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The Work of the Spirit in Creation according to Barth's Exegesis of the First Chapters of Genesis

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The subject of this paper concerns Karl Barth's explanation of two places in the first two Chapters of Genesis in their context: the clauses 'God's spirit was hovering over the face of the waters' (Gen. 1:2) and 'YHWH Elohim ... breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; thus the human became a living being' (Gen. 2:7). In the last clause, the word 'spirit' is in fact lacking, but at a place like Gen. 6:3, where, after referring critically to a pagan mythological theme (the daughters of humans and the sons of God), it is said that the giver of life 'will not leave his spirit in humanity forever' (Gen. 6:3). Apparently, therefore, both expressions, 'breath' and 'spirit', are in some way interchangeable, although there could be a reason why the 'spirit' is not mentioned in the second Chapter. Before we will comment on the two clauses, we will start with three introductory remarks on Barth's procedure in *Church Dogmatics* III/1 § 41.

1. Introduction

I.1 In the preface to this Volume Barth announces: 'the theological principle which I accept without a rival has made it almost compulsory that I should first present the doctrine of the work of the Creator as such in the old-fashioned form of a radical exposition of the contents of the first two chapters of the Bible' (v/ix[1]). It is remarkable, and even exceptional in the whole of the *Church Dogmatics*, that in § 41.2.3 the biblical text is not only governing for Barth in the excursuses, but also in the unfolding of the dogmatic argument of the main text (in the larger font).[2] However, it is unclear what he had in mind as examples for the alleged 'old-fashioned form' of his exposition. Rather, the classical form is that of the *Hexaemeron*, 'The work of the six days', from which genre Barth in this Volume quotes the famous and brilliant specimens of Basil (3x) and Ambrose (8x) several times. With these types of works, patristic and other premodern authors tried to prove (a real 'masterpiece' in natural theology[3]) that the Bible, besides its message of salvation, also offers a scientific view of cosmology and psychology.[4] In the psychological context then, as an extension to the information of the sixth day, when humankind was made, materials from the second Chapter of Genesis could be integrated into the discourse. But an exposition of the seventh day in Christian doctrine remained reserved for another book, i.e., the book of eschatology (on life eternal). In this respect, Barth is *not* following the old tradition, for in § 41.2 he comments on the narrative of Gen. 1:1 – 2:3 as a whole, including the day of the sabbath as its culmination-point.

I.2 In § 41.1 Barth characterizes the witnesses of these Chapters as marked by a ‘non-historical and pre-historical view of history’ (‘unhistorische und praehistorische Geschichte’, 87/80). Although he does not consider himself an expert in this field, he wishes with the category of ‘Geschichte’ to take distance from the view of these texts as *myth*, as an expression of a timeless truth in the shape of a story. With his preference for their designation as a ‘saga’, he means ‘an intuitive and poetic picture of a pre-historical reality of history which is enacted once and for all within the confines of time and space’ (88/81). This characterization underlines in Barth’s eyes ‘that the idea that the Bible declares the Word of God only when it speaks historically is one which must be abandoned, especially in the Christian Church’. In this respect, ‘both Liberalism and orthodoxy are children of the same insipid spirit’ (89/82). ‘This is in fact only a ridiculous and middle-class (“bourgeois”) habit of the modern Western mind which is supremely fantastic in its chronic lack of imaginative phantasy, and hopes to rid itself of its complexes through suppression’ (89/81; here we are reminded of Marx as well as of Freud, RRB). The fathers as well as the reformers could naively read the first Chapters in this way, [5] but for us it is a dead-end street, that has nothing to offer in the conversation of theology with contemporary natural science (vi/x). [6] This view has consequences for the understanding of the doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture. ‘The biblical creation-histories are not heaven-sent declarations of the truth itself dropped from the sky but human attestations of the revelation which has taken place in the creaturely sphere. It is in this way, and only in this way, that they declare the truth. They do this in relation to what God has given to certain men to apprehend concerning Himself, and they do it through the imagination and lips and writings of these human beings who in themselves are as fallible as others. They are not, then, an adequate, but a very inadequate medium. In respect of their content and credibility, they live wholly by their object, i.e., by the self-witness of the Holy Spirit to whom alone they owe their origin and power’ (102/93). We take note of this insight and we should not forget it in our following considerations about these stories: the Holy Spirit is using human creativity and imagination.

I.3 In his doctrine of Election Barth had defended the (in a Christocentric sense purified) supralapsarian thesis that Creation is a means to realize divine Mercy and Justice (CD II/2, 128, 144). According to Reformed theology, this ‘Gnadenwahl’ (‘Election of Grace’) expresses itself in the ‘Gnadenbund’ (Covenant of Grace). When there is only one covenant, Creation must be connected with that one covenant. And in this way Barth unfolds his well-known view, that in the first Chapter of the Book of Genesis, Creation appears as ‘the External Basis of the Covenant’ (§ 41.2), and in the second Chapter, conversely, the Covenant appears as ‘the internal Basis of Creation’ (§ 42.3). [7] The exegetical presupposition of this double approach is that these chapters offer two subsequent Creation Histories. Critical science mostly distinguished a (post-exilic) ‘Priestly’ and (perhaps going back to earlier, pre-exilic traditions) a ‘Jahwist’ one. Barth refuses to posit a direct link between the two texts and warns against attempts at harmonization (259/229). He is not convinced by the arguments in the commentary of rabbi Benno Jacob – that he consulted for his lectures in the extremely dark summer of 1942! [8] – who tries to demonstrate that Genesis 2 presupposes the first Chapter, [9] and it is particularly understandable that he not has been convinced by him (271/239). Nevertheless, my teacher Frans Breukelman denied that the second Chapter of Genesis is a second Creation

History,[10] and I cannot help to stay with his insights. Decisive in this respect is the explanation of Gen. 2:4a. Barth writes: "There is an indisputable literary connection between 1:1 and 2:4a: "These are the generations (*toledot*) of heaven and earth [when they were created, RRB]." Opinion varies whether the latter verse is a signature, i.e., a recapitulatory postscript to the whole account (Delitzsch), or whether it originally stood at the head of the whole account (Jeremias, Gunkel). What is certain is that the summary in 2:4a is subjected by 1:1 to a distinctively critical refinement. It is the works of the divine *bara'* (to create) which are the "generations".' (109/100). In this way, the verse warns against the myths of the pagan world.[11] However, as Breukelman argues, in the whole of the book of Genesis the words 'these are the generations' always function as the heading of a following part of the book.[12] Moreover, it is impossible that this would have been the original title (67/63), for the expression presupposes that heaven and earth are already known. Gen. 5:1 reads: 'this is the book of the generations of Adam' – and in the end, the main character among the sons and the daughters of Adam turns out to be Jacob / Israel! Under the heading 'these are the generations of the heavens and the earth' therefore, we must ask: what comes (makes its appearance) "out of" Heaven and Earth? – not because they have divinely productive powers in themselves (that would be the misunderstanding of the pagans), but because they were created for that purpose. And the answer appears to be: that is what the following narratives are all about: *adam* from the *adamah*: humankind in its environment.[13] As a superscription, however, Gen. 2:4a introduces the entire textual unit of 2:4 – 4:26. It doesn't fit the arrangement of this unit, to force a break between Gen. 2:25 and Gen. 3:1, as Barth does after § 41.3. In conclusion: there is only *one* Creation History in the book: 1:1-2:3. Nevertheless: Barth's construction, although faulty, must be acknowledged to be beautiful as well!

