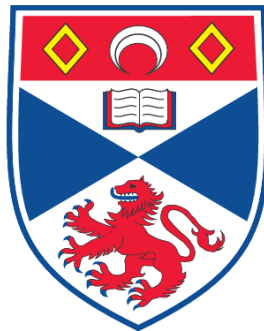


**FREEDOM TO OBEY : THE OBEDIENCE OF CHRIST AS THE
REFLECTION OF THE OBEDIENCE OF THE SON IN KARL
BARTH'S CHURCH DOGMATICS**

Shirley H. Martin

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
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**FREEDOM TO OBEY:
THE OBEDIENCE OF CHRIST AS THE REFLECTION OF THE
OBEDIENCE OF THE SON IN KARL BARTH'S CHURCH
DOGMATICS**

**Submitted by Shirley H. Martin
PhD (Systematic Theology)
December 2007
Faculty of Divinity
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I, Shirley Helen Martin, hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately 100,000 words in length, has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

17th December 2007

I was admitted as a research student in March 2006 and as a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in March 2006; the higher study for which this is a record was carried out in the University of St. Andrews between 2006 and 2007.

17th of December 2007

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ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to show that Barth understands the obedience of Christ to be the reflection of the eternal obedience of the Son. The Son's obedience as man in the economy (his obedience to the Father in the unity of the Spirit) mirrors his obedience to the Father in the unity of the Spirit in the triune life of God. The obedience of the Son as man corresponds [entspricht] to who he is as the eternal obedient Son. Barth's I/1 doctrine of the Trinity, as explicated in sections 8-12, argues that God's triune existence is one of ordered relationships between the three modes of being with a direction (*telos*) of determination, from the ruling Father to the obedient Son in the unity of the Spirit, which is irreversible. Barth's explicit reference to the *filioque* clause in his IV/2 portrayal of the Spirit as the power of God's uniting love, who along with the Father and Son determines the human existence of the Son as the event of his exaltation to obedience as a reflection of the Son's humiliation in obedience, links Barth's doctrine of reconciliation to his I/1 doctrine of the Trinity. This thesis argues that this thread of continuity between the *filioque* clause as defended by Barth in I/1 and used explicitly in volume IV, can be traced through II/1, II/2 and III/2 albeit as an underlying construct; implicit rather than overt. Whilst Barth revises his doctrine of election in volume II, we argue that election is the triune event of reflection and not, as argued by Bruce McCormack, the event in which God elects triunity. The triune God elects to reflect himself in himself by himself in positing in the Son the ontological distinctness of his human existence in which all mankind is enclosed and which, moment by moment, is determined by the triune God as the event of the *communicatio gratiarum*, the grace of election. The incarnate Son's soul and body is exalted to freedom in obedience as a reflection of the Son's freely obedient divine existence. This aspect of Barth's theology, which so mystifies Rowan Williams and Paul Molnar, is shown to be articulated by Barth using a concept of 'correspondence' [Entsprechung]. Barth's election revision does not entail a break with his I/1 doctrine of the Trinity but the asymmetrical structure of I/1's Trinity remains intact and the *filioque* clause remains in place. Barth articulates the Holy Spirit's action *ad extra*, in maintaining the incarnate Son in unity to the Father, to correspond to his uniting action *ad intra*. As the power of God's uniting love, the Holy Spirit is the triune mode who unites the ruling Father and obedient Son in peace and harmony.

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Advent 2007

To God the Father, Spirit, Son,
One undivided, blessed Three,
Let glory, honour, worship, praise
From man and all creation rise.

Malling Abbey Office, Lauds

For Colin

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>CD</i>	Barth, Karl, <i>Church Dogmatics</i> , ed., Bromiley, G.W., and Torrance, T.F., (Edinburgh, T & T Clark, 1956-74)
<i>KD</i>	Barth, Karl, <i>Die Kirchliche Dogmatik</i> (Evangelischer Verlag ag. Zollikon – Zurich, 1932-1970)
<i>HCKBCD</i>	Jones, Paul D., <i>The Humanity of Christ in Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics</i> , unpublished PhD, Harvard (2000)
<i>GBliB</i>	Juengel, Eberhard, <i>God's Being is in Becoming</i> , trans., Webster, John (Michigan, Eerdmans, 2001)
<i>GJC</i>	Kasper, Walter, <i>The God of Jesus Christ</i> (London, SCM, 1984)
<i>KBCRDT</i>	McCormack, Bruce, <i>Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology: its Genesis and development 1909-1936</i> (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995)
<i>BgC</i>	McCormack, Bruce, 'Barth's grundsatzlicher Chalcedonismus?', <i>Zeitschrift fuer dialektische Theologie</i> , 18 (2002), 138-173
<i>DFDIT</i>	Molnar, Paul D., <i>Divine Freedom and the Doctrine of the Immanent Trinity: In Dialogue with Karl Barth and Contemporary Theology</i> (Edinburgh, T& T Clark, 2002)
<i>CFGP</i>	Wenderbourg, Dorothea, 'From the Cappadocian Fathers to Gregory Palamas: the Defeat of Trinitarian Theology', <i>Studia Patristica</i> , 17, 1 (1982), 194-219
<i>KBSTM</i>	Williams, Rowan, 'Barth on the Triune God', <i>Karl Barth – Studies of his Theological Methods</i> , ed., Sykes, S. W. (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1979), 147-193

I

INTRODUCTION

i) Introduction

This thesis argues that Barth sees the triune God as the ground of the decision of election to turn outwards towards that which is posited as ontologically distinct by making space within himself in the Son (a spatial metaphor) in which he, the triune God, is reflected albeit only the Son assuming a human existence. The event of election is the beginning of all God's ways and works *ad extra*, reflecting who he is *ad intra*. The economic Trinity corresponds to the immanent and the direction of this correspondence is irreversible. It is particularly in the first two part volumes of volume four, although references to this can be found in less well rounded forms from volume II/2, that this construct is made explicit in Barth's assertion that obedience is to be found in God in the eternal obedience of the Son to the ruling Father in the Spirit of peace and harmony. This eternally obedient Son, in the event of election, elects humiliation as an act of obedience to the Father in the peace of the Spirit. This act *ad intra* is reflected *ad extra* in the exaltation of the Son's human existence to obedience. That Barth's doctrine of the Trinity in volume four includes a superior and subordinate, a *prius* and *posterior* is no late decision for in volume I/1 Barth's doctrine of the Trinity is structured asymmetrically as can be seen in Barth's argument for adhering to the *filioque* clause where he discusses the relationships of the Father, Son and uniting Spirit as ordered and teleological. It is our opinion that Barth's revised doctrine of election is consistent with his I/1 doctrine of the Trinity as being the event in which the triune God elects to reflect himself *ad extra* by exalting to obedience a human existence assumed by the Son which corresponds to the Son's obedient existence to the Father *ad intra*. Breathed from the ruling Father and obedient Son the Spirit unites them in peace and harmony and continues this act *ad extra* in maintaining the unity of the incarnate Son to the Father as an event that reflects his action *ad intra*. The asymmetrically ordered life of God *ad intra* is reflected *ad extra* for this is who God is. Barth is emphatic in his assertion that the

living God has movement and otherness within himself and in gathering and enclosing that which he creates as ontologically distinct, determining it and maintaining it moment by moment in relationship to himself, he is not doing anything alien to who he is. Barth relocates the doctrine of election in the doctrine of God for it is an event in which the triune God elects to reflect himself in himself by himself. Whilst the event of election as articulated in volume II is different to the event of election as found in Barth's thinking prior to Maury's inspiration, God by the Spirit of 'Revealedness' determining particular people as the moment of election, Barth has in place a pneumatology which works with his revised doctrine of election in his articulation of the *filioque* clause which expresses the Spirit as the unity of the Father and Son *ad extra* as that which corresponds to and is grounded by his uniting action *ad intra*.¹ Barth carries the pneumatology of the *filioque* clause into his revised doctrine of election (the obedient Son elects to humiliate himself to human estate in 'the Spirit of this act of obedience' who unites him in love to the Father) and volumes III/2, IV/1 and IV/2 with the Spirit as the divine agent who unites Christ and all enclosed in him, ontologically and epistemologically, to the Father.

What then of the Spirit as the agent of 'Revealedness'? In II/1, after the impact of Maury, the Spirit is seen as the *Seinsweise* in whom the Father and Son know one another; his uniting work *ad intra* being an event of communion and fellowship in which the Father and Son indwell one another perichoretically and in this sense Barth gives the Spirit's epistemic action *ad extra*, as breathed by the incarnate Son upon the disciples for example, a basis *ad intra* which fits with his concern to understand the correspondence between the economic and immanent Trinity. Barth does not limit the Spirit to simply epistemic action but talks of the Spirit's work as gathering, sending, etc. all of which stress his action of uniting the

¹ Gunton notes of Barth, albeit unconsciously inverting Barth's rule of correspondence, that 'if God the Spirit performs a distinctive role in the economy of salvation, we are entitled to infer that the Spirit's eternal being in some way corresponds to his historic act' but, in agreement with a point made by Smail, argues that Barth defined the function of the Spirit *ad extra* 'so narrowly – almost wholly Christologically' that what was maintained was 'an effective *ontological* subordination of the Spirit to the Son' which 'militates against an identification of the Spirit's specific *persona*' (emphasis in text). If, however, Barth argues for obedience *in* God in the Son being eternally the Son of obedience and subordinate to the ruling Father, then there is in Barth's account an ontological subordination of the Son to the Father but this does not thereby entail a negation of the Son's specific *persona*, on the contrary it distinguishes him and equally in Barth's account the Spirit is distinguished in his being the Spirit of the Father and Son. For Barth, the Spirit's historical act corresponds to his eternal being. Gunton, Colin E., *Theology Through the Theologians* (Edinburgh, T & T Clark, 1996), 106.

Christian community to the Father in the Son as well as uniting Christians one to another. Barth's concept of the Spirit as the divine mode who unites offers a wide umbrella under which to express the Spirit's action and in this sense although Barth articulates the Spirit as 'Revealedness' in I/1, understandable since he is exploring the doctrine of revelation, this too is encapsulated by the concept of uniting to which it corresponds *ad intra*.

It remains intriguing that very little has been written about Barth's doctrine of the obedience of the Son as obedience *in* God, as a perfection of God, as any search for articles or references will show and this is possibly to do with the fact that Barth's references to this come late in his *Dogmatics* with there being no coverage of this in his discussion of the divine perfections in II/1. Even in IV/1 Barth does not explicitly talk of obedience as a perfection but obliquely even though his discussion of the obedience of the Son as obedience in God is resolutely in this category.² The 'obedience of the Son' makes its first explicit appearance in the very heart of Barth's doctrine of election in II/2, although stirrings of it are evident in II/1, and thereafter remains integral to his theology of election as the divine event of reflection in which the triune God establishes within himself in the Son the mirrored space in which creation, whose core is Christ, is and to which the Son descends as the covenant partner of the Father who remains united to him in the Spirit.³ Prior to the explicit reference to the obedience of the Son in II/2, there is in Barth's discussion of the perfection of constancy in II/1 (490-522) a brief outline, perhaps anticipating what was to come in volume four, of the humility of God as a self-emptying which is the true manifestation of the divine glory; a condescension in free love which is 'the one true God Himself' (517f.). The obedience of Christ to death has 'nothing to do with a surrender or loss of His deity' nor is 'in self-contradiction or with any alteration or

² IV/1, 201ff, particularly 209 where the reference to obedience as a perfection is more overt.

³ Dennis Ngien sees Luther holding to 'Christ's humiliation in history' as 'mirrored in God's eternal relation of the Son's obedience to the Father' and whilst there is recognition of Barth's stance on this matter it is relayed via Juengel's comments and so misses the irreversibility of the direction of correspondence between obedience *ad extra* as mirroring that *ad intra* which Ngien implies is held by Luther, 405f.. It is not inconceivable, albeit not persuasively argued by Ngien, that Barth gleaned his own understanding of obedience in God from Luther. In his 1956 essay 'The Humanity of God' Barth refers to Luther's concept of Christ as the "mirror of the fatherly heart of God". Barth, Karl, *The Humanity of God*, trans., Thomas, John and Wieser, Thomas (Richmond, John Knox Press, 1961) 51. Ngien, Dennis, 'Reaping the Right Fruits: Luther's Meditation on the 'Earnest Mirror, Christ'' in *International Journal of Systematic Theology*, 8, 4 (2006) 382-410. Another possible source is P.T. Forsyth. See 'The Divine self-Emptying', *God the Holy Father* (1897, reprint, London, Independent Press, 1957).

diminution of His divine being' but 'far from being contrary to the nature of God, it is of His essence to possess the freedom to be capable of this self-offering':

It is not the case, then, that His self-emptying and self-humiliation compromises His deity. The case is rather that they reveal His true divinity. (II/1, 517)

'God is not compelled to become man by any superior inward or outward necessity' but in free love makes a 'free decision' to befriend man, revealing who he is. This is a 'decision of God's will' and is a 'special act which takes place in the essence of God' as a 'supremely particular event' (II/1, 519ff). Barth is concerned to emphasise the unchangeableness of God, his constancy, not as a static metaphysical unmoved mover but as the freedom of the living God to express and confirm his love in a free positing in which he allows his existence to overflow towards that which he posits as ontologically other to him. In this act God does not contradict himself but reveals himself, expressing and confirming his 'constant vitality' for 'in God Himself there is also life and movement' (II/1, 499) as the one who exists in 'perfect, original and ultimate peace between the Father and the Son by the Holy Spirit' (II/1, 503). God's constancy, his unchangeableness, is this: God is eternally the one who loves in freedom *ad intra* and in his turning to us in the history of reconciliation and revelation 'God does not become nor is He other than He is in Himself from eternity and in eternity' (II/1, 502). Who God is in the economy reveals who he is immanently. Whilst Barth does not elucidate the connection between the obedience of Christ revealing the obedience of the Son at this point, the obedience *ad extra* being true of God's freedom in love *ad intra*, there is in II/1 an indication that Barth is considering the links between obedience and self-humiliation as belonging, along with election, in his doctrine of God. It is no surprise therefore that at the very core of his discussion of election as the eternal decision of the triune God, Barth refers to the obedience of the Son to the Father in the unity of the Spirit as that which is presupposed in the decision of election.

To set the scene we shall engage with Rowan Williams and Bruce McCormack both of whom have something to say about Barth's theology with respect to the above comments. Williams, in his 1979 essay 'Barth on the Triune God', sees the connections between Barth's doctrine of the obedience of Christ as revelatory of

God *ad intra*, the revised doctrine of election and the I/1 doctrine of the Trinity but thinks Barth's adherence to the *filioque* is, potentially, the reason why volume four cannot be tallied with volume one. Williams thinks that Barth's argument for the obedience of the Son as being divine obedience is mystifying. Bruce McCormack has written extensively on Barth's revised doctrine of election and sees Barth's revisions as entailing a radical change to his doctrine of God such that election is seen to have a logical priority over triunity with the result that Barth's I/1 doctrine of the Trinity requires a 'critical correction' which McCormack proposes to make. We shall consider each of these thinkers in turn. Finally we shall look briefly at Paul Molnar who, following T.F. Torrance, cannot see why Barth held to the obedience of the Son as obedience in God, preferring to see the obedience of the Son as only of the economy. In this sense Molnar's claim that Barth held to a 'sharp distinction' between the economic and immanent Trinity would entail that obedience is only predicated of the incarnate Son and not of the eternal Son; talk of obedience in God being highly problematic. In that Barth held to obedience in God as consistent with his understanding of the economic Trinity being a reflection of the immanent Trinity suggests that Barth did not hold to a 'sharp distinction' between the economic and immanent Trinity in the way Molnar envisages. Williams, McCormack and Molnar have been chosen as examples of contemporary theologians whose comments on Barth, with respect to his doctrines of Trinity, election, Christology and pneumatology and their systematic coherence, function to highlight the contemporary interest and importance of the continuing debate as to whether Barth's doctrine of the Trinity is consistent with his revised doctrine of election. We aim to show that Barth's I/1 doctrine of the Trinity is consistent with his revised doctrine of election through Barth's argument that the obedience of the Son to the Father in the unity of the Spirit (the burden of IV/1 undergirded by the doctrine of the Trinity as structured in I/1) is mirrored (the event of election) in the obedience of Christ to the Father in the unity of the Spirit (the burden of IV/2 undergirded by the doctrine of the Trinity as structured in I/1) and hence the reason why Barth saw no need to revise his doctrine of the Trinity.

ii) **Rowan Williams**⁴

Williams questions how the obedience of Christ ‘reveals (as on Barth’s presuppositions it must do) some aspect of the divine life *ad intra*’ and sees Barth’s IV/1 account of ‘the existence of ‘above’ and ‘below’, *prius* and *posterius*, command and obedience, in the life of God’ as a ‘very long and tortuous treatment’ which is inconsistent with Barth’s claim that the divine hypostases are ‘modes of being, and not centres of volition’.⁵

In His mode of being as the Son He fulfils the divine subordination, just as the Father in His mode as the Father fulfils the divine superiority.’ (CD IV/1, 209) What, if anything, this can possibly mean, neither Barth nor his interpreters have succeeded in telling us. (175)

Williams suggests that Barth’s IV/1 doctrine of the Trinity is a ‘very much more ‘pluralist’ conception’ than I/1 and in trying to bring ‘the former [I/1] into line with the latter [IV/1]’ in his discussion of the obedience of the Son as true of the divine life Barth ‘produces one of the most unhelpful bits of hermetic mystification in the whole of the *Dogmatics*’ (175).⁶ Earlier in his essay Williams discusses Barth’s trinitarian thinking in I/1 whereby the revelatory events of ‘Easter, Good Friday and Pentecost’ correspond to the order of ‘Son, Father and Spirit’ (I/1, 332) and notes that Barth has in place, with his assertion that the Son is the obedient reconciler, a concept of God in which there is a ‘second, and in *some* sense ‘subordinate’, way-of-being-God (*Seinsweise*), God the Reconciler following on from God the Creator: an ‘irreversible relation’ but one in which each term is wholly necessary to the apprehension of the other (CD I/1, 412-13)’ (163, emphasis in text).⁷ Williams sees the source of this

⁴ All page references, in parenthesis in the text until indicated otherwise, will be to Williams, R., ‘Barth on the Triune God’ in *Karl Barth – Studies of his Theological Methods* ed. Sykes, S.W., (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1979) 147-193, hereafter *KBSTM*.

⁵ Williams assumes that the differentiation of the trine hypostases in terms of *prius* and *posterius* entails a negation of the hypostases having one will.

⁶ Williams sees the ‘pluralism’ as stemming from Barth’s revised doctrine of election.

⁷ We would see this as further evidence that Barth’s doctrine of the Trinity in I/1 works beautifully with his later doctrine of reconciliation and that his concept of obedience *in* God was already in place in embryonic form early in the *Dogmatics* albeit not referred to explicitly until II/2. See Gallagher, Daniel, ‘The Obedience of Faith: Barth, Bultmann and *Dei Verbum*’ in *Journal for Christian Theological Research* 10 (2006) 39-63, who suggests that Barth saw the obedience of Christ as ‘essentially based in his eternal relationship of obedience as the divine second person of the Trinity’ with the ‘christocentricity of Barth’s theology of obedience’ being ‘rooted in the treatment of grace,

asymmetry in Barth's 'view of revelation' as 'function[ing]' to establish a 'dialectic of Fatherhood and Sonship in God' with a 'tension between the lordship which rules and overrules, and the lordship which restores and re-creates' with each mode being 'divine and equally divine (CD I/1, 414)' and yet having an 'order' which is 'irreversible' (164). We will be arguing, however, that Barth does not see the relationship of the Father and Son as one who rules and one who submits as being one of tension and therefore dialectical but this irreversible order happens in the peace and harmony of the power of their united love and Barth has this already in place in his I/1 doctrine of the Trinity as evidenced by his adherence to the *filioque* clause.⁸ Barth brings out something of this triune order of love in his argument for the *filioque* clause in I/1 473-489, whereby the Spirit is the power of uniting love *ad intra* and *ad extra* and this view is also expressed in II/1's articulation of the eventful life of the living God and in II/2 103ff's account of election as a triune decision as well as in III/2's articulation of the Spirit uniting the incarnate Son (the *imago Dei*) to the Father as a reflection of his uniting role *ad intra* but most robustly it is found in Barth's discussion of the obedience of Christ as a reflection of the prevenient obedience of the Son to the Father in the unity of the Spirit in volume four parts one and two.

