new hearing of Jesus Christ's self-proclamation within the biblical witnesses, so that we follow Him by witnessing in our present existence to His self-manifestation as the ultimate foundation, origin, and telos of all reality.

By analysing the constructive importance of Barth's exegetically derived differentiated perspective on Jesus Christ for his ethical reasoning, in a comparative study of his Münster ethics lectures and the existing particular ethics with respect to the command of God the creator in the KD, the ground was gained on which to venture further and to

explore the concrete possibilities of ethical thinking with respect to the command of God the reconciler and God the redeemer.

The fourth chapter introduced Martin Heidegger as a dialogue partner. This move was a necessary response to the ethical imperative disclosed in the third chapter: the actual understanding of God's covenant-history with humankind in Jesus Christ, as the hidden judgement and ultimate meaning of the present situation, presupposes not only prayer for the self-manifestation of this ultimate reality in remembrance of the biblical testimonies of its perfect consummation, but also a respectful listening to the other in the expectation that his perspective on reality can, if incorporated into the perspective of prayerful existence in remembrance of the history of Jesus Christ, gain the authority to contradict our preconceptions of reality, and lead us to a new and fuller conceptualisation of it.

The actual analysis and presentation of the history of Heidegger's thought centred around his question about the possibility of the self-manifestation of being as the final paradigm of meaning, and therefore as the possibility of Dasein's world-disclosing existence in anticipation of this paradigm, as its final focus and horizon. This question has proven itself as an adequate perspective on Heidegger's work, as it allowed the structures of Heidegger's reasoning, and the inherent unity of its existentiell, ontological, and ethical dimensions, to present themselves.

As the analysis of Barth's and Heidegger's works has identified a common concern, that is, the understanding of reality in a way that makes ethical decision-making possible, a dialogue between both thinkers seemed promising. The fifth chapter has therefore firstly reflected on the limits and guidelines of such a dialogue. The result was the insight that a meaningful discussion could proceed only within a concrete framework of thought. As this work is a theological thesis, I chose the context of Barth's description of Christian existence in prayer as the framework in which to discuss the questions, problems, and directives as they arose from a direct confrontation of Heidegger's thoughts with Barth's.

The aim of this discussion was to challenge Barth's understanding of Christian existence in prayer as the locus of the disclosure of our reality under God's Lordship. This challenge took place by means of the re-consideration of its presuppositions, and of its re-conceptualisation, with regards to its intended subject matter, in so far as it appeared anew through the dialogue with, and the transformation of, Heidegger's basic thoughts. The resulting re-conceptualisation of Christian existence therefore drew together the insights

gained throughout this study of Barth and Heidegger. It is presented here in the hope that it will both challenge, and, perhaps more importantly, be challenged from, other Christian and non-Christian perspectives on reality, and will thereby prove itself as a step towards the communal process of the disclosure of our common world, for the sake of a better understanding and a growing sense of personal responsibility, before each other, and God.

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