1. Genesis 1:2c, 'God's spirit was hovering over the face of the waters'

II.1. *The verse.*

After the superscription, the story begins with three clauses: a. 'The earth was a jumble and disorder (*tohu wa-bohu*)', b. 'darkness was over the face of the deep (*tehom*)', c. 'and God's spirit (*ruach elohim*) was hovering over the face of the waters' (Gen. 1:2, trans. Kessler/Deurloo).

II.2. *Barth's explanation.*

Barth starts his consideration on this second verse (111-121/101-110) with sketching a dilemma (112-4/102-4): does v. 2 speak of disorder, darkness, flood etc. 'as a primeval condition which preceded creation, and therefore a primeval reality independent of creation and distinct from God'? Or does it affirm that creation commenced with the fundamental positing of these elements as the primeval state – 'a positing not included in the work of the sixth days, but promisingly accompanied by the Spirit of God?' The first possibility would take the 'veritable mythological treasure chamber' (Gunkel) of these verses too seriously.[14] Although the text does not express the later (patristic and rabbinic) doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*, nevertheless it is clear that it wants to be in contradiction to the realities as they are meant in the myths of the gentiles. But on the

other side, also the integration of the traditional assumption of an *informitas materiae*,^[15] i.e. a 'prior creation of the world in a raw and rudimentary state' preceding the work of the six days, in the work of creation as a whole, is implausible and unacceptable. For it would undermine exactly the unparalleled character of the *bara Elohim*, of the act of Creation. Fortunately, however, Barth says, there is a 'third possibility'. 'What v. 2 offers (...) is in contradiction to the created reality of heaven and earth summarily described in v. 1 and in glaring opposition to what is later described as God's "good" creation. It is a caricature of the tellural universe. In v. 2 there is absolutely nothing as God willed and created and ordained it.' 'There is only chaos (the *abyssos* that the LXX was right to introduce [in the second clause]).' 'All expositions which overlook or weaken this antithesis, trying to find in it more friendly images like those of a world-egg or a mother-womb which bears the future, forget that the author undoubtedly knew this mythical conception but that his only possible object (...) is to contest it, to interpret and illumine it *in maiorem partem*' (114/104, slightly shortened). Actually, Barth is already here announcing his later doctrine of Nothingness ('das Nichtige'). He is reading v. 2 as a description of a chaos 'which the Creator has already rejected, negated, passed over and abandoned even before He utters His first creative Word' (III/3, 406/352).

Therefore, in the first clause with the *tohu* a wilderness, a deserted city is described, and already here 'that which is waste and empty' (in German: 'das Nichtige schlechthin'), in a combination with the *bohu*, 'the void', is rejected (114-5/104-5). And in the second clause, where the darkness is over the deep (the great mass of waters, the depth of the sea, including the ocean under the earth, perhaps reminiscent of the Babylonian *Tiamat*), this darkness should not be seen as a friend of man (Novalis), but on the contrary, it must be seen in contrast to the darkness that is as light with God (Ps. 139:12): 'God's relation to this magnitude is one of victory over darkness' (115-7/106-8). Finally, in the third clause the 'waters' do repeat the disorder and the deep of the first two clauses, but it seems that now the Spirit of the God of Israel, that broods over it, does have a relation to this monstrous realm. However, in Barth's eyes it is unlikely to see the *ruach Elohim* in such a positive way. 'It is difficult to regard it (with B. Jacob) as a mere wind which vertically agitates the water from above like the beating of a bird's wings over its nest – a wind which as a *spiritus lenis* precedes the divine '*amar* (God said) of v. 3'.^[16] Nor is this hovering and trembling bird (cf. Deut. 32:11 which speaks of an eagle hovering over its young) "brooding" over potential new life, for with that a new creation principle would have been introduced. No, what remains is only a 'reproduction of the caricature presented by the author of the state of the world prior to creation – or more precise apart from God's creation.' 'In that monstrous sphere even the Spirit of *Elohim* is condemned to the complete impotence of a bird hovering or brooding over shoreless or sterile waters.' 'This God who for His part has become a caricature would be the God of this world. How could this be the God who is seen to speak and act in v. 3ff.?' (117-9/106-8).

In conclusion: 'The only option is to consider v. 2 as a portrait, deliberately taken from myth, of the world which according to His revelation was negated, rejected, ignored and left behind in His actual creation, i.e., in the utterance of His Word.' 'God will not allow the myth to become a reality.' 'If in v. 2 judgment upon a world alienated from Him is indicated as at least a possibility, it can actually be executed only at the point in the cosmos created by

Him and in one creature. And at this one point and in this one creature God is Himself the One who is judged and suffers in the place and for the salvation and preservation of the rest of creation. This – the moment of darkness in which His own creative Word, His only begotten Son, will cry on the cross of Calvary: “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” – will be the “small moment” of His wrath (Is. 54:7) in which all that is indicated in Gen. 1:2 will become real’ (119-21/106-9).

II.3. *A first comment.*

To start with the evaluation of Barth’s explanation of Gen. 1:2, I want to stress immediately that I have serious doubts about his solution to consider the actuality that is described in this verse as a ‘caricature’ of the reality of creaturely being, which is negated, rejected and left behind by the Creator in advance. On the level of the text, we are confronted here with the enigma, why the *ruach Elohim*, the very first time it appears, should right away have to be considered as having been used in an utterly improper way, as a quality of the god of this world and not of the God of Israel. This seems an unlikely outcome of sound exegesis. On the level of the dogmatic argument, I assume there is a contradiction in the elaboration of the doctrine of Nothingness, which in CD III/1 was only in a stage of development. The pages mentioned before in CD III/3 § 50, where Barth is coming back to Gen. 1:2, equally show this contradiction. On the one hand he asserts: ‘Nothingness is that from which God separates Himself and in face of which He asserts Himself and exerts His positive will.’ ‘He says Yes, and therefore says No to that to which He has not said Yes’ (405/351). But on the other hand, as we have seen, he states about v. 2: ‘There is a reference here to the chaos which the Creator has already rejected etc. *even before He utters His first creative Word*’ (sc. of v. 3ff.; 406/352; italics mine, RRB). I would ask: is then the Nothingness an existing or a non-existing being also in abstraction from the Word of God, in which He judges it? Do some places in Scripture teach about the actuality of Nothingness, and other places about the will of God by which He separates Himself from that Nothingness? It occurs to me that Barth here has not thought through the argument to its final consequences.