Williams notes that Barth's I/1 doctrine of the Spirit is structured via his concept of the Spirit as the agent of 'Revealedness' as the free gift of God who brings to pass mankind's response to the Father through the incarnate Son and that this third being way of God points to a threefold act of revelation. Barth seeks to establish that the threefold structure of revelation has a 'foundation *in* God' in which that which is revealed corresponds to who God is 'antecedently and in Himself' (CD I/1, 391)' (165, emphasis in text). Williams acknowledges that Barth's concept of the ordered nature of God's existence is 'the order of a 'repetition' of '*one* divine subject' (CD I/1, 395-8)' and that 'the mode in which God is God as Jesus Christ is not something accidental' (166). Further, Williams acknowledges Barth maintains in I/1 that God's relationship to that which is ontologically other to him in the human existence of the Son does not constitute God otherwise 'we introduce an anthropologically

redemption and righteousness in his *Romerbrief*, but we did not find Barth comments in *Romerbrief* as so clearly indicative of obedience in God to the extent that Gallagher suggests.

⁸ It is beyond the scope of this thesis to engage critically with Barth's doctrine of the *filioque* clause, we simply intend to show that it is integral to his theology as a whole and is one way in which the continuity of volume one with volume two and beyond is demonstrated.

conditioned necessity into God' and 'destroy the gratuity of grace (CD I/1, 420-1)' (166). Williams sees that the 'burden of Barth's argument' is that 'God is eternally Son because he is eternally himself' and rejects any notion that God is 'ontologically bound up with and conditioned by the world of men' or that he 'need[s] creation as a means of self-realization or self-interpretation' (167). On the contrary God is free and is the 'Lord' of his threefold revelation and 'gives himself to be known on the grounds of his eternal knowing of himself'; God is antecedently 'an object to himself' (167).⁹

What then of the Spirit as the agent of 'Revealedness' as that which is true antecedently in God's ordered life? Williams is not so convinced by Barth's account of this in his discussion of 'the eternal Spirit' in I/1 466-89 seeing Barth's exegesis of the 'Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed' as 'halting' and the emerging discussion as exhibiting a 'curious and uncharacteristic uncertainty about the person of the Spirit in the 'immanent' Trinity'' (169). Barth's stance that as the Spirit is the bond of communion between the Father and Son and therefore in revelation the 'act of communion between God and men' is, Williams suggests, a 'good basis for connecting the Spirit's role *ad intra* with his work *ad extra*' but questions Barth's articulation of the Spirit as a 'common act of Father and Son' for what sense does it make to talk of the Spirit as a third divine mode who does something, for his mode of being seems to be an 'operation' or a 'quality' rather than an active third hypostasis? Certainly, and this is the crucial problem for Williams, 'the Spirit's role in the Godhead cannot be the *Offenbarsein* (the 'revealedness') of revelation' and consequently Williams suggests that Barth moves the emphasis when talking of the Spirit *ad intra* from a concept of revelation to one of communion in which 'the fellowship of the Holy Spirit which God bestows on believers' is a 'mirror of [the Spirit's] own life'. This, Williams asserts, is problematic because what has happened is that Barth's reliance on his 'all important model of revelation or divine self-interpretation' to talk of God *ad intra* is, at this point, in danger of breaking down (172). Williams' question is thus: what criteria *ad extra* allow Barth to assert that the Spirit is the mode of communication between the Father and Son *ad intra* if it cannot be asserted that the Spirit is the 'revealedness' of the Father and Son *ad intra* as he is

⁹ Against Hegel Barth holds that God is not obliged to reveal himself but does so in freedom and as a reflection of who he is.

ad extra?¹⁰ On what grounds can it be held that ‘revealedness’ corresponds to fellowship/communion? We follow Williams’ questioning the ‘all-sufficiency of [Barth’s] revelation model’.

Using Gustaf Wingren’s critique of Barth’s doctrine of the humanity of Christ in which Wingren sees Barth’s theology of reconciliation in volume four as a late, and unsuccessful, attempt to give more weight to the concept of God liberating mankind from sin rather than merely freeing him epistemologically, Williams comes up against Barth’s construct of the correspondence between the obedience of Christ and the obedience of the Son and concludes that Barth sees the obedience of Christ as ‘the way in which the love of God is made *known*: ‘space’ is made for God’s communication in the world by the self-abnegation of Christ’ such that the obedience of Christ in some sense reveals the obedience of the Son to the commanding Father (173-75, emphasis in text).¹¹ Reiterating a point made above, Williams sees Barth’s IV/1 Trinity as ‘pluralist’ in which ‘God must confront God across the gulf of fallenness, from the place of Godless man’ risking his very identity and if this is the case, there is a discontinuity with Barth’s I/1 assertions of the ‘freedom and lordship of God’ because God is not simply interpreting himself *ad extra* but is up against another ultimate principle which may have consequences for his identity. In a nut shell, Williams interprets Barth’s volume four stance as evidencing a reversal of his principle that *finitum non capax infiniti* such that, that which God has posited in freedom and love as ontologically distinct from him has the capacity to determine or constitute or have an effect upon who God is; on God’s identity as God. What has been established then in the event *ad extra* is the revelation of a ‘plurality of agency within the Trinity’, *ad intra*, and ‘the inclusion of the history of man in the being of God’ (178). Williams gets this aspect of his argument from Von Balthasar’s use of Barth’s articulation of the ‘way of the Son into the far country’ seeing Von Balthasar’s interpretation ‘to show us just how far from the schema of I/1 we are led

¹⁰ Barth’s criteria is his exegesis of the Spirit being the Spirit of Christ whom Jesus breathes on his disciples. The Spirit is communicated by the Son incarnate. The Spirit as ‘Revealedness’ would seem to be grounded upon this exegetical stance. Whilst Barth writes about the Spirit as ‘Revealedness’ before he discusses the *filioque* we would argue that the theology of the latter is implicit in the concept of ‘Revealedness’. It is beyond the scope of the thesis to argue this particular point.

¹¹ It is outwith the scope of this thesis to defend Barth’s doctrine of the obedience of Christ as salvific and therefore revelatory of the prevenient obedience of the Son who in unity with the Father in the Spirit determines his obedience in human existence, but this is what we think Barth argues.

by the implications of IV/1' with the discontinuity in Barth's scheme being traced to his 'celebrated discussion of the predestination of Christ' in II/2. Williams considers Juengel's account that in electing to become man in the Son God 'eternally 'forsees' the man Jesus'; the 'Logos . . . [being] the holder of Jesus' place (Platzhalter) before God (CD II/2, 96)', as a weaker account than Barth himself offers (178-79).¹² Williams argues that Barth's assertion in IV/2 about the suffering of Christ permitting talk of God suffering and enduring his own negation means that since Barth holds that 'God's being is his act; if he acts in and through a man's death, that death is involved in what he *is*' (179, emphasis in text). Although Williams admits that Barth's adherence to the freedom of God and the 'divine self-determination as true of God *in se*' separates him from both Hegel and Schleiermacher respectively, he contends that Barth's account of election demands that God be seen as 'liable' to elect, 'tending' or 'intending' to elect' such that there is brought into play 'at least, tension, perhaps even conflict, between 'Utterer' and 'Uttered'' (180). Williams seems to see Barth, in his revised doctrine of election, as having allowed, albeit unintentionally, a concept of the Father and Son's will being distinct rather than one; the 'plurality of agency within the Trinity' referred to earlier. In uttering himself the Father utters a contradiction of himself in the Son who is intended for obedience to death. Obedience in God is seen to imply, in Williams interpretation, a contradiction in God which has to be overcome and further, Barth's understanding of the Spirit in I/1 as the bond of love results in an 'intensifying' of 'the sense of plurality in God', found in II/2, because 'not much sense can be made of 'modes' relating to one another in love' (181). What we are offered, Williams argues, is 'a model of two subsistents linked by a quality – a very asymmetrical Trinity indeed' (182). Williams sees the *filioque* clause as a problem that is potentially overcome by Barth's IV/1 discussion of 'the Verdict of the Spirit' in which the Spirit is 'the divine freedom to be Spirit 'beyond' the Father-Son relationship' but we would argue that this aspect of Barth's thinking on the Spirit has been expressed earlier in the *Dogmatics* in his articulation of the Spirit as God's 'post temporality' in II/1 as the one who is always ahead of us and who bonds 'pre-temporality' and 'supra-temporality', uniting eternity and time, and is consistent with

¹² Williams notes that Juengel's influential book has a 'near total lack of reference to the Spirit', 171 note 21

the Spirit as the power of uniting love.¹³ Further, that Barth holds to an asymmetrical Trinity is no surprise, at least, to Barth for this is what is found, as will be shown below, in his I/1 doctrine of the Trinity and which is reflected *ad extra* in the event of election. As well as not appreciating Barth's structuring of the Trinity as deliberately asymmetrical, Williams's critique does not appreciate the function of Barth's powerful use of the concept of correspondence (*Entsprechung*) with its irreversible direction, God reflecting who he is (*ad intra*) in the economy (*ad extra*), and this is crucial for recognising Barth's doctrine of the Trinity in I/1 as concomitant with his theological scheme after revising his doctrine of election. Barth revises his doctrine of election but he does not go back on his stance that the triune God as particular ordered love is prevenient in all things nor that this God is free. It is precisely in freedom that God elects to reflect who he is as the triune God of ordered love.

All paths of discussion with regard to Barth's construct of the obedience of Christ as revelatory of obedience in God, and the asymmetry of the dispensing Father (as loving rule) and submissive Son (as faithful obedience) suggested by this construct, lead, it seems, to Barth's doctrine of election in volume two and the lingering question as to whether this doctrine implies a necessary discontinuity between the structure of Barth's doctrine of the Trinity before and after this volume. Another important critique that sees a discontinuity between volume one and those thereafter, with Barth's I/1 doctrine of the Trinity needing 'critical correction' in the light of his revised doctrine of election, is that offered by Bruce McCormack.

¹³ Williams does not like Barth's concept of asymmetry in God, of the dispensing Father and obedient Son, but wants a 'mutual sharing' citing with approval Christain Duqoc's position that 'Christainity is an inflation of infantile beliefs about the omnipotent Father who can solve all problems and heal all wounds' and what is to be preferred is 'an adult relationship of sonship', 190-191. Barth would see in this comment the triumph of psychology over theology.

iii) **Bruce McCormack**¹⁴

The main thrust of McCormack's claim that Barth's revised doctrine of election entails the necessity of a correction to his doctrine of the Trinity, one which Barth himself never made and which mystifies McCormack, is the II/2 assertion that Jesus Christ is not only the object of election but the subject. For McCormack, Barth's claim that Jesus is the subject of election 'carrie[s] with it a massive correction of the classical Reformed doctrine of predestination' namely that whilst the Reformed doctrine is one of election preceding the provision of the one who effects it, that is, the mediator Jesus Christ, Barth's correction, according to McCormack, is to see God as being 'determined, defined, by what he reveals himself to be in Jesus Christ' (97). The logic of the Reformed doctrine is:

who or what the Logos is in and for himself (as the Subject of election) is *not* controlled by the decision to become Mediator in time; that the identity of this Logos is, in fact, *already established* prior to that eternal act of Self-determination by means of which the Logos *became* the Logos *incarnandus*. And if all that were true, then the decision to assume flesh in time could only result in something being added to that already completed identity; an addition which has no effect upon what he is essentially. (97, emphasis in text)

The question raised by this view is: 'how coherent can one's affirmation of the deity of Jesus Christ be if his being as mediator is only accidentally related to what he is as Logos in and for himself?' (97) We think that Barth answers this question with his concept of the obedience of the Son as obedience in God whereby the decision to become the mediator is one which reflects the eternal obedience of the Son to the Father in the Spirit. The Son's being as the obedient mediator reflects his being as the obedient Son and is therefore not to be considered as something alien or accidental to God but as an expression of who he is. McCormack chooses to engage with the Reformed doctrine by bringing into play the philosophical category of 'accident', suggesting that the decision to become the mediator determines who the eternal Son is otherwise the office of mediator is 'accidental' to who the Son is; he would still be

¹⁴ All page references in parenthesis in the text, until indicated otherwise, are to: McCormack, Bruce L., 'Grace and Being; the Role of God's Gracious Election in Karl Barth's Theological Ontology' in *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Barth*, ed., Webster, John (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000) 92-110. See also McCormack, Bruce L., *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology: Its Genesis and Development, 1909-1936* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997) 454-5 and 460-1, for the background to McCormack's claims.

who he is without having become the mediator. Barth never relinquishes his stance that God is who he is without becoming flesh and that this act is not necessary to his being God but rather flows out of who he is as the triune God. McCormack cuts away at this most basic instinct with his argument that who the Son becomes in time (*ad extra*) determines who the Son is in eternity (*ad intra*) in his concern to assuage philosophical concerns over immutability whilst claiming that this stance is necessary to affirm the full deity of Christ. We would suggest that Barth has in place a more sophisticated stance on this matter and one which does not give an inch to philosophical conundrums. Barth does indeed revise the Reformed doctrine of election but not at the expense of God's freedom or his eternal triune existence in relationship as that which is reflected in his decision to become man in the Son in concrete anticipation executed in time. The existence of the obedient mediator who is the Son in the flesh reveals that the eternal Son is the Son of obedience and because he is this there is in the overflowing of himself this obedient man. The eternal Son is not therefore a 'mythological abstraction' (103) or one whose 'being and existence are *undetermined*' (94, emphasis in text) but rather one who is revealed as the eternally obedient Son of the Father in the Spirit of the unity of their ordered love.

In contrast to this, what McCormack offers, put in the most stark terms, is that God elects to be God for man and therefore determines himself to become triune with his second mode, the Son, being Jesus Christ, begotten as 'the God-human in His divine-human unity' (94) whose divine-human unity is realised in the symbiosis of the divine and human histories:

The decision for the covenant of grace is the ground of God's triunity and, therefore, of the eternal generation of the Son and of the eternal procession of the Holy Spirit from Father and Son. In other words, the works of God *ad intra* (the trinitarian processions) find their ground in the *first* of the works of God *ad extra* (viz. election). And that also means that eternal generation and eternal procession are willed by God; they are not natural to him if 'natural' is taken to mean a determination of being fixed in advance of all actions and relations. (103, emphasis in text)¹⁵

McCormack acknowledges that Barth never sought to revise his doctrine of the Trinity in these terms nor retracted any statements which asserted that God would be

¹⁵ What, potentially, is 'accidental' to God, in McCormack's account, is his triunity. In Barth's account however, the triune God is full of action and relationship in himself.

the triune God without mankind and concludes that ‘Barth either did not fully realize the profound implications of his doctrine of election for the doctrine of the Trinity, or he shield away from drawing them for reasons known only to himself’ possibly because ‘to acknowledge the question and its importance might well have forced upon him the necessity of ‘beginning again at the beginning’ in a quite literal sense – which by this point in time (early 1940’s) was utterly unthinkable’ (102-103). On the contrary, we will be arguing that Barth saw his I/1 doctrine of the Trinity to be entirely compatible with his revised doctrine of election and carried both through into the proceeding volumes of the *Dogmatics*; there was no need for any corrections or retractions. That McCormack suggests Barth was unaware of what his revised doctrine of election meant for his doctrine of the Trinity is in itself remarkable given Barth’s theological acumen.

In a more recent paper McCormack tries to take his argument further.¹⁶ He reasons that prior to Maury’s impact upon Barth’s thinking, Barth had been trying to move away from a metaphysical understanding of God (what McCormack calls ‘substantialistic’) to a more actualistic concept of God whereby what God decides and does (his acts) determines who God is (his being). McCormack argues that an understanding of the eternal Son as ‘an abstract metaphysical subject’ under girds the Chalcedonian formula of the two natures of Christ because Chalcedon was not able to overcome ‘two obstacles standing in the way’ of protecting ‘two values’; the values being 1) ‘the full and free cooperation of the human element in the work of the divine’ and 2) that this be accomplished without dissolving the unity of the divine and human in the one person. The two obstacles in the way were 1) the Logos understood as ‘the directive principle in the human nature’ and 2) the presupposition of ‘the abstract metaphysical understanding of divine immutability’. Suffering and change could only be attributed to the human nature and not the divine and so, according to McCormack, this means that the ‘human “nature” is . . . made a subject in its own right’ and so ‘a swing occurred in the direction of the Nestorian “double Christ”’ (7). That Barth held to this concept of the two natures prior to his revision of the doctrine of election means that Barth’s early Christology is ‘somewhat Nestorian’. McCormack’s main

¹⁶ All page references in parentheses in the text, until indicated otherwise, are to: McCormack, Bruce L., ‘Barths grundsatzlicher Chalkedonismus?’ in *Zeitschrift fuer dialektische Theologie* 18 (2002) 169-73, hereafter *BgC*.

concerns, as before, are the philosophical problem of immutability and the eternal Son considered as an 'abstract metaphysical subject' being the 'directive principle in the human nature' and he argues that the solution to these problems was found by Barth 'in the rejection of the abstract metaphysical subject of Chalcedon and its replacement with an understanding of the Redeemer as a subject whose reality is constituted (in eternity and time) by a twofold history (the humiliation of God and the exaltation of the human)' (8). We will be showing that Barth understands the humiliation of God as the event in which the Son of obedience, united to the dispensing Father in the Spirit and therefore a triune event, elects to reflect himself in humiliation to human estate and that this act is grounded upon who the Son is as the obedient one. McCormack, however, finds in Barth's account a different theology in which Barth 'finds his way', after a 'long period of time in the school of the Chalcedonian Fathers', 'through to a new and different theological ontology (of the divine, of the human, and of the God-human)' and that it is 'only in the doctrine of reconciliation that all of this finally came together' (8).

McCormack reasons that whenever Barth talks of the eternal Son being who he is had he not assumed flesh he 'slips most visibly into the substantialistic form of ancient metaphysics' where 'as applied to the ontology of the person' is found the thought that 'what a person "is" is something that is complete in and for itself, apart from and prior to all the decisions, acts and relations which make up the sum total of the lived existence of the thing in question' thereby driving a wedge 'between "essence" and "existence" in such a way that whatever happens on the level of existence has no effect on that which a "person" is essentially (16). As 'applied to the christological problem as envisioned by the ancients' this makes it 'impossible to understand anything that happens in and through the human "nature" as having any consequences for that which the "Person of the union" (viz. the Logos) is essentially', that is, "[m]ovement" or "change" is located on the level of existence where it can have no significance for that which the divine Word "is" (16). McCormack seems to be defining 'essence' as 'being' and 'existence' as 'act' with Barth's slogan 'God's act is in his being and his being is in his act' in mind whereby what God does reveals who God is. Barth, however, does not thereby hold that the decision of the triune God to assume human existence in the person of the Son thereby constitutes who the eternal Son is but rather that in revealing himself to be obedient as the man Jesus the

eternal Son reveals himself to be eternally obedient to the Father with his eternal obedience to the Father being the precedence upon which his obedience in flesh is grounded. The Son's act of obedience as man is grounded upon his obedient existence to the Father in eternity; God's act is in his being (that which happens in time reveals who God is in eternity) and his being is in his act (that which happens in eternity grounds the event in time). It could be written: God's act *ad extra* corresponds to God's being *ad intra*; God's being *ad intra* is mirrored in his act *ad extra*.

There is also in McCormack's account little discussion of Barth's insistence that God is in himself movement or event or history. That is, the existence of the triune God is one of never ceasing movement from the Father to the Son and the Son to the Father in the unity of the Spirit of this occurrence. In the divine life there is movement and it is this movement of giving and receiving love in freedom which overflows in the decision of this triune God to elect himself in the Son to assume human existence in which all human existence is enclosed.

McCormack points to a particular assertion of Barth in I/2 (*KD*, 175) in which it is said that there is a 'becoming of the human nature which is *not* a becoming of the Word' (17, emphasis in text). Surely this is Barth simply maintaining his stance on the asymmetry of the divine initiative; the *telos* of God's action towards that which is ontologically other as being always from God to that which is other? McCormack, however, sees the 'root of this inconsistency' (inconsistent, that is, with McCormack's own understanding and interpretation of Barth's stance from volume two onwards) in Barth's 'trinitarian background of the event of the incarnation' where he claims that 'God's Word would still be His Word even if the incarnation had never happened' (17-18). In I/2, therefore according to McCormack, Barth's Christology is expressed in terms of human 'acts and experiences' being verbally ascribed to the 'divine Word' which are 'not really his own' because the Word is complete, and would be who he is, without these acts and experiences. Reiterating a point in his earlier paper McCormack sees Barth's Christology here as 'drift[ing] in the direction of Nestorianism' because in asserting that the Logos is who he is without the acts and experiences of the incarnation is to set up a 'Nestorian "double Christ"' because the 'human "nature" is being made a subject in its own right' (19 and 7). That Barth,

after his revision of his doctrine of election, would continue to assert that the eternal Son is who he is had he not become man, are, McCormack argues, ‘metaphysical moments’ in ‘what was otherwise an anti-metaphysical mode of reflection’ and when found even in his doctrine of reconciliation ‘function as a kind of limit-concept whose purpose is to point to the importance of the divine freedom’ (18). On the contrary, we will be arguing that such assertions are entirely consistent with Barth’s programme to articulate the triune event of election as an event of reflection; as the positing of that which corresponds (*entspricht*) to God’s eternal existence.¹⁷ Because God’s action *ad extra* mirrors who he is *ad intra* it is entirely consistent, even necessary, to assert that had God not acted *ad extra* he would still be the God he is *ad intra*. The concept of correspondence as articulated by Barth safeguards the freedom of God and therefore the non-necessity of creation. Further, Barth adheres to the theologoumenon of the *enhypostasia/anhypostasia* throughout the *Dogmatics* even in exchanging the language of two states for that of a twofold history or event and this helps him articulate the direction of determination of the human nature of Christ as being from the eternal Son in his unity to the Father in the Spirit.

After Barth revised his doctrine of election in volume two, McCormack sees a ‘fairly dramatic change’ in Barth’s Christology. From volume two onwards Barth distances himself from the ‘terms employed by the Chalcedonian formula’ (19). The volume one pneumatocentric focus of election as the event in which the Holy Spirit made known Christ to a person (granting ‘faith and obedience’) is now given a ‘christological foundation’ whereby election happens not in the moment in which ‘revelation is subjectively acknowledged’ by particular men and women but happens in the election of Jesus Christ as the object of election, ‘the reprobate human so that all others might be elect in Him’ (22). This ‘initial step’ (‘in “Gottes Gnadenwahl”’, the Debrecen lectures) had not yet made Christ the subject of election and this further step was not something Barth took from Maury but ‘was, as Gockel says, his own contribution’ (22).¹⁸ In II/2 election and Christology are integrated ‘in such a way

¹⁷ Webster notes that Barth’s use of the term ‘correspondence’ in volume III/4 when discussing our ‘active life in obedience’ as that which ‘corresponds to divine action’ (III/4, 474) ‘bears a good deal of weight’ as it does ‘elsewhere’ but does not comment that the obedience of Christ corresponds to the obedience of the Son nor what this ‘elsewhere’ is. Webster, John, *Barth’s Ethics of Reconciliation* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995), 80.

¹⁸ See Gockel, Mattias, ‘One Word and all is Saved: Barth and Scheiermacher on Election’, unpublished PhD, Princeton Theological Seminary, 2002, 202, note 28.

that Jesus Christ (the God-human in His divine-human identity) would henceforth be understood as *both* the electing God and elect human' (22, emphasis in text). McCormack then interprets this to mean that election is the eternal event in which God elects to become triune with the begetting of the Son being a begetting of the 'God-human' as the 'free act in which God assigned to Himself the being He would have for all eternity' as both 'an act of *Self-determination*' and '*Self-limitation*' (23f., emphasis in text). The self-limitation is God choosing reprobation 'in which His being will be concretely actualized in *humiliation*' (emphasis in text). McCormack sees Barth's revised doctrine as making 'God so much the Lord that He is Lord even over His own "essence"' and interprets Barth's IV/1 assertion that God is a suffering God not accidentally but "essentially" as God choosing or electing obedience for his 'way of humiliation is the way of obedience which leads to a cross' (24). According to McCormack, God elects to be an obedient God in the begetting of the God-man Jesus who is the second person of the elected Trinity; God elects to beget the obedient God-man. In what sense, then, is Jesus Christ the subject of this decision of election if he is begotten by a decision made by a God who is triune only in the making of this decision?

McCormack's answer to this question is to pose the question another way:

how can God, as the subject of election, already "be" the incarnate Lord *even if only by way of anticipation*, if being the incarnate Lord is the *consequence* of this decision? Surely He must be in the moment of deciding, something other than what He becomes as a consequence of that decision? (26-27, emphasis in text)

answering that although 'such a line of questioning' is to '[snap] back into metaphysical thinking' a 'reasoned answer' will be attempted and it is this:

For Barth, the triunity of God consists in the fact that he is one Subject in three modes of being. One Subject! To say then that "Jesus Christ is the electing God" is to say "God determined to be the electing God in a second mode of being". It lies close to hand to recognize that it is precisely the primal decision of God in election which constitutes the event in which God differentiates Himself into three modes of being. Election thus has a certain logical priority over the triunity of God. . . . So: the event in which God constitutes Himself as triune is identical with the event in which He chooses to be God for the human race. Thus, the "gap" between the "eternal Son" and "Jesus Christ" is overcome; the distinction between them eliminated. It should be added finally, that the primal decision in which God determines to

be the electing God in a second mode of being is a decision which has never *not* already taken place. So there is no “eternal Son” if by that is meant a mode of being in God which is not identical with Jesus Christ. Therefore, Jesus Christ is the electing God. (27, emphasis in text)

The one subject God (presumably the Father in intention) elects to reiterate himself in a second mode of being in begetting himself as the God-man Jesus Christ in whom all mankind is to be hid and to be united to himself in a third mode of being, the Holy Spirit. The Father, then, strictly speaking is the subject of election and in electing himself to become man in a second mode of being posits himself as the God-man Jesus Christ. There therefore no ‘gap’ between the eternal Son (the concept of which is an abstraction) and the man Jesus Christ, their existence is identical, any ‘distinction between them being ‘eliminated’. The immanent and economic Trinity is therefore ‘identical in content’ (26). This is what McCormack concludes from the theology of Barth following the revision of his doctrine of election but is this really true of Barth? Does Barth wish to eliminate the distinction between the eternal Son and his human existence as the man Jesus? Which distinction, exactly, is eliminated? Surely not the distinction between his being on the one hand, ‘very God’ of divine existence and on the other his being ‘very man’, of human existence? Is the eliminated distinction that McCormack has in mind one of moments of becoming, to do with intervals of existence, striving to eliminate that the eternal Son exist without existing also as man? Why is it so crucial to McCormack to reject that the eternal Son have divine existence but not yet human existence? Is it just the philosophical concern with immutability? But even if the one subject God decides to posit himself as triune with his second mode of being being ontologically divine and human, is there not here a sense in which God has become something which he was previously not; two things in fact 1) triune and 2) the second mode having two distinct ontologies? Asserting that this decision has no beginning, ‘has never not taken place’, does not avoid this question and is certainly not of Barth who insists that the decision of election has a beginning. What has no beginning for Barth is the triune God. That the decision of election be an eternal one may simply mean that it has no ending: the Son will ever more be the man Jesus. Does McCormack’s argument that the distinction, unspecified, between the eternal Son and Jesus Christ is eliminated make sense of the material in III/2 in which the human existence of the Son is described as being ‘indirectly identical’ with the divine existence, the man Jesus being the *imago*

Dei? What then of Barth's powerful and insistent use of the concept of 'correspondence'; that the economic Trinity corresponds to the immanent? Does McCormack's interpretation handle this? Certainly Barth is insistent that God actualises his existence, that is, God posits his triune existence as the particular ordered existence it is. God's divine nature has no actuality in itself but is actualised by the one subject God as being an existence from the Father to the Son and from the Son to the Father in the unity of the Spirit. Certainly there is in Barth's account the eternal, never ceasing event of the becoming of the Son and the spiration of the Spirit from the Father and Son but this event is seen as having no beginning whilst election is seen as having a beginning in relation to God's ways and works *ad extra* and this is asserted in II/2 several times in the very midst of the revisions. McCormack's response to this is that it makes sense of Christ being the object of election but not the subject:

A beginning of God in Himself that is not synonymous with the beginning of God's ways with the human race would surely open the door to turning Barth's later criticism of Calvin's God of the absolute decree back upon himself. That is to say, a God who enjoys a higher mode of being than that which he gives to Himself in the covenant of grace is the Absolute God of natural theology. Once the distinction between a being of God in Himself and a being of God in the covenant of grace as been established, . . . [t]he damage would already have been done . . . such statements are not easily reconciled with the claim that *Jesus Christ* is the electing God. (25-26, note 47, emphasis in text)

Barth, however, whilst maintaining a distinction between the eternal Son and his human existence, has a way of relating the two natures of Christ in such a way that the claim that Jesus Christ is both the electing God and the elect man is maintained as well as asserting that the Trinity revealed in the economy is the eternal Trinity for the obedient Christ of humility is the image, the *imago Dei*, of the obedient Son who condescends to take human existence. The eternal Son is the subject of and gives actuality to his human existence. In agreement with Webster's insight we will be showing just how much weight Barth's concept of 'correspondence' (*Entsprechung*), which is used to articulate this stance, is bearing.

Finally, McCormack considers Barth's doctrine of reconciliation. In the section preceding section 59, McCormack alights upon an 'improper' move where Barth seems to be suggesting that there is a place for the concept of the *logos asarkos*

(IV/1, 52). We will be showing that Barth is, at this point, engaging with his articulation of the overflowing (mirroring) of the obedient Son to human existence and not stressing the maintenance of an abstract understanding of the *logos asarkos*. McCormack misses this and instead takes the opportunity to criticise Alan Torrance's interpretation of Barth's doctrine of the Trinity in suggesting that God's existence is his triune self-relating; the begetting and spirating in which God is God. Certainly, Torrance is more accurate in his interpretation of Barth than is McCormack, recognising that for Barth God's existence is a triune relational event with or without us.¹⁹ Again, McCormack's dis-ease is to do with any suggestion that God is 'complete in' himself 'without regard for' his 'self-communication in history'. That Barth can sustain his claim that God's act *ad extra* does not constitute who he is as God is to do with his assertion that the triune God is *ad intra* eventful; a God of hypostases in movement and action, this being revealed *ad extra*. Barth's use of the various expressions of mirroring, reflection and correspondence are used to express this, as will be seen as the thesis proceeds. McCormack argues that in volume four Barth 'preserves' the 'theological values registered in the Chalcedonian Formula' but only by 'replacing the category of "nature" with the category of "history" and then by integrating "history" into his concept of "person" (32). The person of Christ, then, has two histories but what is of interest to McCormack is the 'ontology of the *subject* of the twofold history of humiliation and exaltation' (33, emphasis in text).²⁰ The event of election is the event in which 'God determines Himself to be, in a very real sense, a "human" God' whereby in the event of election God 'tak[es] up' humanity 'into the event of God's being – the event, that is, in which God's own being receives its own most essential determination' and which at the same time 'humanity is given its most essential determination' (33). That this event is asymmetrical McCormack acknowledges, for 'God alone is the active Subject of the decision in which God gives to divine and human being their most essential determinations' (34). The asymmetry has a 'result' and it is that 'humanity does not "participate" in God's being and life in the same way that God "participates" in human being and life'; the 'modes of "participation" differ in each case' (34). McCormack's point seems to be that God freely decides to allow the event of the assumption of human history to his second

¹⁹ Torrance, Alan J., 'The Trinity' in *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Barth*, ed., Webster, John (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000) 72-91, 85.

²⁰ One begins to wonder whether McCormack is after a, basically, Lutheran concept of one person arising out of two histories as preferred by Robert Jenson?

mode of existence to determine human history (as existence) and divine history (as triune existence). At this point Barth's use of the concept of 'correspondence' is acknowledged.

McCormack's argument is as follows:

1) First McCormack interprets Barth's account of the obedience of the Son as obedience to humiliation. The human history of Jesus Christ:

belongs to the history of God in the second of His modes of being (as "Son"). This human history constitutes the 'second "person" of the Trinity' as 'the "person" that He is. (34)²¹

The mode of participation of God the Son in the 'human being and existence' of Jesus is 'direct and immediate', that is, 'all that occurs in and through and to this human is taken up into the divine life and made to be God's own', for example, experiences of suffering, such that 'the passion and death of Jesus is an event in God's own life' and 'the history which leads to this as its appointed result is a history of divine Self-humiliation' (36f.). McCormack sees section 59 of IV/1 to be Barth showing that 'God is God in the history of His Self-humiliation' as 'fulfilment of that which God has determined Himself for from eternity . . . giv[ing] Himself over to that in and through which His true being is realized'.²² Jesus obedience to death discloses the 'true being' of God.

2) The exaltation of the Son of man is described by McCormack as 'the "participation" of the human Jesus in the being and existence of God' (37f.). Through his 'active obedience to the will of the Father', the human Jesus "'shar[es]" in [God's] history', in the 'being and existence of God'.

A "sharing" in God's history: in no way does this entail the elimination of the distinction between the being of God and the being of the human. It is a

²¹ That the history of the human existence of the Son constitutes who the Son is, is what particularly concerns us for here we would see a reversal of Barth's principle that the determination of the human existence is from God to human existence (*communicatio gratiarum*) with an irreversible asymmetry.

²² That is, God fulfils himself in the history of reconciliation; God's existence as God is realised in this human history. Is this not a process theology? Given McCormack's interpretation, it should not be surprising that some contemporary theologians are using Barth as a springboard for process theology. See, for example, Bowman, Donna, *The Divine Decision: a Process Doctrine of Election* (Louisville, Kentucky, Westminster John Knox Press, 2002).

“sharing” in the sense that the history of the human Jesus is a history of obedience to the will of the Father which brings His history into conformity or correspondence to the history of God’s Self-humiliation’. The “exaltation” of the human Jesus consists in this: that He actively conforms Himself to the history of God’s Self-humiliation and, in doing so, *is made the vehicle of it*. (38, emphasis in text)

The human Jesus ‘can only receive and acknowledge’ the “primal decision” which determines the essential being of the human’ but in so doing ‘lives in conformity’ to this decision and so lives in a ‘history of “exaltation”’.

In summing up his argument McCormack believes that Barth is retaining the ‘distinction between the *anhypostasia* and the *enhypostasia* of Jesus Christ’ recognising that ‘the human Jesus has . . . no existence independent of the event of His assumption into unity with the Word’ but that ‘the ontological frame of reference in which this theologoumenon does its work’ has changed for the humanity no longer subsists in ‘an abstract metaphysical subject’ (38). The exaltation of the human Jesus is the participating of the human Jesus ‘in the being and life of God by means of a willed correspondence of his thinking and willing, his doing and attitude, to the work and attitude of God’ standing in ‘*analogy* to the mode of existence of God, constituting a *parallel* in the creaturely word to God’s plan and intention, His work and attitude’ (40, emphasis in text). The human Jesus is ‘granted an eternal being which is analogously related to God’s own; one which maintains definite ontological “distance” from God’s being but which is eternal being nonetheless’ (40-41). The decision of election is God willing to give ‘both to Himself and to humanity His/their essential being and does so with respect to one and the same figure, Jesus of Nazareth’ and it is ‘through the one history of the man Jesus that that which is essential to both God and humanity is concretely realized’ (41-42). The human history of Christ is ‘so taken up into God’s own life that it constitutes the fulfillment of the divine Self-determination to be God only in and through it’. The person ‘God’ becomes who he is through the event of taking up the human history of Jesus into his own life; human acts and experiences are integral to who God is as the one person God.

We shall consider each of McCormack’s claims about Barth in turn. With regard to McCormack’s claim that the history of the incarnate Son constitutes who the

Son is such that the Son is not the Son without the incarnation, this is to reverse Barth's principle that human existence is determined by God with a direction of determination that is irreversible. Further, what unites God and humanity is for Barth not the actions and experiences of human existence, even of the Son incarnate, but the Holy Spirit. As with Juengel's *Gottes Sein ist im Werden*, references to the Spirit are conspicuous by their absence in McCormack's account. We will be showing that Barth's understanding of the Spirit as the one who bonds the Father and Son in love and freedom is integral, although not always mentioned explicitly in the text, to his doctrines of Trinity, election and reconciliation. In Barth's account, God is fulfilled in himself, ('He might well have been satisfied with the inner glory of His threefold being, His freedom, and His love. The fact that He is not satisfied, but that His inner glory overflows and becomes outward . . . is grace, sovereign grace, a condescension inconceivably tender', II/2, 121) as the one who loves in freedom. It is this God who decides to allow his triune life of love and freedom to overflow in electing himself, in the obedient Son, to be his human covenant partner in whom all humanity is held. God is not fulfilled in this act, almost a rather sentimental anthropomorphic view, but fulfills mankind in this act so that mankind is brought to reflect God's perfectly harmonious existence. Barth did not seek a process theology of election but rather a stronger handling of the sovereignty of God, of the lordship and power of God to bring his creation to perfection by electing himself to be his own faithful covenant partner.

McCormack's point that Jesus' obedience to death 'discloses' the 'true being of God' hides a more radical interpretation than the word 'discloses' suggests. From what McCormack has asserted, God's true being is not merely disclosed but comes to fulfilment. God becomes truly who he is as God through this event. This would mean that God would not be fully realised as God or fulfilled as God without this event and therefore needs this event in order to become what he truly is. This is a stance in opposition to Barth's most basic instincts. McCormack's interpretation of the 'direct and immediate' participation of God in the human existence of Christ is one in which God lives through this human existence and thereby realises (completes) his true divine existence. In the perfecting of his divine life through the human existence of Christ, the human existence is exalted to share in this perfected, fulfilled divine existence not as a divinisation but as a sharing of eternal life as human and in

living this perfected human life, corresponds to the perfected divine life. There is a real symbiosis in McCormack's account of Barth. As the human life of Christ is conformed to the divine life it is made the vehicle of the perfecting of the divine life. God's self-humiliation happens as Christ humiliates himself in conformity with it; there is a two-way simultaneity of determining movement from God to the human existence and from the human existence to God. This second moment of determining movement is what Barth, we would argue, most definitely does not allow. The human obedience does not become the means by which the divine humiliation in obedience is realised and fulfilled but the human obedience happens as that which is determined by and corresponds to the divine obedience to humiliation which it mirrors.²³ The human existence of the Son may indeed be the means by which the divine obedience to humiliation is an event in the creaturely sphere, and in this sense may be considered the 'vehicle' of the divine obedience but in Barth's account this is not an event by which the divine obedience comes to realisation or actuality, as if divine obedience were being determined by the human obedience and could not exist (be actual) without the human obedience. On McCormack's account, God actualises divine obedience through the event of the human obedience albeit a human obedience which is first determined by God. The point is that for McCormack, whilst God may start the ball rolling by positing obedience in begetting an obedient God-man, the divine history of obedience happens only as actualised in the human history of obedience. The human obedience is '*made the vehicle*' of the divine obedience, for McCormack, in a way never envisaged by Barth, that is, the human obedience being the means by which divine obedience is realised and perfected; almost made real as if divine obedience has no existence apart from human existence. We will be arguing that Barth's account of the obedience of the Son as obedience in God, IV/1, section 59, is of a divine obedience which irreversibly grounds the Son's human obedience and that this is why there is a 'necessity' to the human obedience which mirrors it.²⁴

McCormack does see that Barth's account as one in which the concepts of 'analogy' and 'correspondence' are important as well as his retaining of the theologoumenon of *enhypostasia* and *anhypostasia* but sees these latter terms now

²³ Barth makes a distinction, not noted by McCormack, between the obedience of the Son and his humiliation to human estate; obedience presupposes the humiliation.

²⁴ Barth talks of the 'necessity' of the human obedience as that which corresponds to divine existence in III/2.

enclosed in a 'shift in ontological frames of reference' (39). We question whether McCormack believes that Barth continues to undergird his understanding of the history of humiliation and exaltation with the *enhypostasia/anhypostasia* materially, the maintenance of which we believe remains crucial to Barth's understanding of the triune Subject determining the human existence of the Son as the *communicatio gratiarum*, or whether what McCormack is really after is a understanding of the person God emerging out of the distillation of these two histories in that he becomes to be who he is through their symbiosis.²⁵ This would take McCormack very close to the Lutheran ideal of the one person arising out of the two natures albeit with significant differences regarding the doctrine of God, for the Lutherans would not thereby see the incarnation as determining who God is. Whilst McCormack acknowledges Barth's use of the concept of correspondence, he sees this as a two-way event in which the human acts and experiences of Jesus correspond to the divine 'work and attitude' in such a way that the human acts and experiences constitute the divine life. Barth certainly sees human existence as taken into the divine life with his powerful concept of mankind being in Christ, but he understands human existence as being constituted by God not constituting God. To reiterate a point made several times, a concept of the human history of Christ constituting God is to reverse a Reformed axiom Barth held dear: *finitum non capax infiniti* and one which he did not relinquish. The determination is always from the divine to the human, never from the human to the divine. McCormack is arguing that in revising his doctrine of election Barth allows a direction of determination from the human to the divine; a reversing of the Reformed axiom.

iv) **Paul Molnar**²⁶

The main thrust of Molnar's impressive study of Barth's doctrine of the immanent Trinity in dialogue with several contemporary theologians is that Barth

²⁵ In this respect see McCormack, Bruce L., 'For us and Our Salvation: Incarnation and Atonement in the Reformed Tradition' in *Studies in Reformed Theology and History*, 1, 2 (1993) 1-36.