In a moment, I will offer an exegesis of v. 2 as I learned it from my teachers, and which I want to develop further, in order to avoid the contradictions Karl Barth got himself entangled in. But before unfolding that exegesis, I prefer to introduce an interlocutory voice. It is the voice of Catherine Keller, who in her study *Face of the Deep. A Theology of Becoming* has an in-depth conversation with Barth exactly on his explanation of Gen. 1:2.[17] I will stress five elements of this conversation.

II.4. *Catherine Keller conversing with Barth*

II.4.1. Keller comes alongside Barth in his rejection of the two alternative readings in tradition. ‘Contrary to orthodoxy (...), Barth will not solve the problem by any return to the *ex nihilo* doctrine.’ ‘He is too faithful to the biblical text to have recourse to the classical formula.’ And its antithesis he excluded as well. ‘As does a theology of becoming: it must also reject the alternative of either a nonbiblical *ex nihilo* or a primeval reality independent of God’.[18] The presumption of *creatio ex nihilo*, on grounds of the polemic context in patristic times, ‘kept the lid on Gen. 1:2 after the second century CE. But the late nineteenth

century recovery of mythic antecedents injected a new interpretive potentiality in the study of scripture'.^[19] Furthermore, our theology has to reckon with a radically changed outcome in natural sciences, as process theology has tried most earnestly to acknowledge. In that context, it was not Barth's searching for a 'third possibility' that was wrong. However, the direction in which he sought a way out of the dilemma, 'seems to be diametrically opposed' to that of Keller.^[20]

II.4.2. The 11th Century French Jewish grammarian and commentator Rashi had argued that the first verse of the Bible is not a sentence but a dependent clause. He reads: 'When *Elohim* began to create heaven and earth – at which time the earth was *toho wabohu*, darkness was on the face of the deep and the *ruach* was moving upon the face of the waters – then God said: "Let there be light...".^[21] Rashi reads the first sentence as 'crying aloud for interpretation'. There is no chronology of Creation, Rashi 'dislodges the foundation stone of linear time'. Moreover, he enables a departure from the image of a (politically oppressive) *Chaoskampf* for exegesis.^[22] Therefore, when we try to profit from these insights in contemporary debate, a reading as that of Rashi enables us to deny a conception of creation as an absolute beginning of all things, and to develop a conception of creation as becoming, as emerging out of the deep that always already had been there.

II.4.3. Methodologically Keller approaches the biblical text through its intertextuality. That does not only refer to the layers behind the *tehom* in Gen. 1:2, such as the oceanic all-mother *Tiamat* in the Babylonian *Enuma Elish* narrative,^[23] but it means in particular 'approaching the biblical mythologoumenon through the history of its effects.'^[24] These effects are multiple, and they evoke categories that all separately do have their own technical meaning in their specific disciplinary field. In this way, Keller can simultaneously uphold connotations with elements of the *chaos theory* of some physicists – 'chaos theory does not simply map the chaos which threatens the orders of creation with randomness or dissipation, but is learning to recognize everywhere the life-sustaining and life-enhancing functions of an alternative order that had been so long mistaken for disorder'^[25] –, the platonic *khora* in its adaptation by Derrida – 'khora signifies a place "in" which everything would, at the same time, come to take place and be reflected (...); analogously, *tehom* at once opens a place of all becoming and reflects upon its "face"',^[26] as well as a 'deep-end' feminist criticism – 'still, for the most part, any natal symbolism for creation gets brusquely banished to some archaic past, some banished "before".'^[27] Of course, the range of connotations is very broad and diverse, and needs further discussion, also with respect to their mutual relationships, but the direction is similar in all these, as such mutually very diverse, fields. Time and time again, *tehom* is not referring to what has to be negated, but on the contrary to what has to be freed from its negation. In this way, Keller's solution indeed 'seems to be diametrically opposed' to the solution of Karl Barth.

II.4.4. Keller reproaches Barth – not only Barth, but with a specific aggravation particularly Barth – for his *tehomophobia*. This concept has surely been developed in analogy to *homophobia*^[28] to which it relates. For the *tehom* itself is queer, confusing, disordering and undermining. 'Phobia does not mean a simple fear, which has an object – such as real, historical threats. (..). Fear transmutes into phobia when it obsessively repeats itself, coding its dread and loathing in a symbolism that may in fact make it more difficult to face

real threats.’[29] In the text of Barth, this can be found in his ‘flood of sexual imagery’ that v. 2 evokes for him. “The gender of the bird [that is brooding] slides menacingly between mother and male. “In that monstrous sphere even the Spirit of Elohim (...) is condemned to the complete impotence of a bird hovering or brooding over shoreless and sterile waters...”.’ ‘An inadequate masculinity “flutters” above an abortive femininity.’ Barth admits unhappily that the text does seem to allude to “the ancient and widespread myth of a world-egg from which heaven and earth originally emerged”.’ ‘Any concept of a generative chaos, a spontaneous natality, must be sterilized. As to any God who demonstrates queen male or any female propensities – Barth kills both birds with a single stone.’[30]

II.4.5. *Face of the Deep* defends the proposal that the creation process has been developed out of the *tehom*, the chaos, as an undetermined, surely not safe but nevertheless open space. Through the grammatical reading of Rashi, Keller is able to play down the contribution of the often repeated *wa-yomer Elohim* in the text, because she considers this element to be like a ‘strident creator by the s/word’.[31] ‘Biblically, it (chaos) precedes any *logos* and so any *kosmos* – *bereshit*, God has not yet spoken.’[32] The role of this Word of *Elohim* has to be minimized, while the role of the passive element has to be stressed: ‘(And *Elohim* said:) *Let there be light...*’ (Gen. 1:3). ‘Let it be’: that is the highest wisdom with respect to the Creator, who must be presented to the least possible extent as a strong subject of His speaking. Instead, the *ruach* on the face of the waters ‘has provided the pulsing, folding force of a *tehom*ic theology all along. It has ever and again opened the (...) space were *tehom* could flow into language and *Elohim* (...) might listen.’[33] It is clear, that the Christian congregation in her explanation of the creation stories in the book of Genesis must reckon with the influential tendencies that are expressed in a conversation like the one between Catherine Keller and Karl Barth, which we just became acquainted with. But now we have to go back to our exegetical considerations.

II.5. *Further exegetical considerations on Genesis 1 verse 2. A proposal.*

After having discussed the exegesis of Gen. 1:2 by Karl Barth, and shortly after that by Catherine Keller, I will present my own approach, fed by the tradition in Biblical Theology in which I grew up. First of all, to admit my methodological point of departure, I like to quote Feldmeier and Spieckermann, who, although acknowledging the mythological background of this verse, assert: ‘Die Binnenlogik des Textes hat bei der Deutung unbedingten Vorrang’ (‘when interpreting the text, its internal logic has absolute priority’).[34]

II.5.1. *V. 1 as a superscription.*

As we learned, Rashi read the opening words as a dependent clause. He is right – as far as his grammatical argument is concerned, which is not his only or even decisive one –, that if it were an independent clause, one would expect the vocalization *ba-reshit* (with an article: in *the* beginning) instead of *be-resjit*. However, it is not clear what the original vocalization was (cf. the older witness John 1:1, who presupposes an article). It may be that the later rabbis had grounds to omit the article (e.g., to avoid the instrumental reading ‘with the

beginning', that could also mean 'with the wisdom' or 'with the word', that was current in the first century CE, but later could be perceived as specifically 'Christian').^[35] Moreover, content and structure argue for an understanding of Gen. 1:1 as a superscription of the whole of 1:1-2:3, that ends with a similar closing formula (in 2:3b) too: 'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth'.^[36] In v. 2, heaven is not yet there (it is made in v. 7 and receives its name in v. 8), and that also suggests not to connect the superscription – in seven words! – too directly to the beginning of the following narrative only.

II.5.2. V. 2 as a presentation of elements to be worked with.

A very illuminating proposal to understand v. 2 has been made by Odil Hannes Steck.^[37] He does not want to deny that older knowledge is presupposed by the priestly author, but he underlines that all the words of the three clauses in this verse are not meant to provide special information about the condition 'before' creation, but *to be elaborated in the exposition of the first three days later on*. That means: the elements of this verse do not describe a reality independent of the later works of Creation, nor are they to be conceived as a complex of chaotic powers that have to be overcome by *Elohim*, but they are prepared here to function in the ordering actions of *Elohim* that follow. Steck works out this thesis in the following way:

(a) The darkness of the second clause of v. 2 is transformed on the first day (v. 3-5). '*Elohim* said: let there be light' ... 'and *Elohim* separated the light from the darkness' ... 'and the darkness He called Night.' When the darkness receives a name, with that it is also transformed. A threat remains, but at the same time this threat is tempered and limited. Therefore, when Catherine Keller remarks that a certain 'demonization of the dark' could be found in P, one can object that this assertion goes rather far.^[38] As we know Karl Barth proposed to make a distinction between (absolute) Nothingness and the shadow or 'darker side' ('Schattenseite') of Creation.^[39] Calling the darkness 'Night' signifies the localization of this shadow, not making an absolute horror of it.

(b) Although the darkness has been controlled, the *tehom*, the waters of the deep remain a spatial threat to life. This is illustrated by the flood story, where *Elohim's* creation was partially undone. For this reason, on the second day (v. 6-8) *Elohim* says: 'let there be a dome in the midst of the waters'. This round hemispherical dome of the sky functions as a divider, so that in the visible space that resulted, only the waters below the dome remained. This dome receives its name: 'heaven'. But, in distinction to what is said on the other days, only one name is mentioned here. For although there remain waters 'above the heavens' – the *tehom* of v. 2, perhaps more specifically the *mabbul* or the 'flood' (J. Begerich) –, these waters do not bear a name to be given by human beings, because creatures cannot control it. Only *Elohim* Himself takes the responsibility for the encounter with this infinite ocean. 'The heavens, the heavens are YHWH's' (Ps. 115:16).

(c) The first clause of v. 2 begins with the 'earth' (this is also the last of the seven words of the preceding superscription). However, in the sequence of the first three days the earth only appears on the third day (v. 9-13). Only when the darkness has been controlled (first day), and the waters have been divided (in waters above and waters below the dome;

second day), the dry land can appear, the dry land as well as the waters below heaven can receive their names: 'earth' and 'seas' respectively, and finally the earth can bring forth vegetation, so that an environment for the creatures is established. Now Is. 45:16 can be quoted: 'He (YHWH) is *Elohim* that formed the earth and made it; He established it, He created it not as a jumble (*lo-tohu bera'ah*): He formed it to be inhabited' (also quoted by Barth, 114/103f.). In this way, after the transformation of darkness into night, and of the *tehom* first into the waters under the dome and afterwards into the seas, the transformation of the *tohu-wabohu* on the earth into a safe, firm ground as well as a land of life has also been realized.

II.5.3. *Again 'God's spirit hovering over the face of the waters'*

But the third clause of v. 2 still remains. Is there also a relationship between this clause and the following verses? On this point, O.H. Steck surprises again. In his proposal, the word *ruach* in this context offers less of the semantics of 'wind' and rather more of 'breath':^[40] not breath in the sense of life giving (for that is still impossible at this stage of the story), but in the sense of breathing – which for this reason is called 'hovering', 'trembling' – as a beginning of speech. In this way, the *ruach Elohim* prepares the *wa-yomer Elohim* of vs. 3ff. The often-quoted parallelism of Psalm 33:6 is particularly instructive here: 'By the word (*dabar*) of YHWH the heavens were made / by the breath (*ruach*) of his mouth all their host.'^[41] Certainly, the *ruach* in v. 2 is also related to the waters. Deurloo identifies a parallelism between the second and the third clause of v. 2 'darkness was *over the face of the deep* / and the spirit of Elohim was hovering *over the face of the waters*'.^[42] And he explains: already in verse 2 the transformation starts of the *tehom* into waters that no longer make creaturely life impossible, and this transformation is indicated by the presence of the *ruach*. But simultaneously, the *Spirit* of God is related to the *Word* of God that will speak in the continuation of the story. Spirit and Word as closely connected: how could it be more joyful, especially for a Reformed theologian?