²⁶ All page references in parentheses in the text will be to Molnar, Paul D., *Divine Freedom and the Doctrine of the Immanent Trinity: in Dialogue with Karl Barth and Contemporary Theology* (London, New York, T & T Clark, 2002) unless otherwise stated.

maintained a ‘clear and sharp distinction’ between the immanent and economic Trinity and is critical of McCormack’s attempt to correct Barth’s doctrine of the Trinity recognising that McCormack’s attempt to ‘logically [reverse]’ the ‘order between election and triunity’ is to commit a ‘critical error’ (64). This means that, according to Molnar, the *logos asarkos* remained a valuable concept to Barth.²⁷ Further, Molnar, following T.F. Torrance, sees Barth’s belief that there is ‘superiority and subordination in God’ (IV/1, 201ff.) such that ‘in the incarnation, it is God’s own obedience that we meet in Jesus’ human obedience’ an ‘intriguing’ but ‘ambig[uous]’ aspect of his thought (323, note 25).²⁸ That Barth can say that the obedience of Christ is ‘not . . . without any correspondence to, but as the strangely logical final continuation of, the history in which He is God’ perplexes Molnar:

[i]f the obedience of the Son of God incarnate is the continuation of the history of his obedience in the immanent Trinity, where is the distinction between God’s free existence as Father, Son and Spirit who did not need to become incarnate . . . and his free new action *ad extra*? (323, note 25)

but the answer to at least part of Molnar’s question is given in Barth’s text, for the point is that the obedience of Christ is ‘not . . . without correspondence to’ (emphasis mine) the history in which God is God as the giving Father and the receiving Son, that is, the obedience *ad extra* mirrors the obedience *ad intra*, so that if there is to be talk of a distinction it is the distinction of correspondence. Barth’s talk of the obedience *ad extra* being a ‘continuation’ of the obedience *ad intra* can only be understood in the light of the prefix of the concept of ‘correspondence’ but it is just this that Molnar misses. We shall be arguing that the construct of ‘correspondence’ is, in Barth’s hands, a means by which the distinction between the immanent and economic Trinity

²⁷ A concept rejected also by Douglas Farrow, *Ascension and Ecclesia: On the Significance of the Doctrine of the Ascension for Ecclesiology and Christian Cosmology* (Edinburgh, T & T Clark, 1999) 231ff.

²⁸ To our knowledge, the only reference to T.F. Torrance on this is to be found in his *Karl Barth: Biblical and Evangelical Theologian* (Edinburgh, T & T Clark, 1990) where Torrance talks of ‘the element of ‘subordinationism’ in [Barth’s] doctrine of the Holy Trinity’ which Torrance regards as ‘a hang-over from Latin theology but also from St. Basil’s doctrine of the Trinity’. Torrance believes that there was an ‘incipient subordinationism in the Cappadocian doctrine of the Trinity’ which ‘created’ the ‘problem of the *filioque*’ which the ‘Eastern Church had to answer in one way and the Western Church in another’ but that if ‘the line established by Gregory Nazianzen and Cyril of Alexandria’ both of whom ‘rejected subordinationism in Trinitarian relations’ were to be followed the ‘unecumenical western intrusion of the filioque clause . . . simply falls away’ (131-32). Unfortunately, Torrance does not discuss these claims in greater depth nor refer explicitly to his unease with Barth’s talk of obedience in God in print although many have heard him claim in conversation that the obedience is only of the economy.

is not 'sharp' but a reflection in which the Trinity revealed in the economy is who the immanent Trinity is. Barth does not adhere to a traditional understanding of the *logos asarkos*, which following volume two he repeatedly asserts is an abstraction, but to an understanding of the eternal Son as the obedient one with or without us, just as God is humble with or without us. That is, the obedient Christ reveals the eternal obedient Son who lives in freedom and love to the Father in the unity of the Spirit. In the triune event of election, this obedient Son is orientated to becoming man in positing a creation shaped space within himself whose core is Jesus shaped as a reflection of who he is. The *logos* is not therefore an 'abstract' (or as McCormack puts it, 'undetermined') *logos* but in the economy is revealed to be a *logos* whose divine existence is free subordination to the ruling Father in the love and peace of the Spirit. Molnar sees this, however, as an 'element of subordinationism that Barth thinks he can maintain without compromising the equality of the persons in the immanent Trinity' which is possibly 'the result of thinking that the Son and Spirit were 'caused' by the Father in the Basilian sense rejected by Torrance' or 'due to the fact that Barth has unwittingly read back the Son's incarnate action on our behalf into the immanent Trinity instead of seeing it consistently as a condescension grounded in God's eternal love and freedom' (323, note 25). Contrary to these two suggestions, we will argue that Barth sees the 'eternal love and freedom' of God to be a triune event in which there is order and *telos*; an irreversible asymmetry and this action and movement *ad intra*, whereby the Son is obedient to the Father in the unity of the Spirit, is reflected *ad extra* in the acts of the Father, incarnate Son and Spirit. So many contemporary interpreters of Barth find this unacceptable, possibly because of modern notions of equality. Barth does not see this ordered asymmetry of the triune life as suggestive of inequality nor subordinationism, but of peace and harmony. That the economic Trinity is a Trinity in which there is the ruling Father and obedient Son in the unity of the Spirit of peace tells us, Barth insists, that we can talk of the immanent Trinity in these terms and to suggest otherwise, that is, that there cannot possibly be an eternal Son who is obedient is to posit a Trinity in terms of what we do not want to say about God rather than who God has revealed himself to be; it is to allow metaphysical concepts (or existential or psychological) of divine perfection as not being asymmetrical or ordered superior and subordinate to determine what can and cannot be said about God. Barth uses this very argument to assert that God is humble, and yet there has been no big reaction to this statement as if it is acceptable to talk of

God's humility but not of his obedience. For Barth it is in obedience to the Father that the Son humiliates himself to human estate; his humiliation is humility in obedience, the humility of obedience and this is God's freedom in love in the peace of the uniting Spirit, of the 'Spirit of this act of obedience itself' (II/2, 106).

The distinction that Barth maintains between the immanent and economic Trinity is simply that of the Son assuming, in the economy, a human existence which mirrors his divine existence, but in that the immanent Trinity is reflected in the economy, the economic Trinity reveals who the immanent Trinity is. The economic Trinity corresponds to the immanent. The decision of election is the moment of the eternal Son making space within himself in anticipation of what he will become in time; the moment of reflection. What is truly distinct is the human ontological existence assumed by the Son; his particular soul and body existence in the space and time enclosed in the Son. Molnar's discomfort with Barth asserting obedience *ad intra* is perhaps due, in part, to the discontinuity this would have with the claim Molnar wishes to press; that Barth maintains a 'sharp distinction' between the economic and immanent Trinity because talk of obedience *ad intra* would seem to challenge this stance for in what sense, in respect to obedience, is there a distinction? Molnar's claim is more palatable if obedience is only predicated of the economy. In that Barth held to obedience in God as consistent with his understanding of the immanent Trinity being reflected in the economic Trinity suggests that Barth did not hold to a 'sharp distinction' in the way Molnar envisages but that the distinction maintained is to do with the ontologically distinct human existence assumed by the Son; the obedience *ad extra* is obedience as man as reflective of the Son's obedience as God.²⁹ Further, Molnar wishes to rebut McCormack's proposal that the incarnation is constitutive of God by asserting Barth adhered to the *logos asarkos* but it is not this that Barth uses to assert that *finitum non capax infiniti* but the irreversibility of the prevenient sovereignty of God who is himself, in irreversible relationships, one who

²⁹ To engage any further with the theological questions thrown up by what could be referred to as a distinction of correspondence with regard to the obedience *ad extra* corresponding to obedience *ad intra*, that is, with the distinction between the obedient acts of Christ as a reflection of the obedience of the Son, between human and divine acts, is beyond the scope of this thesis although aspects of this are briefly touched upon in chapter three where Barth explores the humanity of Christ as the *imago Dei*. Interestingly enough in this part volume Barth brings to the fore the distinction between Christ's humanity and ours (the three differences between Christ and ourselves) but the similarity (correspondence) between Christ and God and certainly in IV/1 and IV/2 Barth is concerned with the correspondence (the similarity) of obedience between the eternal Son and his human existence.

disposes one who submits and one who unites this asymmetry in harmonious love. Barth seeks to understand the God who reveals himself in the economy as corresponding to who God is and in this sense is not seeking 'sharp distinctions' but rather similarities. Perhaps Molnar's concern with 'sharp distinctions' is a remnant of the traditional theological process of trying to ascertain who God is by negation? In terms of Barth's approach, Barth seeks to understand what the economy tells us of who God is and in this respect seeks in his theology of the correspondence between the divine and human existence of the Son to grasp what can be said of the divine life.

v) Thesis Structure

The thesis is structured in four chapters. Chapter one is concerned with Barth's adherence to the *filioque* clause as integral to his I/1 doctrine of the Trinity as asymmetrically structured and follows Barth's argument for its importance. It is Barth's deliberate asymmetrical structuring of his doctrine of the Trinity which explains why he could see 'command and obedience' in God as entirely consistent with the oneness of God's existence and will as opposed to Rowan Williams's suggestion that the obedience of the Son as obedience in God 'produces one of the most unhelpful bits of hermetic mystification in the whole of the *Dogmatics*'.³⁰ Chapter two engages with Barth's doctrine of God in II/1 and II/2, showing that Barth articulated the event of election (II/2) in the light of his understanding of the triune God as the one who loves in freedom in the enclosing of time in eternity in the Son and uniting time and eternity in the Spirit (II/1). It is in II/2 that Barth begins to explore the event of election as the event in which the triune God whose existence is one of ordered giving and receiving in love reflects himself in himself (the Son) by himself (united by the Spirit). This interpretation of II/2, the triune God's act of reflection (election), begins to challenge McCormack's view that election is logically prior to Trinity although McCormack's stance is not fully challenged until Barth himself builds up his concept of correspondence as seen in III/2's discussion of the humanity of Christ where the use of *Entsprechung* begins to gather pace, in Barth's

³⁰ Williams, *KBSTM*, 175.

understanding of the humanity of Christ being ‘indirectly identical’ to his divinity, towards its full use in IV/1 and IV/2 where it is robustly expressed in obedience *ad extra* corresponding to obedience *ad intra*. Chapter three, therefore, considers Barth’s christologically grounded anthropology of III/2 in which the tentative comments made on election as the event of reflection in II/2 are more fully fleshed out in Barth’s construal of the incarnate Son as the *imago Dei* whose human existence in relationship is ‘indirectly identical’ to his divine existence in relationship. The Spirit unites the incarnate Son to the Father in time reflecting his uniting of the Son and Father in eternity. Chapter four argues that Barth’s articulation of the obedience of Christ (IV/2) as a reflection of the eternal obedience of the Son (IV/1) gives clarity to Barth’s II/2 doctrine of election as concomitant with his I/1 doctrine of the asymmetrical Trinity as seen in the way, for example, in which he draws the *filioque* clause through all the proceeding part volumes as integral to his theological programme as well as expounding the concepts of correspondence, reflection and mirroring explored in III/2 with its stress upon Christ as the *imago Dei* whose human existence is ‘indirectly identical’ to his divine. Molnar’s argument that Barth held to a ‘clear and sharp distinction’ between the economic and immanent Trinity (whereas Barth prefers to talk in terms of correspondence) as well as the *logos asarkos* as an important principle (the traditional use of which Barth sees as abstract) goes some way to explaining why Molnar, following T.F. Torrance, is not able to understand why Barth asserted the obedience of Christ as the ‘strangely final logical continuation [of] the history in which He is God’ (IV/1, 203), but like McCormack attempts to explain why what Barth said could not possibly be what he meant to say.³¹ It is our contention that what Barth said and said again is what he meant to say and that the doctrine of the Trinity, the doctrine of election, the doctrine of time being enclosed in eternity, the christologically grounded anthropology of III/2 and the doctrine of the obedience of Christ as that which corresponds to the eternal obedience of the Son form a seamless theological whole whose structural consistency is not seen until the whole story from I/1 to IV/2 is traversed.

³¹ Molnar, *DFDIT*, 323,

vi) Some Comments on Key Terms

Before progressing, whilst clarification of some of the key terms, as used by Barth and central to this thesis, such as ‘correspondence’, ‘overflowing’ and ‘reflecting’ or ‘mirroring’, might be considered to be of benefit, it is very difficult to offer definitive definitions because Barth himself does not offer such definitions and is often found using several of these terms in rapid succession or in groups as if to give a flavour of what he considers to be an event. In what follows we therefore do not propose clinical definitions but simply attempt to express something of what Barth perhaps has in mind and readily accept that much more detailed work would have to be done on the theological concepts encapsulated by these terms than this thesis can possibly offer. The following comments are therefore tentative and relate strictly to those areas we have researched. With regard to the concept of correspondence as used by Barth, which in itself would make a demanding research topic, there seems to be an increasing weight of meaning applied to this concept as the *Dogmatics* progresses. Barth uses the term in volume I but it seems to take on a new lease of life once into volume II, gathering pace and significance thereafter. It is also to be noted that these terms circle around one another and feed into one another and that there is a sense in which they are difficult to separate into distinct theologoumenon. Again, this is because, as used by Barth, the terms are expressive of events in which God’s sovereignty and grace is displayed.

The term overflowing [*Ueberstroemen*], overflows [*Ueberstroemt*], is used to express the gracious action of the triune God in becoming the creator God and so acting outwardly towards that which he creates as not God. Barth will at times describe the overflowing of God as the sovereign grace of becoming outward (‘divine transition’) as an event of divine spontaneity in which God’s love super-abounds or with reference to the Son assuming a human existence, as an event in which God extends his being into unity with that which he posits as other.³² Closely tied to the concept of ‘overflowing’ is the stress on God’s determining action as a sovereign event.³³ God is free and powerful to act out-with himself, establishing, as an expression of his abundant love, that which is not God and yet maintaining and

³² See, for example, II/1, 649, IV/1, 201 and II/1, 662 respectively.

³³ See, for example, III/2, 188.

enabling this ontological otherness in relationship to himself. There is a two-fold cascade, if you like, to God's overflowing as the gracious outpouring of his active love and commitment: i) the establishing and determining of the human existence to be assumed by the Son as that which reflects the Son and ii) the establishing and determining of all other human existence as that held within the human existence of the Son. There is also creation itself, the stage upon which all that which is not God happens as event, but for simplification we leave this to one side except to point out that Barth sees this too as enclosed within the Son.

In a similar way to the concept of 'overflowing', the term 'correspondence' [*Entsprechung*], 'corresponds' [*entspricht*], is tied to the event that Barth expresses as divine determination. Whilst the concept of 'overflowing' expresses the irreversible direction of God's action from himself as sovereign to all he creates and determines, the concept of 'correspondence' expresses that God's determining action out-with himself is in total harmony with who he is as God. There seems to be three levels to the way Barth uses the concept of correspondence as the bringing to pass of something determined by God which is in total harmony with who God is as God: i) the correspondence between the economic and immanent Trinity ii) the correspondence between the human existence (as constitutionally one with mankind) and divine existence (as divine status) of the Son, the *imago Dei* and iii) the correspondence between mankind's existence and the human existence of the Son, the *analogia relationis*.

i) God determines himself to work out-with himself such that what he does out-with himself corresponds or mirrors or reflects to who he is. This is an act of sovereignty, of the power and freedom of God, as an event in which the triune God brings it to pass that there be his work *ad extra*, an economic act, in which what he does in acting towards it as determining event reflects who he is.

ii) The triune God determines the human existence of the Son, the constitutional element that is ontologically not God, as a reflection of who the Son is, his divine status. Man is not self-determining, not even this man. The human constitution taken by the Son is determined in accordance with who the Son is as God, that is, in accordance with the Son in his relationship to the Father in the Spirit. The

relationship the Son has with the Father in the unity of the Spirit is ‘immediate and direct’ and so the event of divine determination is ‘immediate and direct’ triune enabling so that this human existence exists in a unique and singular way, mirroring the Son himself.³⁴ The Son encloses his human existence in himself, in the space he graciously makes within himself. His human existence is in direct contact, if you like, with himself and molded by himself in his unity to the Father in the Spirit and therefore is brought into total harmony with himself. The Son’s human existence is determined as the image of God, that is, the image of the Son. Hence, the obedience of Jesus reflects, corresponds to, the obedience of the Son.

iii) God determines all other human existence as that which is not God but as that which is held in relationship to God by God and also held in relationship to fellow humans by God. This event of determination by God bringing to pass that that which is not God is, in the case of mankind, not ‘immediate and direct’ but mediated by Jesus, who is the Son in human existence. Because Barth operates with a concept of mankind being enclosed in the human existence of the Son, mankind is not in direct contact with God but is held twice removed, so to speak, from divine existence. Mankind is held within the Son’s human existence and the Son’s human existence is held within the Son. The correspondence between mankind’s human existence and the Son’s human existence is expressed by Barth as being an *analogia relationis*. It is not an *analogia entis* because human existence is not a reflection of God’s sovereign existence but a reflection of the Son’s human existence. The Son’s human existence itself is not a reflection of God’s sovereign existence, an *analogia entis*, because it too is determined by God and not self-determining, but rather a reflection of God the Son’s ordered orientation to the divine other that is his triune life. Although the human existence of the Son is the *imago Dei*, it is the image of the obedient Son in his ordered relationship to the Father in the unity of the Spirit and therefore also the *analogia relationis* to God. When Barth therefore considers mankind’s existence in terms of an *analogia relationis* to Christ, or corresponding to Christ, he is found discussing our freedom to obedience, to right relationship with God and therefore others. It has to be acknowledged too that our existence as an *analogia relationis* to Christ is only such because of Christ’s redemptive action towards us in enclosing us

³⁴ For references to the ‘immediate and direct’ aspect of the Son’s relationship to the Father see III/2, 49.

in him. We are brought into total harmony with Christ in our relation to God and others only as held in Christ who is obedient on our behalf.

Barth's use of the concept of 'correspondence' in this three-fold way shows a tiered system of implication. By this we mean that at each level of its use, there is a strict and irreversible direction of implication between the levels. That our true human existence corresponds to Christ's human existence means that our true human obedience rests upon (depends upon) Christ's. That Christ's human obedience corresponds to the Son's divine obedience means that the Son's obedience as man rests upon (depends upon) the Son's obedience as God. That the economic Trinity corresponds to the immanent Trinity means that God's determining action out-with himself rests upon (depends upon) who he is as the free and sovereign God. There is a strict direction of determination to Barth's use of the concept of 'correspondence'.

Barth's use of terms such as 'mirror' [*das Bild*], 'mirrors' [*bildet*], 'reflection' [*Abbildung, den reflex*], 'reflects' [*spiegelt*] function to express the direction of correspondence or direction of determination from that which brings something to pass to that which is brought to pass such that that which is brought to pass exactly corresponds to that which determines it. It is self-evident that the terms correspondence and reflection feed into one another and explicate one another and Barth is often found using these terms interchangeably. That the Son's human existence be a mirror image ('indirectly identical') of his divine existence is not so difficult to conceptualise, but more difficult theologically is Barth's suggestion of the economic Trinity being a mirror image of the immanent; God electing to reflect himself in the event of election. In what sense can it be said that God's action in his determining work towards all that is not God is 'indirectly identical' to or the exact image of who God is as God? There is in this a distinction between who God is in himself and his actions in the economy but one has to bear in mind that this distinction is the distinction of correspondence. God's actions *ad extra* exactly correspond to who God is *ad intra*. Barth is emphatic that God is within himself activity and movement with a direction of determination from the Father to the Son in the unity of the Spirit. It is this triune God who acts in the economy. The actions of the triune God towards the space freely willed by, and posited in, the Son in obedience to the Father in the unity of the Spirit 'mirror' the actions of the Father, Son

and Spirit towards one another in their divine life of giving and receiving in love. The distinction of correspondence, as expressed in the term 'reflection' or 'mirror', does not split God into two Gods, but stresses that the sovereign God is not to be confused with, nor determined by, his creation towards which he freely acts. God's action out-with himself is a free giving of himself that nevertheless remains out of mankind's grasp and containing in terms of comprehensibility. Whilst giving himself to be known, God also remains free to be incomprehensible. Barth's use of the terms 'reflection' and 'mirror', and the concept of the distinction of correspondence bound up in these terms, maintains that there are God given limits to our knowing.