II.5.4. *Verse 2 as a stylistically hidden narrative; a correction of both Barth and Keller*

Above (II.2) we saw that Barth rejected the alternative interpretations of vs. 2 as either a nonbiblical *ex nihilo* or a primeval reality independent of God, and (II.4.1.) that Catherine Keller joined him in that rejection. Both are in favor of a 'third' possibility. For Barth this verse describes a 'caricature' of God's good creation, i.e., the reality of Nothingness, for Keller, on the contrary, it sketches the creative process where, through the brooding of the spirit, all things develop out of the ambivalent potentialities of the deep. The proposal of Steck, Deurloo and others offers a way beyond all these alternatives. This is based on a more literary reading. Traditional exegesis, up to the deconstructive approach of Keller, was forced to press v. 2 into a framework of curiosity regarding questions of science and worldview, giving an answer to the question: what was the condition of things before the work of Creation began? This question was dominant in the *ex nihilo* doctrine of rabbinic and patristic literature in antiquity, but also in the 'tehomitic' theology of becoming (although there is no 'before' in that approach).^[43] Barth rejected this question, but he too isolated verse 2 from its context and therefore he took refuge in his opinion that the verse

described a non-real, caricatural, reality. Against all these voices, the Steck/Deurloo thesis says that these three clauses 'are not discursive reading – leading to speculation about a primeval pre-creation situation – but stylistically hidden narrative.' [44]

This exegetical outcome has important implications regarding the *ruach Elohim* in this verse. It must neither be conceived as 'condemned to the complete impotence of a bird hovering or brooding over shoreless or sterile water' (Barth) nor the opposite, as 'the pulsing, folding force of a tehomitic theology' (Keller). On the contrary, it is fully part of a narrative that prepares for the Word of *Elohim* to be spoken from v. 3 onwards. It is the trembling breath as the beginning of the divine speaking, and at the same time it is the power that transforms the deep into the waters, whereupon the waters will be transformed into the seas that surround the land of life under heaven.

II.6. *Finishing the conversation with Barth and with Keller*

After having drawn the main conclusion of this contribution on the first appearance of the Spirit in the Book of Genesis, we still need to conclude our conversation with Barth as well as that with Keller. As far as Barth is concerned, we identified (above, II.3) the problem that for him the *ruach Elohim*, the very first time it appears, should immediately have to be considered as used in an utterly improper way, as a quality of the God of this world and not of the God of Israel. And Keller, on the contrary, identified this thesis of Barth as an utterance of a 'tehomophobic' attitude (II.4.4). Since we now have reached our own exegetical conclusions, we can finish with some remarks in the direction of both theologians.

II.6.1. *Gen. 1:2 and Barth's doctrine of Nothingness*

Barth's explanation of v. 2 as such is an interesting first indication of the doctrine of Nothingness that he will develop in the course of his volumes on Creation in the *Church Dogmatics*. However, we asked whether this verse in particular should be appropriate for the unfolding of this doctrine. Because v. 2 is silent about the speaking of *Elohim*, we asked: 'is then the Nothingness an existing or a non-existing being also in abstraction from the Word of God?' Since we offered another explanation of this verse, we may conclude that it is not helpful to search for the actuality of Nothingness in it, because apparently it has the narrative function of preparing the reader for the hearing of the Word of *Elohim* in the description of the first three days (vss. 3-13). That does not mean that the reality of Nothingness cannot be found in the 'song of the seven days' as a whole. On the contrary, the description of the second day presents this theme in a most desirable way. We saw that here the 'dome in the midst of the waters' that receives the name 'heaven', is a divider between a visible (and later on: a livable) sphere below and the waters 'above the heaven' as an infinite ocean for the encounter with which only *Elohim* takes responsibility. Here can be found a confrontation with the reality of Nothingness that is fully developed from the point of view of the Will and the Word of God, as Barth desires it in CD III/3. Actually, Barth identifies this very well in his explanation of vss. 6-9 (148-158/133-141, e.g. 155/137 about 'the metaphysical danger'). That should have been enough. In his explanation of v. 2 this allusion was inconsistent and needless.

II.6.2. Some more comments on Catherine Keller

Keller suspects any theory of Nothingness, be it that of the author P or that of Barth as his interpreter. For her such a doctrine is an expression of an incapacity to cope with the ambivalence of the chaotic ('tehomitic') background of reality, and of a – 'hypermasculine'[45] – inclination to meet all threats with containment by establishing (divine) order. I don't want to neglect such a 'hermeneutics of suspicion', for we need it. But I'm not convinced by her alternative proposals, which are so far removed from 'the internal logic of the (biblical) text' (see above, Spieckermann). As an indication of my hesitations, I confine myself to formulate three questions. (a) Is it true that the language of Nothingness, Nihilism, etc., is only a construction, an ideological framing of reality, invented by masculine thinkers from Nietzsche to Barth? Can you really neglect the 'metaphysical danger' as an object of serious fear on the part of human beings? Is 'tehomophobia' really a phobia, a disease, a misunderstanding of the actual state of being? Do you take seriously all those people who are afflicted with such an alleged phobia, sometimes up to the boundaries of madness? It is my feeling, that Barth is honest in acknowledging the actuality of the threat of what he calls Nothingness, and at the same time is leaving the confrontation with this actuality of the non-being only to God, because its weight is too heavy to be borne by creaturely beings. (b) Connected with that last remark is the question, whether a complex as Gen. 1:1-2:3 should only be the expression of the need to control the ideological field by a caste of priests by way of a logocentric ordering narrative? Do not such texts bear witness to an astonishment that the God of Israel is able to speak and act in such an unexpected otherness, compared with the given world-views? And (c) Is it true that such a phenomenon as 'queerness', undermining repressive order, can only be found in the ambivalent deep of *tehom*?[46] We started with Barth's hermeneutical approach of the first chapters of Genesis (above, I.2): 'God has given to certain human beings to apprehend concerning Himself and they (the creation stories) do it through the imagination and lips and writings of these human beings'; they 'live wholly by their object, i.e., by the self-witness of the Holy Spirit.' Couldn't the Holy Spirit, who uses imagination and creativity, in this way pre-eminently stimulate queerness?

1. Gen. 2:7bc: 'YHWH Elohim ... breathed into his nostrils the breath of life / thus the human became a living being'

III.1. As we mentioned above (I.3), Barth is speaking about a 'second Creation story' in Genesis 2. Indeed, there are features here of a new telling of the Creation of a human being. However, it is better to consider the complex under the heading 'these are the generations of the heavens and the earth' (Gen. 2:4a) as a story in which, given the creation of heaven and earth, *adam* on the *adamah* (humankind in its environment) appears before God's face (cf. 3:8; 4:5-6). The short sequence 2:4b-7 has an introductory character that is followed by the stories about the man and his women, human beings that want to be like God (2:8-3:24) and thereafter about the man and his brother, about human being that wants to be without brothers and sisters (4:1-24), ending with a short remark (4:25-26) on the proclamation of the Name of the God of Israel – that in the whole of this complex is connected with the general name of the Godhead in the exceptional combination YHWH Elohim – as a Name

that is decisive in what is to be told in the following ‘book of the generations of Adam, human being’ (5:1-50:26).[47]

III.2. ‘The day when YHWH Elohim made Earth and Heaven’ – in that (unusual) order, for now the story will deal with the *earth* – initiates the day of man (2:4b.7).[48] A long interim sentence – not yet, not yet...’ (2:5ab), ‘not, not...’ (2:5cd) – announces what is necessary for the earth to become human abode. Rightly Barth stresses in his explanation of this sequence (265-283/234-249, esp. 273f./241f) the agricultural character of these passages, which presuppose the conditions of the land of Canaan.[49] The earth cannot be a field (*adamah*), when the human (*adam*) is not present to work the field (2:5d). Nevertheless, the story wants to stipulate that the field became suited to be cultivated before the human being appeared. This is narrated in a subtle and indirect way by telling of an *ed* (a wordplay on *adamah* and *adam* and untranslatable; ‘a mist’ or ‘moisture’?) that in a wondrous way ‘drenched the surface of the field’ (2:6), as a parable of what YHWH Elohim will do for humankind.[50] And then follows the more explicit miracle: ‘YHWH Elohim formed the man (*adam*), dust of the field (*adamah*) / He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; / thus the human became a living being’ (2:7abc).

III.3. Barth starts his explanation of this verse with three ‘comparative observations’ (275f./243f.), which we will refer to and when necessary discuss now.

III.3.1. ‘On tablet six of the epic *Enuma Elish*[51] there is a presentation of the same process which tells us that man is formed from the blood of a slaughtered deity in accordance with the needs of other gods. But in this saga there is no question of a similar, involuntary self-emptying of deity and consequent divinity or divine likeness of man.’ (...) Even regarding the life of the body, his soul, he is not at all “akin to God” or “an emanation of the divine breath” (Gunkel).[52] He was quickened into his own existence by the breath of God. He breathes as God breathes into him. What is he, or has he, which he has not received, and in which, since he was created by Him, he is not distinct from Him?’.

III.3.2. ‘In contrast to the Greek conception of man, the creation of man as it is described here does not signify that a divine or God-like being had found a prison in an inadequate physical organism, or a spiritual power a material veil, or a holy internal reality a less holy or unholy external. By the same hand and breath of God man is both earthly and alive, body and soul, visible and invisible, internal and external.’ With these sentences, Barth abandons a broad consensus in the history of Christian Doctrine. We can refer to Thomas Aquinas, who in the first part of his theological *Summa*, in the questions 50-64, discusses ‘the purely spiritual creature which in Holy Scripture is called angel’, then in the questions 65-74 ‘the creature wholly corporeal’, and finally in the questions 75-102 ‘the composite creature, corporeal and spiritual, which is man’.[53] Or to John Calvin, who in his *Institutes* I.15.2 states: ‘Moreover, there can be no question (!) that man consists of a body and a soul; meaning by soul, an immortal though created essence, which is the nobler part’ (Calvin was a Platonist in a Christian way).[54] Barth had held this traditional view himself in his *Göttingen Dogmatics* (1925),[55] but apparently he had said farewell to it in the 1940s. To be honest, he cannot be considered to be consistent with that in this text of § 41.3. An example of this inconsistency is his maintaining the translation of 2:7a as it goes back on

Saint Jerome: 'And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground' (275/242).[56] In such a historicizing reading, the story, as in many mythical texts, tells that God makes man *out of* dust, as a potter who works with clay. However, the Hebrew can be read as follows: 'YHWH formed the man, dust of the field'.[57] Then, dust is not the material from which the human is made and that which survives his death (his material remains); rather, it is an aspect of being human. Read in this way, the clause doesn't describe the origin of man, but his identity. Cf. the sentences 'Dust you are, and into dust shall you return' (3:19) or 'He (the Lord) knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust' (Ps. 103:14; cf. Barth 278/245). Because the Latin doesn't have an 'accusative of material'[58] at its disposal, Jerome had used the (faulty) expression '*de limo terrae*' in his Vulgate (to be consistent with his translation of 3:19 he would have used: *de pulvere*) of the old Latin translation. With that the 'Greek dualism' also dominates Bible translation.[59] To be clear: if the first clause of the verse does not have to be read as describing an origin, but an identity or a destiny, the same is true for the following double clause. From one point of view, humanity in its identity totally is 'dust', from the other point of view humanity, seen in its destiny, totally is 'living being'.

III.3.3. In his third observation, Barth characterizes v. 7 as a 'picture indirectly but decisively determined by the prophets of Israel'. 'Prophetic' here is used in the rather worn sense of 'foreseeing': the sentence is already a prelude to the following history of fall and salvation (276f./243f.). Perhaps it would be more fitting to connect this notion to the understanding elsewhere in the Old Testament, but even more in Judaism and early Christianity, that there exists a special connection between the Spirit (breath) of God and the gift of prophetic speaking (e.g. Numbers 11:29-31: 'But Moses replied, "(...) I wish that all the Lord's people were prophets and that the Lord would put his Spirit (*ruach*) on them!" (...) Now a wind (*ruach!*) went out from the Lord and drove quail in from the sea...').[60] Indeed, Barth also remarks, God, in establishing his history of salvation, will draw near to the people of his covenant, by giving it a 'prophetic spirit' (281/247). Would it be improper to think in this direction already in Gen. 2:7?

III.4. Now we can proceed to discuss Barth's explanation of v. 7bc. (278ff./245ff.). 'God's breath gives to the man formed of dust' (as we saw: 'to the human who *is* dust' would have been preferable, RRB) 'that what he does not possess and cannot give himself as such: the stability and consistence which preserves him from disintegration into his constitutive elements'. That the human became a 'living being', Barth adds, he shares with the other creatures, as, e.g., the animals (Gen. 6:17, 7:15: 'all flesh, wherein is the breath (*ruach*) of life'; also 7:22). God's breath means a fulfilment of the hope for humanity. But 'it has to be noted that this hope and this fulfilment, because it depends on God's free act and because God is the Lord of life and death, is itself the threat to man and beast.' In this sense, Ezek. 37 'is the most powerful commentary on Gen. 2:7' (281f./248f.). In the valley full of dry bones, 'the Lord said unto me: Prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind (*ruach*): (...) Come from the four winds (*ruchot*), o breath (*ruach*), and breathe upon these slain that they may live' (v. 9). 'That this God-given breath as the vital principle of the soul and body of man can and will be withdrawn; that in respect of both soul and body man is subject to death and has no immortality; but that even when this breath is taken from him it does not vanish, or cease to be the living and quickening Spirit (...) – these are the lessons which we have to learn

from Ezek. 37, as a commentary from salvation history, in our understanding of the anthropology of Gen. 2.' In this perspective, we can say, already Gen. 2:7 speaks about life out of death, or perhaps it is better to say: about the miracle of life in the midst of death.[61]

III.5. In the first sentences of this contribution I wrote: 'both expressions "breath" and "spirit" are in a certain way exchangeable, although there could be a reason why the "spirit" is not yet mentioned in the second Chapter'.[62] Now we can say that indeed the expression 'breath of life' (*nishmat chayim*) elsewhere can be replaced by Spirit (*ruach*). In connection with this Barth quotes Ps. 104:30: 'Thou sends forth thy Spirit, they are created' and Job 33:4 'The Spirit (*ruach*) of God has made me / and the breath (*nishmat*) of the Almighty has given me life' (279/246).[63] We can add Is. 42:5: 'He gives breath (*nishmat*) unto the people upon it (the earth) / and spirit (*ruach*) to them that walk therein.'[64] I am not able to discover a special reason why the 'spirit' could not have been mentioned in v. 7, apart from the beautiful alliteration *wyppch b'ppyw* ('and He breathed into his nostrils'), [65] which seems to have been enough for the authors.