II

Barth's Defence of the Doctrine of the Double Procession of the Holy Spirit in Church Dogmatics I/1

i) Introduction

Whilst Barth challenged and revised many major aspects of the thought of his predecessors he adhered to the doctrine of the double procession of the Holy Spirit, hereafter referred to as the *filioque* clause, rigorously. In I/1 we find a sustained attack on those who would question the theological correctness of the *filioque* clause but before going into the detail of this the historical development of the doctrine will be outlined.³⁵

ii) The Theological Form of the *Filioque* Clause and its Historical Development as a Credal Confession

'*Filioque*' means 'and the Son'. The word was added by the Latin church, after much dispute between Rome and Constantinople over a period of several hundred years, to the original Niceano-Constantinopolitan creed's statement that the 'Spirit proceeds from the Father' to read that the 'Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son'. This statement is referred to as the 'double procession' of the Holy Spirit.

³⁵ For a sustained and persuasive account of the problems associated with christologies tied up with the *filioque* clause see: *The Forgotten Trinity, vol. 1, The Report of the BCC Study Commission on Trinitarian Doctrine Today* (London, BCC, 1989).

The history and controversy of the *filioque* clause is covered succinctly by Walter Kasper, the source of much that is outlined below.³⁶ The clause conceptualises the relationship of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit as ‘loving grace and embrace’ whereby the ‘Father [who] knows and expresses himself in the Son ... also wills or is moved by love to unite himself to this image of himself’ and ‘in like manner, the Son gives himself wholly to the Father in love’.³⁷ This interpretation of the Holy Spirit as ‘mutual and reciprocal love between Father and Son’ is considered by Kasper to be ‘an essential of Latin pneumatology’, established especially by Augustine who built upon Hilary’s concept of the Holy Spirit as the ‘sweet blessedness of the Begetter and the Begotten’ and taken up by both Anselm and Aquinas.³⁸

Latin theology thus uses a symmetrical representational model according to which the movement of trinitarian life is rounded off in the Holy Spirit in a kind of circular movement. (216)

Augustine wanted to affirm also the ‘Father as sole origin’ of the Spirit and ‘[t]herefore, despite his firmly asserted thesis that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, Augustine insisted that the Holy Spirit proceeds originally (*principaliter*) from the Father.’³⁹ Aquinas accepted this, describing the Father as the *fons totius trinitatis* and was able to say that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son.⁴⁰ Only in Anselm of Canterbury is no room made for this point of view’ argues Kasper and ‘[u]nfortunately it was Anselm who influenced the later theological tradition at this point’.⁴¹ In book fifteen, 47, of *De Trinitate*, Serge Lancel sees Augustine returning ‘*in fine*’ to comments that thitherto (book fifteen, 29) had

³⁶ Kasper, Walter, *The God of Jesus Christ* (London, SCM, 1984); thereafter *GJC*. See also Pannenberg, W., *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh, T & T Clark, 1991) chapter five for scholarly coverage of the theological problems underlying the development of the *filioque* and Pelikan, Jaroslav., *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*, vol. 2, *The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (600-1700)*, (Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press, 1977) 183-198.

³⁷ Kasper, *GJC*, 215f.

³⁸ See Augustine, *De Trinitate*, vi, 10; Hilary of Poitiers, *On the Trinity*, 2; Anselm of Canterbury, vol. 3, *The Procession of the Holy Spirit*, ed., and trans., Hopkins, Jasper and Richardson, Herbert (Toronto and New York, Edwin Muller, 1976); Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, iv.

³⁹ Kasper, *GJC*, 216. Barth seeks to articulate the divine asymmetry revealed *ad extra* as true of the Trinity *ad intra*. The ‘*principaliter*’ of Augustine is important in this respect. Whether Augustine’s doctrine of the Trinity is symmetrical is open to debate.

⁴⁰ Aquinas, *Summa*, iv, 19.

⁴¹ See also Lancel, Serge, *St. Augustine*, trans., Nevill, Antonia (London, SCM, 2002) 386 who notes Augustine’s formulae as ‘stiffened by the scholasticism of the mediaeval West’. Anselm’s hardened form of the *filioque* clause certainly seems evident in Barth’s stance, but in that Augustine’s ‘*principaliter*’ is also evident, it would be instructive to know in greater detail the respective impact of these theologians on Barth’s thinking.

perhaps been made rather hastily regarding the procession of the Spirit from the Father and Son as a procession originating from the Father ‘as from its first principle’, *principaliter*.⁴² Augustine argues in XV, 47 that the Father ‘who in himself has the property of being the principle from which the Spirit proceeds, has similarly given the Son the property of being the principle from which the Spirit proceeds’. There is an order of giving from the Father to the Son and from both to the Spirit and this happens timelessly.⁴³ The concept of ‘principaliter’ has thus been broadened.⁴⁴

Kasper brings to notice a second model of Latin pneumatology built upon Augustine’s concept of trinitarian love.⁴⁵ Richard St. Victor understood the perfect love of God as ‘wholly ec-static’ existing as Father (the ‘pure giver (*gratuitus*)’), the Son (as ‘gift wholly given away’ and ‘wholly received from another (*debitus*)’ and in turn ‘wholly given away (*gratuitus*)’ and the Holy Spirit (as ‘gift wholly received (*debitus*)’ and ‘the common beloved (*condilectus*) of Father and Son’). For this thinker the Spirit is ‘gift in an unqualified sense’, that is, the Spirit is the unrestricted gift of the Father to the Son, and the unrestricted reciprocity of love from the Son to the Father.⁴⁶ According to Kasper this model ‘more clearly and consistently brings out the status of the Father as source who gives love to the Son, a love which the Son who possesses it as given to him by the Father, together with the Father who possesses it as ungiven, then bestows as the Spirit’. However it was the less nuanced model of the Spirit as the ‘reciprocal love of Father and Son’ that dominated in the west and for the first eight centuries existed alongside the Greek view as expressed by John of Damascus: the Spirit proceeding from the Father, ‘communicated through the Son’ and received by the world, an active agent creating by ‘his own power’ making ‘all things be’ and sanctifying and holding all together.⁴⁷ With Damascus’ view the Father is seen as the ‘sole source within the Godhead’ and the Spirit as an active

⁴² Lancel, *St. Augustine*, 386 citing *De Trinitate*, XV.29.

⁴³ ‘[b]ut let no one think of any times therein which imply a sooner or later; because these things are not there at all’; ‘without any beginning of time’; ‘without any interval of time’. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, XV, 47. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, ed., Shedd, William, .trans., Hadden, Arthur, 1887, (Reprinted Edinburgh, T & T Clark, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Eerdmans, 1993)

⁴⁴ *De Trinitate*, XV. Lancel notes that this conception of procession ‘clearly differed’ from the eastern ‘*ekporeusis*’ with its associated concept of the Father as the ‘unique principle of the Trinity’, Lancel, *St. Augustine*, 386.

⁴⁵ Love was three elements ‘the lover, the beloved, and the love itself’. *De Trinitate*, viii,10.

⁴⁶ Richard St. Victor, *De Trinitate*, iii, 2ff. This model sees the Spirit as being given or being received with regard to the Father and Son, not as giver.

⁴⁷ John of Damascus, *de fide orth*, I, 8 from Kasper, *GJC*, 217.

creative agent in relation to the world. This latter point pulls away from the Latin conception which, Kasper notes, is ‘in danger of turning the life of God in the Holy Spirit into something self-enclosed and not turning outward to the world and history’, 217.⁴⁸

For both the Latins and the Greeks the basic text is John 15:26 ‘where the Spirit is described as one ‘who proceeds from the Father’ (*ho para ton patros ekporeuetai*).’⁴⁹ In the Nicene-Constantinopolitan creed all traditions replace *para* (beside, past, beyond) with *ek* and *ekporeuetai* with *ekporeuomenon* ‘in order to bring out not only the ‘temporal procession but the abiding eternal procession.’ According to Kasper, the theological tension between the Greeks and Latins began when the Vulgate translated *ekporeuetai* as *procedit*. The Greek verb has a more specific meaning which the more general meaning of *processio* could not handle; that *ekporeuesthai* means to ‘stream forth from’ or ‘emerge from’ and so is applicable only to the Father as the unoriginated origin. The ‘co-operation of the Son in the procession of the Holy Spirit, on the other hand, must be described by the verb *proienai*’, a ‘fine distinction’ which the Latin does not make. Rather, ‘*processio*’ is a general concept which is applied to ‘all of the inter-trinitarian processes’, i.e., ‘not only to the coming forth of the Spirit from the Father, but also to the generation of the Son and to the breathing of the Holy Spirit through the Son’ and as a result of this, Kasper continues, Latin theology had to deal with a problem the Greeks did not have, that of the *processio* of the Son from the Father and the *processio* of the Holy Spirit from the Father, suggesting two sons, that is, the Latins had to find a way of distinguishing the Son from the Spirit in terms of their respective origins, something the Greeks had already done with their language of *ekporeuomenon* and *proienai*. The Latins solved their problem by ‘giving the Son a role in procession of the Spirit

⁴⁸ A point made many times by Colin Gunton, see for example, *Becoming and Being* (London, SCM, Second Edition, 2001) Epilogue, 225-245. Gunton saw Richard St. Victor, as well as Hilary, as holding an ‘outward going’ concept of the Trinity as opposed to Augustine’s ‘inward turning circle’ (238f.). Gunton argues that Augustine’s trinitarian inwardness is due to seeing the Spirit as an ‘impersonal link closing the gap, so to speak, between those two who are effectively the persons of the Godhead’ as opposed to the Cappadocian concept of ‘the three persons perichoretically constituting the unity of God’ (232), an insight attributed to Basil of Caesarea, whereby God is ‘a sort of continuous and indivisible community’ and the Spirit as the one who ‘completes the divine and blessed Trinity’. Basil of Caesarea, *Letters*, 38,4 from Gunton, *Becoming and Being*, 232 and Basil, *Hex. 2. 6* from Gunton, Colin, E., *Act and Being: Towards a Theology of Divine Attributes* (London, SCM, 2002) 120, respectively.

⁴⁹ Kasper, *GJC*, 217f.

from the Father,’ not as *principaliter* but ‘only in virtue of the being he has received from the Father.’ In this respect it could be argued that the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son is considered as a procession from a single principle avoiding any notion of two principles of origin with regard to the Spirit. So although Latin theology can say with Aquinas that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, and so recognise a differentiation of roles such that the Father is the *fons* and the Son breathes the Spirit as given him so to do by the Father, this distinction is not expressed in the credal form of the *filioque*.⁵⁰ Greek theology on the other hand expresses the special role of the Father in its credal formulations but is silent about the relation of the Spirit to the Son. Kasper refers to John. 14.16, 27; Gal. 4.6; Rom, 8.9; Phil. 1.19 and Rev.22.1 as validation that the economy of salvation does make a case for the Son being involved somehow in the procession of the Spirit *ad intra* and points out that the early Greek fathers ‘did not object to early formulations of the *filioque* or its equivalent in Ambrose, Augustine and Leo the Great’ and that, according to Yves Congar, ‘formulations are to be found in some Greek Fathers, especially Athanasius, Cyril of Alexandria and even Basil, that sound like the Western *filioque*’ although they do speak mostly of *processio* through the Son.⁵¹

In the seventh century Maximus the Confessor attempted to mediate between the Greek and Latin position and for a short time there was ecumenical unity. In the fifth to seventh centuries ‘in various provincial Synods of Toledo’ the theological construct of the *filioque* gradually became dogmatic confession probably as a defence against an offshoot of Arianism, Priscillianism, where theologians had to assert once again the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father and therefore the Spirit being the Spirit of both. In this sense, the *filioque* was not used against the East but was useful in defending the *homoousios* at a time when contacts with the East were weak. Eventually ‘mutual understanding ceased’ between the two traditions at the council of Frankfurt in 794 when Charlemagne objected to the 787 Second Council of Nicaea’s confession of the procession of the Holy Spirit ‘from the Father through the Son’ and

⁵⁰ But if in Anselm no room is found for this *principaliter*, then he has to find the distinction in another way; this he does by arguing that to say ‘proceed from’ is to say ‘exist from’, and either the Son must exist from the Spirit or the Spirit must exist from the Son.

⁵¹ Congar, Yves, ‘I Believe in the Holy Spirit’, in Smith, D., ed., *The River of Life Flows in the East and in the West*, (London, Geoffrey Chapman, 1983) 30ff, 35f, from Kasper, *ibid.*, 218.

proclaimed the *filioque* clause ‘which had meanwhile been received in the West.’⁵² In 809 at the Council of Aachen the *filioque* was officially added to the Niceo-Constantinopolitan Creed. Kasper notes that Rome was ‘very reserved and even opposed to the development’ and Leo III, although he approved the teaching of the *filioque*, defended Nicaea and refused to add to the creed. Controversy broke out when the Frankish monks in St Sabbas in Jerusalem introduced the *filioque* clause into the creed of the Mass, but Leo held firm against adding to the creed. On the succession of Pope Benedict VIII, and under the pressure of Emperor Henry II, the papal authority finally relented and the *filioque* clause was incorporated into the creed of the mass of the King’s coronation in 1014. The Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 and the Second Council of Lyon of 1274 further defined the doctrine of double procession, the 1274 council firmly rejecting the Eastern view that the doctrine involved two principles of origin in the Trinity, the primary concern of the West being the unity and equality of the Trinity; the *homoousios* of the Father, the Son and Spirit.

The East saw the credal *filioque* as a violation of the seventh canon of the 431 Council of Ephesus which had deemed the confession of faith as complete. The Latins saw the *filioque* clause as simply explaining the confession. In the ninth century Patriarch Photius made a dogmatic stand against the *filioque* by setting in its place *ek monon tou patros* (from the Father alone) brushing aside the procession from the Father through the Son and thereby setting up a polemic and rendering impossible any agreement with the West. In the fourteenth century Gregory Palamas stoked the embers of the dispute by his assertion that the faithful are given the gift of the Spirit as ‘radiance and glory (*energeia*)’ not the divine substance itself, the giver of the gift, but only the uncreated gift or action and in that there is no ‘real indwelling’ of the Holy Spirit in the church it is not possible to argue back from the economic to the immanent Trinity. Kasper calls this a ‘radical *theologia negativa*’ re-emerging in the work of the Neopalamite theologians, especially Lossky.⁵³ Preferable, he argues, is

⁵² Kasper, *GJC*, 219.

⁵³ Lossky, Vladimir, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (Cambridge and London, James Clark, 1957). For a thought provoking and important contribution to this debate see Wenderburg, Dorothea, ‘From the Cappadocian Fathers to Gregory Palamas: the Defeat of Trinitarian Theology’ in *Studia Patristica* 17, 1 (1982) 194-8, hereafter *CFGP*.

the ‘more historical judgement’ of Bolotov and on the whole believes the Orthodox to regard the *filioque* as ‘canonically irregular’ rather than ‘dynamic error.’⁵⁴

Finally, from an early date the Latin Church saw non-acceptance of the *filioque* clause as heretical. Although a reunion was hoped for at the 1439-45 Council of Florence it did not transpire and to date Pope Benedict XIV’s decisions of 1742 and 1755 remain normative, that is, that the ‘Uniate Eastern Churches’ be allowed the use of the unaltered creed of 381 and as such the two formulas of the East and West are ‘complementary’.⁵⁵ The western form of the Nicene Creed was inherited by the churches of the Reformation and Karl Barth is noteworthy in his spirited defence of the *filioque* clause but before considering the details of this it will be instructive to follow Barth’s thinking on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit which immediately precedes his argument.

iii) The Eternal Spirit in I/1 of Karl Barth’s Church Dogmatics⁵⁶

In volume I of the Church Dogmatics Barth is writing about revelation and is concerned to maintain the asymmetry of the divine initiative; God is first in all things. Nowhere is this more controversial than in his assertion that not only from without but from within ourselves, God is Lord and his presence miraculous.⁵⁷ Prior to the shift in Barth’s doctrine of election from a pneumatological to a radical christocentric focus,

⁵⁴ Kasper, *GJC*, 220, referring to Bolotov ‘Theses on the filioque’, 1898, see 362 note 79. McIntyre suggests that the *filioque* ‘may be a tidier way of expressing’ the fact, shared by East and West alike, that the Father is known through the Son in the Spirit, but are there not deep theological differences between the two sides on how this fact is understood and that this is to do with two quite different trinitarian theologies? McIntyre, J., ‘The Holy Spirit in Greek Patristic Thought’ in *Scottish Journal of Theology*, 7 (1954) 353-375.

⁵⁵ Kasper, *GJC*, 221.

⁵⁶ All page references for the remainder of the chapter, in parenthesis in the text, are to *Church Dogmatics* I/1 unless stated otherwise, 466-89.

⁵⁷ To this end Barth notes that this controversial aspect of trinitarian doctrine had to be established ‘before the doctrine of grace ... could become a problem, before the struggle and victory of Augustine over Pelagius could take place’, 468. This dogma is also the background to the Reformed doctrine of ‘justification by faith’ and Barth saw nineteenth century Protestant theology as ‘a regression to pre-Nicene obscurities and ambiguities regarding the Spirit’, 468. For an account of Barth’s I/1 doctrine of election ‘in Christ, by the Spirit’ with its Calvinistic double predestination hue being essentially of the *Goettingen Dogmatics* era see McDonald, Suzanne, ‘Barth’s ‘Other’ Doctrine of Election in the Church Dogmatics’ in *International Journal of Systematic Theology*, 9, 2 (2007) 134-147, 138.

Barth's I/1 doctrine of election is, as McCormack has shown, pneumatocentric, that is, the Spirit as Revealedness makes known Christ in the believer as election happens moment by moment to particular people.⁵⁸

The Eternal Spirit 'is of the essence of God Himself' and in the event of revelation is the 'subjective element' (466ff.). The Spirit of God is 'in revelation what He is antecedently in Himself', that is, the economic Trinity reveals the immanent. Having described briefly the limited development of the doctrine of the Spirit up until the fifth century formulation in the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan Creed Barth notes that 'for the full development of the doctrine we shall have to look as late as the final reception of the *filioque* into the creed of the Western liturgy (1014) and the schism of the Eastern Church occasioned by the rejection of this addition'. Barth contends that the doctrine of the Spirit is a difficult one, for whilst one can accept:

the author of revelation, the Father, is fully God, and perhaps that the Revealer, the Son, is also fully God in order to be able to be God's Revealer, the question remains open whether God has said that man's own presence at revelation, the reality of this encounter with the Revealer, is not his own work but is again in the full sense God's work. (467-68)

The Spirit is 'Revealedness'.⁵⁹ The doctrine of the 'autonomy' and deity of the Spirit as the 'Mediator of revelation to the subject', challenges mankind's propensity to 'regard his [own] faith as an active instrument'. The Spirit is the 'subjective element' in the event of revelation and is God himself working. Barth now briefly explores the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan Creed, paving the way to the *filioque* clause. 'With the Father and the Son [the Spirit] is the one sovereign divine Subject' but is so in a 'neutral way, neutral in the sense of distinct ... also in the sense of related, i.e., related, but a being to the Father and the Son, whose reciprocity is not a being against, but a being to and from and with one another' (469, emphasis mine).

This togetherness or communion of the Father and the Son is the Holy Spirit. The specific element in the divine mode of being of the Holy Spirit thus consists paradoxically enough, in the fact that He is the common factor in the mode of being of God the Father and that of God the Son. He is what is common to them, not in so far as they are one God, but in so far as they are the Father and the Son. (469).

⁵⁸ McCormack, Bruce L., *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology: Its Genesis and Development, 1909-1936* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997) 454-5, 460-1, hereafter *KBCRDT*.

⁵⁹ I/1, 295ff.