III.6. In Barth's last paragraph on v. 7 he remarks: 'there can be no simple equation of *nishmat chayim* ('breath of life') or the *ruach* of the Old Testament with the *pneuma hagion* of the New' (282f./249). We set aside this remark in our context, to discuss it in different ways on other occasions of our consultation.[66] For the time being, it is, e.g., not yet clear to me, why Paul in 1 Cor. 15:45 contrasts the first Adam, who was made a living soul, with the last Adam as a quickening spirit. In my perception, the second aspect already has been implied in the first, for receiving the divine breathing – in analogy to the correspondence of the divine breath or Spirit with the divine Word in Gen. 1.2-3! – also implies the enabling of humanity to speak with a (prophetic) voice. We can ask: is the messianic human being an addendum to the anthropology of 'the *toledot* of the heaven and of the earth' (Gen. 2:4a), or is it its hidden mystery from the beginning?

[1] This abbreviation means: *Kirchliche Dogmatik III/1* (1945), v and *Church Dogmatics III/1* (1958), ix.

[2] Cf. Otto Bächli, *Das Alte Testament in der Kirchlichen Dogmatik von Karl Barth*, Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag 1987, (225-265)227.

[3] Adolf Harnack, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte* II, ³Freiburg und Leipzig: J.C.B. Mohr 1894, 61. In places like 123/111 Barth uses the category 'work of the six days' (cf. Ex. 20:11) as an indication of the expression *wa-yo'mer Elohim* in the description of these days in Genesis 1, i.e., of those days Elohim actually was working.

[4] Thus Calvin hermeneutically distinguishes a *general doctrine of Scripture*, by which God is known as Creator and Ruler of the world (*Institutes* 1559: I.2.1.) from a *proper doctrine of faith* (in Scripture), by which God is known as Redeemer (I.6.1-2).

[5] Cf. e.g., the *Argumentum* of John Calvin's Commentary on the book of Genesis, where he asks how Moses (as the author) could have known about of the Word of Creation, of which he could not have been an eye-witness. CO 23, 5ff.

[6] In the Netherlands, a heated discussion has taken place based on the recent study of Gijsbert van den Brink, *En de aarde bracht voort. Christelijk geloof en evolutie*, Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum 2017 (cf. *Reformed Theology & Evolutionary Theory*, forthcoming with Grand Rapids Mi.: Eerdmans). Unfortunately, there is a striking lack of interest in the biblical witness *in its textual appearance* in this study. That the primary discipline for theology is *grammar* (as Luther as well as Rosenzweig knew) seems to have been largely forgotten here. With regard to Barth, his suggestion of a 'pre-historical view of history' is connected with approaches from another origin that substantially differ from it (Ibid., 218). Van den Brink misses the remark in CD IV/1, 566/508 on the 'incomparable' character of the Adam-saga.

[7] Scholastically thought, *causa interna* is an impossible category in this connection.

[8] E. Busch, *Unter dem Bogen des einen Bundes. Karl Barth und die Juden 1933-1945*, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1996, 504.

[9] B. Jacob, *Das erste Buch der Tora. Genesis*, Berlin: Schocken 1934, 81 (ET: *First Book of the Bible*, New Jersey: KTAV 1974, 16; heavily abridged). Similar objections can be made with regard to the related argument of Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary of the Book of Genesis, Part One: from Adam to Noah*, Jerusalem: Magness Press, the Hebrew University 1964, e.g. 88f., 92, 108, 128.

[10] Frans Breukelman, *Bijbelse Theologie I,3. Ouvertures van Genesis*, Kampen: Kok 2010 (posthumously edited), 161-169. Cf. B. Jacob (ref. 9), 73 (ET 15)

[11] In a similar way Martin Buber says in his 'Verdeutschung': 'Dies sind die Zeugungen des Himmels und der Erde: ihr Erschaffensein' ('these are the generations of heaven and earth: their being created'. M. Buber, *The Prophetic Faith*, New York: Macmillan 1949, 39 and 90). Everett Fox, *In the Beginning*, New York: Schocken Books 1983, 10: 'These are the begettings of the heavens and the earth: their being created' (as a superscript; 'begetting' is preferable above 'generations', but obsolete).

[12] The main superscriptions (after Gen. 2:4a) are: Gen. 5:1 – generations of Adam; 11:27 – generations of Terah (the history of Abraham and Sarah); 25:19 – generations of Isaac (Jacob and Esau); 37:2 – generations of Jacob (Judah, Joseph and the others). See further 6:9, 10:1, 11:10, 25:12, 36:1, 36:9.

[13] Martin Kessler & Karel Deurloo, *A Commentary on Genesis. The Book of Beginnings*, with a Foreword by Walter Brueggemann, New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press 2004, 40f.

[14] Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1922, 103. Gunkel first comments on 'Die Urgeschichte bei J.', and afterwards on 'Die Urgeschichte bei P.'

[15] Augustine, *Confessiones* XII.4.

[16] B. Jacob (ref. 9), 29 (the remark is absent in the ET, 2). Although Jacob's view on the wind can be disputed, the connection of it with God subsequently speaking is interesting. See below, II.5.3.

[17] Catherine Keller, *Face of the Deep. A Theology of Becoming*, London / New York: Routledge 2003, especially 84-99. Cf. Rick Benjamins, *Catherine Keller's constructieve theologie*, Vught: Skandalon 2017, 62-91.

[18] Keller, *Ibid.*, 86.

[19] Keller, *Ibid.*, 103.

[20] Keller, *Ibid.*, 86.

[21] Keller, *Ibid.*, 9.114f.

[22] Cf. Hermann Gunkel *Creation and Chaos in the Primeval Era and the Eschaton. A Religio-historical Study of Genesis 1 and Revelation 12*, Grand Rapids Mi.: Eerdmans 2006 (the original book in German appeared in 1895).

[23] Keller, *Ibid.*, 28f. Cf. also recently Marjo C.A. Korpel and Johannes C. de Moor, *Adam, Eve and the Devil: a New Beginning*, Sheffield: Phoenix Press 2014, 117f.: 'in Ugarit the equivalent of the Hebrew *tehom* is masculine *thm*, and feminine *thmt*. Both designate the primordial Flood, but in Ugarit *sjmm wthm* "Heaven and Flood" are deities' (cf. 8, 52, 259 etc.), with the comment: 'The priestly writer studiously avoids anything which might hint at such a divine status of these cosmic entities.'

[24] Keller, *Ibid.*, 109.

[25] Keller, *Ibid.*, 28.

[26] Keller, *Ibid.*, 13.

[27] Keller, *Ibid.*, 223.

[28] Keller, *Ibid.*, 61f.

[29] Keller, *Ibid.*, 26.

[30] Keller, *Ibid.*, 94.

[31] Keller, *Ibid.*, 114.

[32] Keller. *Ibid.*, 165.

[33] Keller (ref. 17), 232.

[34] Reinhard Feldmeier & Hermann Spieckermann, *Der Gott der Lebendigen. Eine biblische Gotteslehre*, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2011, 207n.16.

[35] For this and the following argument see K.A. Deurloo & R. Zuurmond, "In den beginne" en "De Adem Gods" (Genesis 1:1,2)', *Amsterdamse Cahiers voor Exegese en Bijbelse Theologie* 7 (1986), 9-24.

[36] This reason can already be found in the commentary of Von Rad (1949).

[37] Odil Hannes Steck, *Der Schöpfungsbericht der Priesterschrift*. Studien zur literarkritischen und überlieferungsgeschichtlichen Problematik von Genesis 1,1 – 2, 4a (FRLANT 115), Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1975, 223-239.

[38] Keller (ref. 17), 200.

[39] CD III/1 426/372; CD III/3, 334/295.

[40] Steck (ref. 37), 234-7. Steck refers to an earlier suggestion of N.H. Ridderbos, 'Genesis 1, 1 und 2, OTS 12 (1958), (214-260)245.

[41] On the eve of the first Council of Constantinople 381, this verse with its parallelism of Word and Spirit was fundamental for Basil the Great in the development of his thoughts on the Holy Trinity. See Basil, *De Spiritu Sancto* XVI.38.

[42] Deurloo & Zuurmond (ref. 35), 19 (graphically illustrated); Kessler & Deurloo (ref. 13), 19.

[43] Keller (ref. 17), 224f., refers to the end of the first main part of the *Star of Redemption* by Franz Rosenzweig, where Rosenzweig, in the tradition of Schelling, speaks of 'die Geburt aus dem Grunde' (ET: 'the birth from the depth'), as a silent remembrance of the transition from Genesis 1 v. 2 to v. 3. However, in that context, we must reckon with the deconstructive character of Part I of the *Star* vis-à-vis the systematic constructions that pagan philosophers have made out of the elements that 'precede' Creation, Revelation and Redemption.

[44] Kessler & Deurloo (ref. 13), 18.

[45] Keller (ref. 17), 88.

[46] Conversely, one can ask whether there might also exist a defense of a tehomic approach that is characterized by a very masculine attitude. Spinoza, who advocated the interconnectedness of all things and who took distance from any divine reality that was separated from the world, gives evidence of a *horror vacui* that has phobic features too; e.g., in his denial of nothingness in *Ethics* I prop. 11, the third proof.

[47] Breukelman (ref. 10), 170-229.

[48] Barth 272/240 remarks: 'It (this second creation saga), too, is recounting history in the temporal sequence of events, and Jacob's attempt to explain this away is unconvincing', but he neglects to tell how Jacob is doing this 'explaining away'. Actually, Jacob (ref. 8, 71; ET 14) combines Gen. 2:4b with the superscription v. 4a: 'These are the descendants of the heavens and the earth after their creation, after the Lord God made the earth and the heavens'. V. 5 then makes a new beginning. This is indeed a very unlikely syntactical construction.

[49] 277/244: 'Adam thus means the man of the earth or field or soil, the husbandman'.

[50] Kessler & Deurloo (ref. 13), 41ff.

[51] En. el. (ed. Lambert 2013) VI.29-34.

[52] Gunkel (ref. 14), 6.

[53] See the summary at the beginning of S.Th. I q. 50: 'Post haec considerandum est de distinctione corporalis et spiritualis creaturae. Et primo, de creatura pure spirituali, quae in Scriptura sacra Angelus nominatur; secundo, de creatura pure corporali; tertio, de creatura composita ex corporali et spirituali, quae est homo.'

[54] 'Porro hominem constare anima et corpore, extra controversiam esse debet; atque animae nomine essentiam immortalem, creatam tamen intelligo, quae nobilior eius pars est'.

[55] See Rinse H. Reeling Brouwer, *Karl Barth and Post-Reformation Orthodoxy*, Farnham UK: Ashgate 2015, 218 and the references given there.

[56] In German: 'Da bildete Gott der Herr (better would be: „der Herr, Gott“, RRB) den Menschen aus Staub von der Erde (better would be: Staub vom Acker, RRB)'.

[57] P. Paul Joüon S.J., *Grammaire de l'Hebreu biblique*, par. 125f. says: if a nominal clause like, e.g., 'the human (is) dust', is transformed into a verbal clause with a verb like 'to make', the subject becomes the object and the predicate becomes a second object, as in 'he formed the human (who) is dust'; cf. Breukelman (ref. 10), 267. Buber: 'und ER, Gott, bildete den Menschen, Staub vom Acker'.

[58] Cf. Cassuto (ref. 8), 106.

[59] Breukelman, (ref. 10), 'Der locus classicus der biblischen Anthropologie in der Verdeutschung Martin Bubers' (a contribution in the Festschrift for K.H. Miskotte, 1961), 264-276

[60] Cf. the Constantinopolitan Creed: '(The Spirit) Who spoke through the prophets'.

[61] Kessler & Deurloo (ref. 13), 43.

[62] B. Jacob (ref. 8), 85 is of the opinion that the word *ruach* has been (intentionally) avoided here (the remark is absent in the ET).

[63] The parallel in Eccl. 3:21 seems to be less instructive, for this verse could actually be an expression of disbelief in the special relationship between God and the human spirit. Cf. Feldmeier & Spieckermann (ref. 34), 209n.26.

[64] In the synagogue this verse belongs to the Haftara Bereshit (after Gen. 1:1-6:8 has been read).

[65] Karel Deurloo, *De mens als raadsel en geheim. Verhalende antropologie in Genesis 2-4*, Baarn 1988, 34.

[66] Especially in discussing CD III/2 § 46.2 'The Spirit as Basis of Soul and Body'.