To this Barth adds Augustine, *De Trin.*, vi, 5, 7, ‘the Holy Spirit, whatever he is, is common to Father and Son’ (*Spiritus sanctus commune aliquid est Patris et Filii*); John of Damascus, *Ekdos*, I, 13, the Spirit stands ‘in the middle between the Begotten and Unbegotten’ and Anselm, *Ep. De incarn.*, 2, ‘*Nomen Spiritus sancti non est alienum a Patre et filio, quia uterque est spiritus et sanctus*’ (469). The Spirit’s mode of being is that he is the mode of communion between the Father and the Son. Barth concludes:

even if the Father and the Son might be called “person”..., “the Holy Spirit could not possibly be regarded as the third “person” ... He is not a third spiritual Subject, a third I, a third Lord side by side with two others. He is a third mode of being of the one divine Subject or Lord. (469)

Barth is, of course, maintaining the western stress on the one *ousia* and displaying his discomfort with the eastern use of ‘person’ to refer to the triune identities being, it seems, more comfortable with an understanding of the Spirit as the mode of loving communion between the Father and Son, whose common denominator with Father and Son is divine existence. Whilst it is well known that Barth was against the use of the word ‘person’ to refer to the *hypostasis* and is taking a side swipe at those who do, the above suggestion that even if the Father and Son might be thought of as divine ‘persons’, the Holy Spirit could not, is an interesting and possibly revealing stance and perhaps throws more light on Barth’s preference to talk of the Spirit as ‘neutral’.⁶⁰ Certainly Barth would not want to refer to the Father and Son as two divine subjects or ‘I’s with the potential suggestion of duotheism and in the assertion that to call the Spirit ‘person’ is to suggest a ‘third I’, Barth is being characteristically coy. Whatever is to be made of the Spirit as that which is common to the Father and the Son in so far as they are the Father and Son and not in so far as they are one God, Barth, in his acceptance of the Spirit as the bond of communion, knowledge or love, sits at Augustine’s and Anselm’s feet, amongst other Latins, and piles up reference after reference to *De Trinitate* and certain of Anselm’s works:

He is *communio quaedam consubstantialis* (Augustine, *De Trin.*, XV, 27, 50).
He is the *vinculum pacis* (Eph.4.3), the *amor*, the *caritas*, the mutual *donum*

⁶⁰ The Spirit as ‘neuter’? Rowan Williams picks up on this as a deficient pneumatology due to the Barth’s version of the *filioque*: ‘Barth on the Triune God’, in Sykes, S.W., ed., *Karl Barth: Studies of His Theological Method* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1979) 147-93, 169. See also Colin Gunton’s comments, *Becoming and Being*, 232f.

between Father and the Son, as it has often been put in the train of Augustine. He is thus the love in which God (loves Himself ...) as the Father loves the Son and as the Son loves the Father. (470)⁶¹

The togetherness of the Father and Son is one principal act of reciprocal love for 'God cannot be or do anything other or less than what is equal to Himself' and so the Father and Son are 'together only in their own principal' and this is 'the breathing of the Holy Spirit or the Holy Spirit Himself' for the work is what is equal to them, 'and this equal is the Holy Spirit' (470).⁶² Although not stated explicitly, the image produced by Barth, of the God who is simultaneously Father generating, Son generated and both breathing the Spirit who unites them, is one which is trying to circumnavigate static concepts of principles of origin. Barth is articulating a triune event. In his very being, that is, *ad intra*, God is 'the act of communion, the act of impartation, love, gift' and so he is 'in this revelation', that is, *ad extra*, but

'Not *vice versa*! We know Him in His revelation. But He is not this because He is it in His revelation; because He is it antecedently in Himself, He is also it in His revelation'. (471)

Because the Spirit is the gift of the Father to the Son and the Son to the Father, their openness to one another, he is also the gift given by God who opens our minds to God; the gift of our communication with God. Barth defines the Spirit as 'the Lord who acts on us in revelation as the Redeemer' simply doing in time 'what He does eternally in God, because this mode of being of His in revelation is also a mode of being of the hidden essence of God', (471f., emphasis mine). He is the 'giving gift' in revelation because he is the 'gift given' between the Father and Son. Barth sees this 'neutral' Spirit as doing something eternally in God even though he is wholly given and does not give existence to the Father and Son. The doing (act) of the Spirit *ad intra* is his existence (being), mode of being, as the bond of communion. The giving of the Father (as generation and spiration) and Son (as spiration) is used very specifically as giving divine existence. The action of the Spirit is not an action of communicating divine existence as an originating act, giving existence, but the Spirit does something towards the Father and Son in the sense that his mode of being bonds the Father and Son. That the Father and Son are 'together only in their own principle' is to say that they are together only as they breathe, as one, the Holy Spirit. The Spirit

⁶¹ Citing Augustine, *De Trinitate*, XV, 19, 37.

⁶² Citing Augustine, *De Trinitate*, VI, 5, 7, Anslem, *Prosl.*, 23 & *Monol.*, 53.

is the divine mode of existence in which the Father and Son mutually indwell one another; in which *perichoresis* happens as event.

Barth argues that the basis for these assertions is the textural witness to revelation which tells us that the Spirit is the one who is the mode of our appropriation of God by God. We are brought into relationship with the divine other by the divine other whose mode of being is to relate distinctness to distinctness as one who is 'being to, from and with the other'; as one who is distinct, neutral, related. *Ad intra* the Spirit does not oppose the distinctness of the Father and Son but as harmonious communion is the mode who unites them. Barth has a concept of the Spirit as one who is reciprocity in relatedness *ad intra*. Many of the recent criticisms made of Barth's construal of the becoming of the immanent Trinity are to do with the omission of a concept of the personal Spirit actively constituting the Father and Son as who they are but Barth would see the Spirit as being involved in the reciprocal relatedness of the Trinity in that the Spirit, even as 'neuter', is the one in whom the Father and Son are related for as they bring the Spirit forth in the simultaneity that is the eternal becoming of the one God, relatedness between the Father and Son happens.⁶³ Even as 'pure Receiver' of divine existence from the Father and Son, there is in Barth's account grounds to say the Spirit constitutes the relatedness of the Father and Son, for the giving of the Father and Son to one another, their communion, is the Holy Spirit.⁶⁴ Objections to Barth's stance have been numerous, not least the logic of 'pure Receiver' as a receiving which is also some form of enabling relatedness, but here too, in the concept of 'pure Receiver' we find Barth operating with an asymmetrical concept of the Trinity *ad intra*, the order and *telos* of the triune life, as an ordering which has its origin from the Father to the Son and even, perhaps, completed in the Spirit.⁶⁵ Barth might not have articulated the Spirit as a 'person' in the sense preferred by more recent trinitarian theologians nor expressed the Spirit's

⁶³ The *repetitio aeternitatis in aeternitate*; 'He possesses Himself as Father, i.e., pure Giver, as Son, i.e., Receiver and Giver, and as Spirit, i.e., pure Receiver', 364. This is a version of the position taken by Richard St. Victor, page 49 above.

⁶⁴ Jenson's comment on Barth that '[w]ithout the Father there would be no Son or Spirit – but it is not said that without the Spirit the Father and Son would not occur' is an over-simplification of the situation for Barth is adamant that without the Spirit as the bond of communion the Father and Son are not who they are. Jenson R.W., *God After God: the God of the Past and the God of the Future, Seen in the Work of Karl Barth* (Indiapolis and New York, Bobbs-Merrill, 1969) 173. Much depends how one articulates 'involved', as the eternal bond of love, the Spirit is, in Barth's account, certainly involved.

⁶⁵ Barth might well have seen something of Basil's concept of the Spirit as the one who 'completes the divine and blessed Trinity' in his own. Basil, *Hex.* 2.6.

relating of Father to Son in terms of origins, i.e., being the one through whom the Father begets the Son, nor spoke of the Spirit as constituting the Father and Son's communion but that is not to say that his concept of the Spirit, even as 'neuter', did not provide the function of actively constituting the relationship of Father and Son as the one in whom they are united.

But in this section, which displays a leaning towards the more philosophical elements of the tradition of the doctrine of the *filioque* clause as opposed to a textual grappling (of which we know Barth to be quite capable) with the actual acts of the Holy Spirit in relation not only to the early church (Barth has done this to his satisfaction at least in his section 'God as Redeemer', 448-466) but also, and most importantly perhaps, to Christ, Barth concerns are primarily to do with revelation and particularly the assertion that a person's awareness of God in whichever terms one might express this be it experience, knowledge or faith is itself the act of the triune God in his mode of being the Holy Spirit whereby 'man is, as it were challenged in his own house' (468). In this sense, Barth's articulation of the Holy Spirit in terms of that which opens us up to God relating us to God ('Revealedness') as the mode of being who is eternal communion in God, is perhaps not so strange. Barth articulates the Spirit *ad intra* according to what he sees being done *ad extra*, and what he sees, at this stage of the *Dogmatics* at least, is the work of the Spirit communicating the benefits of Christ from our side according to the will of God; the mode who in our very thinking communes us to the Father and the Son. If the Spirit's action towards mankind is one of uniting mankind to the Father and Son as the Spirit of the Father and Son, then his action *ad intra* is one of uniting the Father and Son as the Spirit of both. That the Spirit receives his existence from the Father and Son does not seem to stop Barth from predicating an action which is distinctively his; uniting or bonding action. Barth's articulation of 'giving' in relation to the Father and Son is used very specifically. To 'give' *ad intra* means to communicate the divine essence; to give existence. The Father does this in generating the Son; the Son does this (along with the Father) in breathing the Spirit. The Spirit does not do this for he is the divine essence communicated. The Father is distinguished from the Son as 'pure giver', the Son from the Father as 'receiver and giver' and the Spirit from the Father and Son as 'pure receiver'. The divine essence communicated who is the Spirit, is to say the Spirit 'exists from' the Father and the Son. The triune becoming is ordered with an

asymmetrical *telos*. Anselm's argument of the distinction between Son and Spirit being denoted by who exists from whom is very helpful to Barth's asymmetrical concerns but Barth has to be careful that this is gleaned from the 'soil of revelation' (476).

Bearing these comments in mind, we shall briefly follow Barth's considerations of what it means to talk of i) the procession of the Spirit and ii) what this means for his distinction from the Son.

iii.i) The Third Clause – the Spirit 'Who Proceedeth'

Having affirmed the deity of the Spirit as the mode of being of God who 'acts on us in revelation' and therefore the 'gift given' between the Father and Son, Barth comes to the third clause on the Spirit as the one who proceeds. The Spirit is God from God, 'an emanation' of mode of being of the one essence of God which intrinsically remains and is the same' (473f.): '[i]n this case', Barth asserts, 'obviously the procession is not from the essence of God as such but from another mode of being or other modes of being of this essence' (474). This would fit in with Barth's understanding of the Spirit as that which is common to the Father and Son in so far as they are the Father and Son, but not in so far as they are the one God. The emanation of the Spirit is from the modes of Father and Son (he is common to them), not from the oneness (the essence or oneness of existence).⁶⁶ Barth seems to be leaning, here at least, more towards Augustine's take on the procession of the Spirit rather than Anselm, for Anselm was quite adamant that the Spirit proceeds from the essence of God, believing talk of procession from 'fatherhood' to be foolish, whereas Augustine would talk of the procession from 'fatherhood'.⁶⁷ Barth asserts that the Spirit

⁶⁶ Not that this concept is at all clear but my point is that Barth is maintaining a logical consistency in his constructs.

⁶⁷ For Anselm, to say that the Spirit proceeds from the Father is to say that the Spirit proceeds from 'the Father's relation ... a thoroughly foolish statement to make' for what has to be said is that the Spirit proceeds from the 'Father's deity', that is, from the divine essence. This was crucial to Anselm's argument for the *filioque* clause. Anselm of Canterbury, vol. 3, *The Procession of the Holy Spirit*, ed., and trans., Hopkins, Jasper and Richardson, Herbert (Toronto and New York, Edwin Muller, 1976) 198.

proceeds from another mode or modes because the procession of the Spirit is not to do with the *opus ad extra* but with the reality of the Holy Spirit in relation to the Father and Son; the divine procession has a strict, particular meaning for Barth; it is the Holy Spirit, the mode of divine essence who is the bond uniting the Father and Son.⁶⁸ It could perhaps be argued that Barth sees the modes of Father and Son as being modes who act towards one another in bringing forth the Spirit whereas Anselm would not predicate action of what he understood to be ‘relations’ in God even in regard to the inner life of God. When Barth talks about the work *ad extra* he maintains the dictum that the operations of the Trinity *ad extra* are undivided, and therefore the work of the one triune Subject albeit by appropriation; when he considers the activity of the modes one to another, *ad intra*, he denotes particularities of activity to the Father (generation and spiration) and Son (spiration) but, as we shall see, the Spirit does not act towards the Father and the Son in the same way that the Father and Son act towards the Spirit, that is, in the sense of giving existence to them as an originating event, for he is the ‘pure Receiver’.⁶⁹ So much hangs upon the articulation of the acts of the hypostases *ad extra* as revelatory of their actions *ad intra*. Barth does talk of the Holy Spirit as the divine mode in whom the Father and Son are, immediately and directly, united; the divine existence who is their union on the grounds that he is the divine mode in whom mankind appropriates God by God, but this act does not correspond to an originating event in God as an act of the Spirit, but the event in which God the Father and God the Son bring forth the Spirit and thereby appropriate one another in their mutual indwelling. The action of the Spirit *ad extra* therefore seems to correspond to the originating action of the Father and Son *ad intra* and to the *perichoresis* which flows from this act. The Spirit is breathed from the Father and Son and therefore received by mankind as the one in whom mankind appropriates God. Mankind’s appropriation of God, in which mankind is brought to dwell in God, is the gift of the Spirit breathed from the Father and Son.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Procession is not a result of the work *ad extra* as it is who God is in his freedom, regardless of whether he creates or not. The fact that God does create means that we are given to know, through the agent of ‘Revealedness’, of this procession.

⁶⁹ In Barth’s doctrine of the Trinity ‘[a]ppropriation safeguards differentiation, and therefore enables theologically coherent talk of the being of God as Father, Son and Spirit’, Webster, John, Translator’s Introduction, in Juengel, Eberhard, *God’s Being Is in Becoming: The Trinitarian Being of God in the Theology of Karl Barth. A Paraphrase*, trans., Webster, John (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Eerdmans, 2001) xv (hereafter *GBIIB*).

⁷⁰ As will be shown, Barth’s revised doctrine of election relocates this emphasis whereby the event of mankind dwelling in God as the Spirit of ‘Revealedness’ makes people aware of God in the here and

The clause ‘who proceedeth’ differentiates the Spirit from the Son picking up the ancient western problem of how to avoid the suggestion of two sons. There are not two revelations and two sons, but one revelation of the Son who ‘represents the element of God’s appropriation to man’ and the Spirit as ‘the element of God’s appropriation by man’ (474). This distinction of action *ad extra* remains *indivisia* and is only ‘to be distinguished *per appropriationem*’ but nevertheless points to a real distinction of action *ad intra* with regard to the triune modes, the Father and Son spirating the Spirit, and the Spirit as spirated, proceeding from them.⁷¹

iii.ii) The Spirit as ‘Revealedness’ as distinct from the Son as ‘Revelation’

The event of revelation means that there is a distinction of origins ‘in the reality of what the Son and the Spirit are antecedently in Themselves’ (474f.). This distinction of origins is important to Barth not only because he has to maintain that there are not two sons, but also because he wants to maintain the asymmetry of the divine life *ad intra*. The Spirit proceeds, the Son is generated, although the difficulty, as for Augustine, of differentiating procession from generation remains. Although *generatio*, *loquutio*, *spiratio*, *processio* are ‘only metaphors’ nevertheless, Barth notes, Augustine did try to give some positive content to the distinction in his ‘*imago trinitatis* in the human soul’ in *De trin.*, XV, 27, 50. Aquinas took up the model and ‘greatly expanded’ it although Augustine, ‘unlike Thomas’, recognised that the light thrown on analogy was always opposed by the infirmity of our sin which only God could heal and therefore, ultimately, he closed the treatise with a precautionary air. Barth does not accept the ‘entire theory of the *imago trinitatis*’ and Augustine’s own earlier concession that the distinctions remain a mystery in ‘C, *maxim* II, 14, 1’ (475),

now becomes the event in which the Son assumes a particular human existence in which the human existence of all mankind is enclosed and the Spirit unites Christ to the Father in whom all mankind is hid.

⁷¹ We need then to ‘acknowledge’, Barth believes, ‘that the Holy Ghost, both in revelation and also antecedently in Himself, is not just God, but in God [*in Gott*] independently [*selbststanding*], like the Father and the Son’. Whether it is helpful to conceive as the three hypostasis as ‘independently [*selbststanding*] *in Gott*’ remains to be seen.

before he started on the journey of the analogy of the human mind, is, Barth believes, the wiser position. The '*processio* of the Spirit and the Son may indeed be denoted [i.e. as *generatio* and *spiratio*] but cannot be comprehended'. Since the articulation of the divine processions is so problematic we can only say, so as not to stray too far from 'the soil of revelation', that there is a triune delimitation and that 'these three who delimit themselves from one another are antecedently a reality in God' (476).

In trying to understand the distinction between the *generatio* of the Son and the *spiration* of the Spirit we reach, Barth believes, the wall of mystery.⁷² So although revelation points to a distinction between the Son ('God's appropriation to man') and the Spirit ('God's appropriation by man'), corresponding to their respective origins as begotten and spirated, Barth asserts:

we cannot establish the How of the divine processions, ...we cannot define the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, i.e., we cannot delimit them one from another. We can only state that in revelation three who delimit themselves from one another are present ... (476)

Although Barth is unwilling to offer any further theological content to the distinction of triune delimitation, enough of a distinction is made through revelation by appropriation to be able to say that the triune delimitation points to an eternal asymmetry of becoming. So much hangs, of course, upon one's articulation of the concept of revelation; upon one's interpretation of the textual witness to the actions, and therefore delimitations, of the Trinity. Given Barth's context as a theologian who saw the neo-Protestantism of his times as a resurgence of Pelagianism, the total supremacy of God in all things was for him a burning issue. Barth is ready to consider the clause, '*ex Patre filioque*' (477).⁷³

⁷² William Shedd, the editor of the 1887 edition of *De Trinitate* in the *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* series, notes that the 'school-men' tried to breach this wall. Note 2, 226.

⁷³ Rowan Williams observes that in his discussion of 'the Eternal Spirit' (I/1, 466-89) Barth 'gives the impression of hurrying the argument forwards towards a conclusion determined in advance (evidently with a lot of help from Augustine and the rest of the Latin tradition)' and that a 'curious kind of Trinitarianism seems to appear' and yet 'when he gets to the *filioque* clause he devotes fourteen pages to it'. 'Barth on the Triune God' in *KBSTM*, 169f. We think that it is in his argument for the *filioque* clause that Barth particularly elucidates triune asymmetry.

iv) *Ex Patre Filioque*

Barth holds that the original creed follows John 15.26 'in saying "from the Father; but without saying: "and not from the Son"', and as such the material content of the *filioque* addition was not opposed 'even among Greek theologians' in the early centuries of the church for 'it is hard to see against what heresy the exclusion [of the *filioque*] could have been directed' (477f.).⁷⁴ The clause was aimed at the Macedonians who denied the deity of the Holy Spirit but who affirmed his procession from the Son although in the Arian sense of the procession of a creature from a creature. To have rejected 'from the Son' would have implied that from the Son 'implies less than' from the Father. Apart from confounding the pneumatomachi, the clause also made 'the origin of the Spirit parallel to that of the Son as regards consubstantiality with the Father' and although 'from the Father' would have established this, there is 'no necessary reason', continues Barth, why the belt and braces of the *filioque* should not be in the Creed.⁷⁵ The more casual attitude of the West to the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan creed, as opposed to the sacrosanct character 'accorded to it in the East', meant that the *filioque* became gradually used in liturgy in sixth century Spain and as the 'trinitarian doctrine of Augustine increasingly established itself as an expression of the common insight' the *filioque* became more formally accepted. As for the Reformation, 'its trinitarian theology was ... strongly enough orientated to Augustine to accept quite naturally and without further ado the general Western confession' and on the whole, according to Barth, it is the east which has continued the offensive against the predominately defensive west.⁷⁶ Barth insists that the 'whole thrust' of his 'attempted understanding of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and the Trinity generally' has brought him to the western side and believes

⁷⁴ Here Barth quotes Epiphanius (*Ancoratus*, 75), Ephraem (*Hymnus de functis et trinitate*, II) who both use the phrase 'proceedeth from the Father and the Son' as does Cyril of Alexandria (*Thes. de trin.*, 34) in the fifth century, 477.

⁷⁵ The 'factual reason', Barth notes, 'is not a necessary one', 477-78.

⁷⁶ It took until the ninth century to see 'sharp feelings and statements' primarily against the 'unlawful and unloving way which the west acted', 478-79. For a summary of Reformation thinking on the *filioque* clause see Heppe's *Reformed Dogmatics*, revised and ed., Bizer, Ernst, trans., Tomson, G.T., (London, The Wakeman Trust, 1950).

himself to be consistently following his rule that the economic reveals the immanent, contending that ‘in the *opus ad extra*, and therefore in revelation (and retrospectively in creation), the Holy Spirit is to be understood as the Spirit of both the Father and the Son’ (479).

All our statements concerning what is called the immanent Trinity here have been reached simply as confirmations or under-linings or, materially, as the indispensable premises of the economic Trinity. They neither could nor would say anything other than that we must abide by the distinction and unity of the modes of being in God as they encounter as according to the witness of Scripture in the reality of God in His revelation. The reality of God in His revelation cannot be bracketed by an “only”, as though somewhere behind His revelation here stood another reality of God; the reality of God which encounters us in His revelation is His reality in all the depths of eternity. (479).

We could not have a more clear statement of Barth’s conclusion of this matter; he believes revelation affirms that the Spirit is the Spirit of the Father and the Spirit of the Son and is so eternally. *Ad extra* both the Father and Son give the Spirit and therefore in God himself the ‘opening and readiness and capacity’ we see in revelation, as the Spirit is given forth, happens eternally and this capacity comes as gift from the Father but ‘no less necessarily’ from the Son for ‘Jesus Christ as the Giver of the Holy Spirit is not without the Father from whom He ... is’ and ‘the Father as the Giver of the Holy Spirit is not without Jesus Christ to whom He Himself is the Father,’ (480). Whilst the Greeks do not contest that *ad extra* the giver of the Holy Spirit is both Father and Son, they do so *ad intra* and so ‘achieve a very different picture of God’ quite ‘beyond revelation’.⁷⁷ Much depends, as we have already said, upon the articulation of what it means to talk of divine giving *ad extra* as

⁷⁷ In this respect he refers to an 1875 work by Sylvester of Kiev but as he is the only eastern theologian Barth cites as saying this, the validity of this claim requires further confirmation (479) not least for over-simplification.

corresponding to giving existence *ad intra*. Whilst the uniting acts of the Spirit *ad extra* reveal that he unites the Father and Son *ad intra*, Barth does not interpret the action *ad intra* as one to do with divine origins and the reason is this: the texts witness to the Spirit being the Spirit of the Father and Son as the one given by the Father and Son; there is an irreversibility to these relationships.⁷⁸ The texts do not witness to the Spirit giving the Father or Son, the Father is not the Father of the Spirit nor the Son the Son of the Spirit. The actions of the Father and Son in giving the Spirit reveal that the Spirit exists from the Father and Son; the actions of the Spirit as uniting actions reveal that he unites the Father and Son as the one who is brought forth from them. The actions of the Spirit *ad extra* do not correspond to divine origins whilst the actions of the Father and Son do. The actions of the Spirit *ad extra* correspond to divine *perichoresis*; the Spirit is the divine mode in whom the Father and Son are united, in whom they indwell one another. Barth interprets the actions of the Spirit *ad extra* (and therefore his corresponding action *ad intra*) in the light of the actions of the Father and Son *ad extra* (and therefore their corresponding action *ad intra*) and in this sense makes a theological decision as to the order of interpretation.

The Spirit is not only the Spirit sent from the Father but also given by the Son. What gives theologians the right, Barth demands, to isolate John 15.26 from all the other texts which ‘plainly call [the Spirit] the Spirit of the Son?’ Are not John 15.26 and these other texts ‘mutually complementary’ disclosing the Spirit as proceeding from the Father and Son and ‘valid to all eternity, as the way it is in the essence of God Himself?’

For us the Eastern rejection of the *filioque* is already suspect from the formal standpoint because it is patently a speculation which interprets individual verses of the Bible in isolation, because it bears no relation to the reality of God in revelation and for faith. (480)

Formally the rejection of the *filioque* clause is a rejection of the principle that the economic Trinity reveals the immanent. What then are Barth’s material concerns?

The *filioque* expresses recognition of the communion between the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is the love which is the essence of the relation

⁷⁸ In this sense Barth would be uncomfortable with Gunton’s suggestion that ‘[w]e have to speak of the Spirit’s Jesus as much as of Jesus’ Spirit’. Gunton, Colin E., *The promise of Trinitarian Theology*, second edition (Edinburgh, T & T Clark, 1997) 133.

between these two modes of being of God. And recognition of this communion between God and man as a divine, eternal truth, created in revelation by the Holy Spirit. (480).

Barth believes that he is being true to his method when he takes as the basis for his doctrine of the Holy Spirit as the bond of love between the Father and Son the economic rendering that this Spirit is the principle of God's bond of communion/fellowship/love with mankind as the gift of the Father and Son. Barth sees the Spirit as the agent of human fellowship with God reflecting his being the bond of fellowship between the Father and Son:

The intra-divine two-sided fellowship of the Spirit, which proceeds from the Father and the Son, is the basis of the fact that there is in revelation a fellowship in which not only is God there for man but in very truth – this is the *donum Spiritus Sancti* – man is also there for God. (480)

God in his mode of being the Holy Spirit is the basis of the fellowship of God to man and, as gift given, man to God because the Spirit is the bond of love which proceeds from Father to Son and Son to Father uniting them and '[t]his whole insight and outlook is lost when the immanent *filioque* is denied' (481f.). If the Spirit is the 'Spirit of the Son' only *ad extra* and not *ad intra*, being only the Spirit of the Father *ad intra*, then 'the fellowship of the Spirit between God and man is without objective ground or content' ... 'purely a temporal truth with no eternal basis' and so 'an emptying of revelation'. Barth does raise the important point: that one cannot think of what the Spirit does as only *ad extra*. The question, as ever, is how this doing *ad extra*, and therefore *ad intra*, is to be articulated? Along these lines, but with a different emphasis, Dorothea Wenderbourg argues that the distinctions of the trinitarian persons, in this case the Spirit, are known through their distinctive actions in the economy: '[t]he actions of the Spirit are nothing alien to his being, but are specifically his; therefore they reveal what he is'. Wenderbourg sees Palamas' fourteenth-century doctrine of the divine energies as the 'defeat of [Greek] trinitarian theology' in its denial that the hypostases themselves act in and towards the world. The hypostases just are, they do not do anything.⁷⁹ Barth's modes certainly act in and

⁷⁹ Wenderbourg, *CFGP*, 194, who points out that the seeds of Palamas' doctrine are to be found in the Cappadocians themselves. See also Pannenberg's argument for denoting the triune persons from their works *ad extra*, for example, the Son as being sent by the Father in the Spirit to ultimately hand back the kingdom to the Father by the Spirit whereby both the Son and the Spirit constitute the monarchy of the Father, Pannenberg, W., *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh, T & T Clark, 1991) 305ff.

towards the world; the question is how Barth articulates this acting, particularly the action of the Spirit, as revelatory of who God is in himself? Certainly Barth sees the concept of 'Revealedness' as corresponding to the *ad intra* event of 'opening and readiness and capacity' between the Father and Son (479). In this sense, as Barth works through his concept of the Spirit as the unity of the Father and Son the concept of 'Revealedness' is given a broader canvas than its epistemological category may at first suggest.

Even worse than saying that the Spirit is the Spirit of the Son only *ad extra*, Barth continues, is to assert that the Spirit is only the Spirit of the Father 'in His *opus ad extra*', that is, 'the exclusive *ex Patre*' which sets aside Jesus Christ as the 'basis and origin of the relation of God to man' giving 'a mystical union with the *princium et fons Deitatis*'. With this concept the person and work of the Son becomes redundant for the second person of the Trinity would not be the mediator between God and man, the one in whom we are reconciled, with the danger that the Spirit would be translated, in Hegelian fashion, as the *Geist* of 'direct illumination', mankind possessing the uniting Spirit directly or in Platonic fashion, the Spirit as the connecting link, the form, between the relative, time bound word and the eternal absolute.

v) *Per Filium?*

'[I]n the Eastern view of the relation between the divine modes of being' Barth 'cannot recognise their reality as we believe we know it from the divine revelation according to the witness of Scripture' and not even 'in the version in which it does indeed rule out' from the Father alone and is 'prepared to accept a *through the Son* as a possible interpretation of *from the Father*' (481f.) Why? Because even this position is not meant to lead to the 'essence of the Spirit' as the 'full consubstantial fellowship between Father and Son', that is, to the bond of love which is 'a prototype to the fellowship between God as Father and man as His child the creation of which is the work of the Holy Spirit in revelation'. The bond of love is an essential concept to Barth for it protects his concern to understand the Spirit as the basis of the

relationship of God to man and man to God, as the agent of fellowship and communion. Further, Barth does see the Spirit as the bond of fellowship between the Father and Son to be ontologically constitutive of the Father and Son because he is their ‘full consubstantial fellowship’. The Spirit constitutes the Father and Son in the sense that he is brought forth by them as that which unites them. Much hangs upon the theological articulation of constitutiveness, but in Barth’s account the constitutive act of the Spirit is not about bringing forth the divine existence of the Father or Son but uniting them.

Barth cannot deny that the ‘*per filium*’ ‘has on its side the usage of most of the Greek and Latin Fathers before the schism’ nor that the procession of the Spirit from the Son’ may be finally traced back to the Father’ indeed ‘[t]he Latin Fathers never disputed this’:

Augustine himself declared unequivocally: *principaliter* the Spirit proceeds from the Father, and the Son has it from the Father, *ut et de illo procedat Spiritus Sanctus*. (482)⁸⁰

However, after the schism, and really even before, Barth argues, ‘Eastern teaching’ saw the procession from only the Father and therefore the relationship of the Spirit to the Son ‘*per filium*’ as a ‘continuation or extension or prolongation of the procession of the Spirit from the Father’. The three torches metaphor of Gregory of Nyssa whereby the second torch is lit ‘from the first and the third from the second’⁸¹ and the analogy of the Father as mouth, the Son as word and the Spirit as breath giving sound to the word show, Barth argues, the thinking behind the Greek *per filium* for the word does not produce breath, although ‘the logical prius of the breathing’, but the breath comes from the mouth and not the word and to this extent *per filium* is too imprecise for the Son is only a ‘mediating principle’, the Father being the source in the strict sense.⁸² This contrasts with the ‘direct’ procession of the Spirit from the Son ‘on the presupposition of the begetting of the Son’ (482). Therefore *per filium* is to be

⁸⁰ ‘De trin., XV, 26,27;cf.17,19; In Joann. Tract., 99,8’ (482). Although Augustine expressed the Father as the ‘first principle’ of the spiration of the Spirit, he did not attempt to explain the difference between the two emanations. See the editor William Shedd’s comments on the ‘school-men’ with their concepts of the generation of the Son being ‘by the mode of intellect – hence the Son is called Wisdom, or Word (Logos) and the spiration of the Spirit by ‘the mode of the will – hence the Spirit is called Love’. Shedd, *ibid.*, note 2, 226.

⁸¹ Nyssa, *De Spir.*, s.3, (482).

⁸² According to Bolotow, “Thesen uber das filioque”, *Revue intern. De theol.*, 1898, 692 (482).

rejected, and from the Son to be maintained as 'both logical and necessary'. A 'true derivation of the Spirit from the Son' as well as the Father must be maintained in order that the Spirit may be properly acknowledged as the Spirit of the Son. Barth thinks that if the Son is not the origin of the Spirit then the scriptural reference to the Spirit being the Spirit of the Son loses its content, that is, the origin of the Spirit from the Son maintains not only the Spirit's full consubstantiality but also the Son's full consubstantiality. Barth presses his point:

Furthermore, if the Son is not also the true origin of the Spirit, the Father and the Son do not have all things in common, the one being the origin of the Spirit in a primary sense and the other only in a secondary sense. Even the unity of God the Father is called in question if implicitly He is not already the origin of the Spirit as the Father of the Son, the origin of the Spirit from Him being a second function along with His fatherhood. Finally and above all, the Spirit on this view loses His mediating position between the Father and the Son and the Father and the Son lose their mutual connexion in the Spirit. (482)⁸³

If the Spirit is not seen to originate from the Father and the Son, there is somehow, for Barth, the suggestion that the Father is not, for a moment, the Father of the Son, as if there were a moment in which the Father spirates the Spirit without also simultaneously being the Father of the Son. It is unlikely that this is what the 'alone or only' of the Greeks meant although Photius' inflexible position was neither helpful nor meant to be so and has its own weaknesses.

Barth does raise some important questions about the limitations inherent in the Greek view; that the moment of coming to be of the Son (being begotten) and Spirit (being spirated) from the Father alone is a one way street. This potential criticism of the doctrine of the Trinity, however, is also evident in the Latin position if the Spirit is not seen as actively constituting the Father and Son as argued, for example, by Robert Jenson who suggests, influenced as he makes clear by Pannenberg, that the Spirit has a function in enabling the Father to be the Father of the Son in that the

⁸³ Can the Spirit mediate between the Father and Son as God without the capacity of communicating the divine essence? Can the Father and Son be mutually connected in the Spirit if the Spirit cannot communicate the divine essence? Communication of divine essence in Barth's account is strictly to do with origins, mutual indwelling on the other hand is expressed by the concept of *perichoresis*. *Ad extra* the Spirit unites corresponding to his *perichoretic* uniting *ad intra* on the basis that he is brought forth by the Father and Son as that which unites them.

Spirit frees the Father to intend the Son.⁸⁴ In Jenson's model there is an attempt to relay something of the concept of the *perichoretic* life of the Trinity as having something to say about origins and so recognise a constitutive role for the Spirit. Tom Smail has made a similar suggestion and argues that the coming to be of the Son and Spirit is best depicted in the formula that the Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son and the Son is begotten of the Father through the Spirit.⁸⁵ If the Son and Spirit have all things in common with the Father, and not only the Son, then not only the Son but also the Spirit is to be thought of as being involved in the coming to be of the triune life otherwise the Spirit does not have all things in common with the Father. In this sense denoting the Father alone as the sole origin of the Son and Spirit does not deny the mediating role of the Spirit as the one through whom the Father and Son are related (the Son is begotten of the Father through the Spirit) just as it does not deny the mediating role of the Son as the one through whom the Father and Spirit are related (the Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son), but neither does it express these. Perhaps, with Irenaeus' metaphor in mind, one might want to say that the Father uses each of his two hands to bring the other into being. Barth, however, wants to express the origin of the Spirit from the Son in what, for him, are more immediate and direct terms; what is spirated from the Father and Son is no less than divine existence itself in the 'being way' (*Seinsweise*) the Spirit. Although Barth, formally at least, wants to recognise that the origin of the Spirit from the Son may be 'finally traced back to the Father', he is not prepared to express this in any way which might suggest that the Son is not also the origin; does not also have the ability to bring forth divine existence.

To cap it all, Barth persists, how can the Father and the Son be connected if not in the Holy Spirit; if not by the bond of love which each breathes to the other? And if we do not maintain the harmonious picture of the *vinculum caritatis*, we end up in the murky waters of 'Origenist Subordinationism' along with the Easterners.⁸⁶ Barth

⁸⁴ Jenson R. W., *The Triune Identity* (Philadelphia, Fortress Press, 1982) 148.

⁸⁵ Smail, Thomas, 'The Holy Trinity and the Resurrection of Jesus' in *Different Gospels*, ed., Walker, Andrew, second edition (London, SPCK, 1993) 13-26. See also Weinandy, Thomas, *The Father's Spirit of Sonship* (Edinburgh, T & T Clark, 1996).

⁸⁶ Barth's reference to subordinationism is linked to the rejection of the *filioque* clause in assertions that only the Father breathes the Spirit, that is, it is the fact that both the Father and Son breathe the Spirit of unity that allows one to maintain that a first and second are maintained in perfect harmony and peace.

might have a doctrine of the asymmetry of the divine life, but for him it contains no subordinationism. Barth's main concern, however, is to protect the oneness of God:

But above all it is the unity of the Trinity which we must see to be endangered at every point by the denial of the *Filioque*. We have seen elsewhere that tritheism was always the special danger in Eastern theology and we cannot escape the impression that when the Trinity is constructed in such a way that the *Filioque* is denied the *trinitas in unitate* is very perilously overemphasised as compared with the *unitas in trinitate*. It was for the sake of the *unitas* that the *Filioque* forced itself on Augustine and then carried the West. Our decisive reason for adhering to this view is to be found in the fact that only in this *unitas*, and not in the strange juxtaposition of Father and Son with respect to the Spirit which may be seen in the Eastern doctrine, do we have anything corresponding [*Entsprechung*] to the work of the Holy Spirit in revelation. If the rule holds true that God in His eternity is none other than the One who discloses Himself to us in His revelation, then in the one case as in the other the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the love of the Father and the Son, and so *procedens ex Patre Filioque*. (483)

Once again, Barth stresses that the uniting love of the Spirit *ad intra* is mirrored in 'the work of the Spirit in revelation'. It is certainly true to say of Augustine that the *unitas in trinitate* was logically prior to the *trinitas in unitate*, the one *ousia* prior to the three *hypostaseis* and his concept of the Spirit as the *vinculum caritatis* of the Father and Son essential to him. However, whether Augustine can be cited as the source of Barth's assertion that both the Father and the Son are the origin/source of the Spirit is another matter for on this point Augustine can be seen to tread much more warily with his wording. Augustine makes it clear, formally at least, that there are not two principles of origin but the Father's spiration as 'from its first principle' and the Spirit given as gift to the Son who, subsequently although simultaneously, reciprocates love to the Father. Materially Augustine's concept of the double procession might struggle to maintain this nuance but nevertheless Augustine was aware of the potential for imbalance in the doctrine and tried to hold the tension in place. It seems that Barth was more influenced by Anselm on this point than by Augustine although, without a doubt, the bones of the doctrine of the *filioque* belong to the Bishop of Hippo and Barth would deny falling prey to two principles of origin holding that the priority of the *unitas*, the simultaneity of the eternal becoming and the *principaliter* of the Father, formally stated at least, would mitigate against this. Anselm solves the problem of any suggestion of two principles of origin by the Spirit being breathed from the deity (*ousia*) of the Father and Son, one *ousia* meaning one

principle of origin.⁸⁷ Barth, however, wants to maintain: a) the Spirit is breathed from ‘other modes of being of this essence’ and ‘not from the one essence of God as such’ (474) (for the modes are not to be thought of as mere relations); b) a concept of the simultaneity of becoming (not articulated in any depth at this stage but evident not far below the surface); c) the emphasis on the *unitas in trinitate* and d) the *principaliter* of the Father. Anselm’s position of the Spirit being breathed from the essence maintains the dictum that there be one principle of origin but raises the spectre of the persons being mere relations whereas Augustine’s position that the Spirit is breathed from the persons of Father and Son, the Father *principaliter*, maintains the equally important dictum that the persons have real existence and there is one principle of origin but leaves too much hanging as to the distinction between generation and spiration, a lack that the scholastics fleshed out with dubious results.⁸⁸ Barth tries to minimise any margin of error, holding the favoured aspects of Augustine and Anselm in some sort of synthesis, and expresses the doctrine as follows:

As God is in Himself Father from all eternity, he begets Himself as the Son from all eternity. As He is the Son from all eternity, He is begotten of Himself as the Father from all eternity.⁸⁹ In this eternal begetting of Himself and being begotten of Himself, He posits [*setzt*] Himself a third time as the Holy Spirit, i.e., as the love which unites Him in Himself. (483)

God ‘negates in Himself, from eternity, in His absolute simplicity, all loneliness, self-containment, or self-isolation’ but is ‘orientated to the Other’ having his being ‘with

⁸⁷ Pannenberg sees Barth’s argument as structured through Anselm, seeking to ‘understand the Trinity in terms of the divine subjectivity ... the self-relation of God as it is grounded in his self-consciousness’ and therefore also full of Hegel. Augustine ‘so emphasised the unity of God that no space was left for the trinity of persons’ and Anselm ‘finds it hard to think in terms of the Father, Son and Spirit as persons’, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1, 304, 287, 286 respectively.

⁸⁸ Although Augustine’s more cautious suggestion that while the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, it proceeds from the Father *principaliter* is formally true of this theologian, materially, as TeSelle suggests, it is possible that Augustine’s articulation is susceptible to Anselm’s interpretation in the sense that Augustine’s articulation of the priority of the *unitas* (making essence, subsistence and relation continuous) collapses the distinctions between *ousia* and *hypostasis* ‘into one [notion], which is then referred to as the self-related being of God’. TeSelle, Eugene, *Augustine the Theologian* (London, Burns and Oates, 1970) 298. Many scholars hold that Augustine’s struggle with understanding the Greek position was due to limited access to their works as well as problems over translation, see for example, Lancel, *St Augustine*, 379. Heppes’s Compendium shows Anselm’s more rigid stance on the *filioque* clause as the preferred; the hypostases being seen as relations in God.

⁸⁹ ‘Indem er von Ewigkeit der Sohn ist, geht er von Ewigkeit hervor aus sich selber als dem Vater’, *Die Kirchliche Dogmatik* (hereafter *KD*) 507.

the Other and indeed in the Other'.⁹⁰ It is because God is love that 'love proceeds from Him as His love', that is, as the Holy Spirit. God 'is the Father of the Son in such a way that with the Son He brings forth the Spirit, love, and is in Himself the Spirit, love'. One solution to maintaining one principle of origin (particularly found in Anselm) and yet acknowledging the real existence of the triune identities (possibly attributed to Augustine) is to tie the three together very tightly indeed and to maintain, as is evident without being stated in the above citation, the simultaneity of the event of becoming. Barth's modes of being are so unified that in a way he circumnavigates the problems of moments of becoming alluded to earlier in his concerns with the eastern 'exclusive *ex Patre*' by his picture of the one Subject who simultaneously begets, is begotten and unites himself in love.

Barth returns to his theme that as love meets us in reconciliation, so God is antecedently love in himself 'as He posits Himself as the Father of the Son' (484f.). This is the '*qui procedit ex Patre*'. The *filioque* must be added because God is the Father of the Son and the Son no 'less the origin of love' than is the Father. The distinction of the Father and Son is not a 'loveless distinction' but a 'distinction which affirms fellowship in separateness [*Sonderung*] and separateness in fellowship'.⁹¹ The oneness of a first and a second is maintained in perfect harmony and peace. Barth asks: '[h]ow, then, can the breathing of the Spirit belong less essentially, less properly and originally, to the Son than to the Father?' (484) Barth is seeking to do justice to the biblical witness that Jesus breathes the Spirit, that the Spirit is the Spirit of the Son. If the Son does this in the work *ad extra*, he must also do it *ad intra* and this means that the Son is directly, along with the Father, the one from whom the Spirit exists. With Anselm, Barth holds that to be 'breathed' means 'to exist from'. Anselm argues, in order to differentiate the Son and Spirit, that the 'one from whom another exists cannot be the other who exists from him, nor can the one who exists from another be the other from whom he exists'; either the Son exists from the Spirit or the

⁹⁰ 'Among Barth's greatest achievements is to write an orientation to the other into the very fabric of the doctrine of God, evading the perils of Augustine's inward-turned circle in a distinctive way. He achieved it by his remarkable transmutation of the Western doctrine of election', Gunton, *Becoming and Being*, 239. Has the transmutation begun or is there in Barth's I/I doctrine of the Trinity a foundation for it?

⁹¹ Barth uses the word '*Sonderung*', 'separateness' quite unselfconsciously, but nowadays 'particularity' is used as it does not have the unacceptable theological ramifications that 'separateness' suggests with respect to the Trinity.

Spirit exists from the Son and if the Spirit is the Spirit of the Son, then the Spirit must exist from the Son.⁹² It is simply not possible to suggest a spiration of the Spirit from the Son, his being breathed, that is not simultaneously an ‘exists from’, an originating event:

Is it only indirectly, only derivatively, that the Son is here the Giver of the Spirit, of the revelation of love? But if He is this immediately and directly, how can this be if He is not so in reality, in the reality of God antecedently in Himself? ... As the Son of the Father He, too, is thus *spirator Spiritus*. He is this, of course, as the Son of the Father. To that extent the *per Filium* is true. But here *per Filium* cannot mean *per causam instrumentalem*.⁹³ The Son of this Father is and has all that His Father is and has. He is and has it as the Son. But He is and has it. Thus He, too, is *spirator Spiritus*. He, too, has the possibility of being this. This is how we would explain and prove the *qui procedit ex Patre Filioque*. (484)

There is simply no spirating of the Spirit that is not also a spiration of (communicating of) divine existence in the sense that, along with the Father, the Son has the capacity of bringing forth divine existence who is the Spirit (God bringing forth God) and not simply the instrument through whom the Father spirates the Spirit. Just as the breathing of the Spirit by the Father is to say the Spirit originates from the Father, the breathing of the Spirit by the Son is to say the Spirit exists from the Son because the Son ‘is and has all that [h]is Father is and has’. The *per filium* does not deny that Christ breathes the Holy Spirit on his disciples, but for Barth *per filium* as *per causa instrumentalem* is too indirect a way to talk of the spiration of the Spirit. He wants an immediate and direct spiration that denotes an immediate and direct existence of the Spirit from the Son such that what the Son breathes is directly his very own, and the Father’s, divineness, divine existence. What is spirated is the Holy Spirit himself as the communication of uniting love and in that it is the modes of Father and Son who spirate this uniting love which is their divine essence (existence), Barth seems to be offering a synthesis of Augustine’s spiration from the persons (of Father and Son) and Anselm’s spiration from the *ousia*. But what does it mean to talk of a *principaliter*, an originating, an ‘exist from’, that is not a principle of origin?

⁹² Anselm, *ibid.*, 184f.

⁹³ Clarification of what is meant by this is found in Barth’s brief discussion of the *filioque* clause in the *Goettingen Dogmatics* whereby the Eastern Church understood the *per filium* to mean that the ‘Son was a cause or instrument in the hand of the Father’ so ‘*per filium*’ meant as ‘*per causam instrumentalem*’, Barth, Karl, *The Goettingen Dogmatics*, vol., 1, ed., Reiffen, H., trans., Bromiley, G.W., (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Eerdmans, 1990) 129.

There is a double procession, two ‘exists from’, (the Spirit exists from the Father and the Son) but not two principles of origin?

To be the ‘Giver of the Spirit’ means, for Barth, an ‘immediate and direct’ divine event; the event of the coming forth of divine existence as the ‘being way’ that is the Spirit as uniting event. In a sense Barth circumnavigates the traditional concern to avoid the suggestion of two principles of origin as well as the traditional concern to maintain the Father as *principaliter* with his concept of the simultaneous event that is the Father and Son’s bringing forth of the uniting divine existence who is their fellowship/love/communion; the being way that is the Spirit. There are not two principles of origin but one simultaneous event which is the bringing forth (the becoming) of the one God from the one God. A simultaneous event that nevertheless is ordered telos. Both *causam instrumentalem* and principle of origin, even in the singular, are static concepts circumnavigated by that of event. Barth might well refer extensively to Augustine and Anselm and might well take this and that from them, but really, he is paving his own way.

vi) Does the Son Exist From the Father and Spirit?

At this juncture Barth notes an important point his deliberations have unearthed (485f.). He considers the possibility that it may be said that the Son proceeds from the Father and the Spirit. First the exegetical evidence. ‘In more than one respect the work of the Holy Spirit in revelation is presented as the work of creating or begetting’ as in John 3.5f which talks of the Spirit enabling our adoption as God’s children (485). There is also the baptism story of which Barth asks: ‘is not His divine sonship shown to be established by the Spirit alighting upon Him?’ and further there is Rom. 1.3, Lk. 1.35 and Mt. 1.20, all of which point to some sort of dependency of the Son upon the Spirit.⁹⁴ With reference to the baptism narrative Barth is being rather sly in his suggestion that the alighting of the Spirit establishes

⁹⁴ The Romans text is to do with the resurrection and the others with the virgin birth. Barth does not use the word ‘dependency’ and does not say in his own words what the Spirit is doing or how his role might be conceived but simply puts forward the texts.

the divine sonship for as he well knows to say such is to suggest that Jesus was not eternally the Son and in this respect Barth is constructing boundaries around the interpretation of this text rather than permitting a grappling with what is going on between the Son and the Spirit. Barth then refers to his rule that the witness of the text to the economic Trinity reveals the immanent Trinity and suggests that perhaps we are ‘compelled to accept a relation of origin between the Son and the Spirit.’ Recognising that this idea would allow for a ‘circle of mutual origins’, a *perichoresis* of origins, and therefore one would have to talk of the Father coming from the Son and Spirit, Barth reasons that *perichoresis* has to do with the relationships between the modes of being of the one God rather than with origins and is a description of the ‘*homoousia* of Father, Son and Spirit, but has nothing to do with begetting and breathing’ and therefore this line of reasoning falls foul of the conceptual boundaries of the tradition and is therefore a non-starter.⁹⁵

The exegetical points are, Barth confesses, slippery to deal with and concludes that although the Spirit enables human nature to become that of the Son in uniting the already existent ‘in Mary’ flesh to the Son, he doesn’t bring forth the Son; the Son does not receive his sonship from the Spirit but rather the ‘possibility of the flesh existing for Him’ (486). What the Spirit does for the human existence of the Son in time is not to do with the communication of divine existence as an originating act; this has a very strict meaning for Barth. The ‘bringing forth’ of divine existence that is the prerogative of the Father and Son is to say ‘exists from’. To reiterate, this is Anselm’s argument for what distinguishes the Spirit from the Son. In Barth’s hands, Anselm’s argument is used to maintain the asymmetrical nature of the triune becoming. The Father begets the Son. The Son as begotten of the Father, along with the Father, breathes the Spirit. The Spirit is breathed from the Father and the Son. The Spirit exists from the Father and Son. The Spirit does not breathe divine existence, but is himself divine existence breathed, uniting the Father and Son, and is himself the divine existence of uniting love that is given forth by the Father and Son *ad extra*. The Spirit might well act towards mankind *ad extra* including the human existence of the Son, but does not himself breathe divine existence, for he is himself the divine existence breathed. The ‘bringing forth’ of the Spirit *ad extra* is expressed

⁹⁵ What kind of distinction then is to be drawn between the ‘relationships’ as opposed to ‘origins’ of the Trinity?

in many ways but it is not a ‘bringing forth’ of divine existence. The ‘bringing forth’ of the Father and Son is to talk of the communication of divine existence as God bringing forth God from God. Divine ‘procession’, as used by Barth, has a very specific, strict meaning:

... we must note throughout that the work of the Holy Spirit in relation to the Son in revelation, to which all the passages refer, is not of such a kind that it can be described as commensurable with the eternal begetting of the Son by the Father or the eternal breathing of the Spirit by the Father and the Son, so that another eternal relation of origin can and should be read off from it. What the commensurability lacks is as follows. The begetting and breathing are a bringing forth from the essence of the Father, or of the Father and the Son, but not from another essence. But the bringing forth of the Holy Spirit described in the passages quoted is always a bringing forth from some other essence whose existence is presupposed. (485, emphasis mine)

The ‘bringing forth’ of the Spirit as his action *ad extra* is to unite, exalt, reveal, impart and so forth ‘some other essence whose existence is presupposed’. The bringing forth of the Spirit by the Father and Son, however, is a bringing forth from the divine essence that which is divine essence. The Spirit does not bring forth divine existence but unites human existence to divine existence as a reflection of his uniting divine existence. Barth believes that there is no scriptural validation for arguing that the Spirit communicates the divine essence for he himself is the divine essence communicated.⁹⁶ *Ad extra* and *ad intra*, the Spirit’s action is one of uniting. The Spirit’s uniting role *ad extra* corresponds to his uniting role *ad intra*. Barth’s exegetical arguments are as follows.

To be ‘born of the Spirit’ (John 3) is to be regenerated but the person who is regenerated ‘is already there when this happens’ (485). When the Spirit descends on Jesus at the baptism, ‘[i]t is this man Jesus of Nazareth, not the Son of God, who becomes the Son of God by the descent of the Spirit’; the ‘installation’ of Romans 1 is ‘expressly related to the resurrection’ whereby the Spirit appoints, declares, exalts and reveals ‘Jesus Christ according to his humanity’:

This Son of God as such does not derive His being from this [declaration], nor from the Holy Spirit. But the One called Jesus Christ according to His

⁹⁶ As Turretin would have it, as paraphrased by Shedd, ‘[g]eneration is accompanied with the power to communicate the essence; procession is not’, Shedd, *ibid.*, note 2, 226.

humanity derives it from the Holy Spirit that He should be the Son of God.

(486)

The incarnation is not the Son of God coming into being for the first time, but the Son of God taking to himself ‘that other which already exists in Mary, namely, flesh, humanity, human nature, being as man’, that is, the possibility of a particular soul and body in space and time:

What is ascribed to the Holy Spirit in the birth of Christ is the assumption of human existence in the Virgin Mary into unity with God in the mode of being of the Logos. That this is possible, that this other, this being as man, this flesh is there for God, for fellowship and even unity with God, that flesh can be the Word when the Word becomes flesh, is the work of the Holy Spirit in the birth of Christ. (486, emphasis mine)

The adoption of people to become children of God as the work of the Spirit is grounded upon the work of the Spirit uniting the already existent ‘in Mary’ humanity to the Logos. This is not a ‘work of the Spirit on the Son of God Himself’ but is the bringing to pass the possibility of flesh existing for the Son, the Son’s ‘being as man’, the Word himself assuming the flesh: ‘the Son of God takes to Himself that other which already exists in Mary’.

[w]hat the Son “owes” to the Spirit in revelation is His being as man, the possibility of flesh existing for Him, so that He, the Word, can become flesh.

(486)

The assumption of human essence does not bring the eternal Son into existence. The possibility of becoming flesh is to be distinguished from the actual assumption of the flesh already existent ‘in Mary’. The actual assumption of the already existent ‘in

Mary' flesh is the act of the Word.⁹⁷ The Word assumed flesh. The Word who assumes flesh remains united to the Father in the eternal being way that is the Spirit. The Spirit is the being way in whom the Father and Son are united in love. That the Spirit is the being way in whom the Father and the incarnate Son are united in love means that the Spirit is the possibility in which this incarnate Son and this Father be united and as we shall see in IV/2, the possibility of his being united to the Father as the obedient man for God is the event of the *communicatio gratiarum*.

Returning to an earlier point, it seems that Barth will give to the Son the capacity to bring forth, to communicate the divine essence, so that he has all things in common with the Father, but will not give this capacity to the Spirit. It could be argued that the Spirit does not have all things in common with the Father and the Son. However, if that which the Father and Son bring forth is divine essence as that which unites them, what sense does it make to talk of that divine essence communicating divine essence? To whom would it be communicated? There is not a fourth mode to be brought forth from the three. Barth would simply not have seen the non-communicating of divine essence of the Spirit as a problem for on what grounds would the Spirit need to communicate the divine essence as he is the third and final mode of being who completes the Trinity? Referring to the triune identities as persons would not have led Barth to conclude that the third person had the capacity to communicate divine essence. The origin of the Spirit from the Father and the Son is not twofold but rather a 'common origin' (486). The Father as the begetter and the Son as the begotten means that 'they are different divine modes of being' for only the Father begets and only the Son is begotten and therefore their respective origin is not 'common to them' but what they have in common is 'God's third mode of being ... the Spirit, love':

This third mode of being cannot result from the former alone, or the latter alone, or the co-operation of the two, but only from their one being as God the Father and God the Son, who are not two "persons" either in themselves or in

⁹⁷ Barth picks this up again in I/2, 'the Miracle of Christmas' in articulating the credal '*conceptus de Spiritu sancto*', 196ff. and reiterates the point made in I/1 that '[t]he Holy Spirit is God Himself in His freedom' and '[t]hrough the Spirit flesh, human nature, is assumed into unity with the Son of God' meaning that 'this man can be God's Son and at the same time the second Adam', I/2, 199. The Spirit maintains, as event that unites, the human nature in unity with the Son. Here Barth states clearly that the baptism narrative is not the Spirit making Jesus the Son of God, but it is because Jesus is the Son of God that the Spirit descends on him witnessing to this fact.

co-operation, but two modes of being of the one being of God. Thus the one Godness of the Father and Son is, or the Father and Son in their one Godness are, the origin of the Spirit. What is between them, what unites them, is, then, no mere relation ... As an independent divine mode of being over against them, it is the active mutual orientation and interpenetration of love, because these two, the Father and Son, are of one essence, and indeed the divine essence, because God's fatherhood and sonship as such must be related to one another in this active mutual orientation and inter-penetration. That the Father and Son are the one God is the reason why they are not just united but are united in the Spirit in love; it is the reason, then, why God is love and love is God. (487)

It is from the 'one Godness of God' who is Father and Son that the Spirit originates. United, ordered, triune life happens as God the Father and God the Son bring forth that which unites them, the Spirit, not that this makes clear what, exactly, Barth had in mind by talking of the 'one Godness of God' as being that from which the Spirit originates, despite him balancing this (or clashing as dialectic) with the 'Father and Son in their one Godness are'. It sounds rather like Anselm's argument from essence, especially coupled with the references to 'fatherhood' and 'sonship'. The uniting love is 'active mutual orientation and inter-penetration' as well as being 'an independent divine mode of being over against' the Father and Son. Barth's articulation of the 'neutral', 'adjectival' Spirit 'whose reciprocity is not a being against, but a being to and from and with one another' (469) is now an 'active', 'independent', 'over against' 'divine mode of being' and on page 488 Barth stresses that the Spirit is a 'He', possibly aware that the personal pronoun has been somewhat remiss hitherto. It is probably not helpful to make too much of this, for theology has a habit, as it is being written, to evolve. Nevertheless, what does come across is a vision of the asymmetrically ordered simultaneity that is the *telos* of the becoming of the triune God and the uniting action of the Spirit as the divine mode breathed from the Father and Son constituting their unity in love.

vii) Summary of Main Points of Chapter II

Dependent as Barth is upon Augustine's and Anselm's articulation of the *filioque* clause as evidenced by some sort of synthesis of their thinking, Barth is not constrained by either of these theologians and is doing his own thing. Several

important factors are being held together by Barth in his adherence to the *filioque* clause as found in volume one:

- a) the Spirit as the agent of 'Revealedness' is 'God's appropriation by man' 'corresponding' (483) to his being the mode in whom the Father and Son appropriate one another; the unity of their communion. In I/1 the doctrine of election is placed within the doctrine of revelation; the Spirit as 'Revealedness' is the event in which election happens to particular people uniting them to God.
- b) the *unitas in trinitate* as ontologically basic but a *unitas* that is the event of *trinitate* for the generation of the Son is from the mode of the Father and the spiration of the Spirit is from the modes of Father and Son as a spiration of divine existence and not any empty becoming from naked *ousia* as such. The modes are no mere relations.
- c) the *principaliter* of the Father as being a *principaliter* event in which the simultaneity of becoming (whereby the generation of the Son by the Father is the simultaneous event of the ability to communicate divine essence to the Son who, along with the Father, simultaneously spirates the Spirit) mitigates against static concepts.
- d) to have the capacity to communicate divine essence is to say 'exists from' as an originating event for the communicating of divine essence is an event in which divine existence is brought forth. The Spirit is that which is brought forth/breathed/spirated/derived from the Father and the Son as that which unites them in love.
- e) the Holy Spirit is the divine essence/existence communicated/breathed and therefore, as the third and final repetition of the one God, does not communicate divine essence/existence. For Barth there is no reason to say this. The Holy Spirit derives from the Father and Son as the divine mode in whom the Father and Son are united. The principle of *perichoresis* expresses the mutual indwelling of the Father and Son in the Spirit in the light of the ordered becoming.
- f) the actions of the Holy Spirit *ad extra* are not commensurable with the inter-trinitarian event of his spiration from the Father and Son, because

this (spirating existence) is not his act, but with his action of uniting the Father and Son which is his particular act.

- g) The work of the Spirit *ad extra* is expressed in many ways, some examples being, regeneration, declaration, exaltation, revealing, appointing, installing etc, all of which are to do with his uniting mankind to the Father in the Son corresponding to his uniting role *ad intra*. The work of the Spirit as 'Revealedness' is, under the concept of his uniting action, given a broader meaning than simply epistemological.
- h) the bringing forth of the Holy Spirit as uniting action *ad extra* is always a uniting of 'some other essence whose existence is presupposed' to the Father in the Son and therefore is not 'commensurable with' the 'bringing forth' which is the begetting/spirating of the Father and the spirating of the Son. That the Spirit *ad intra* unites the Father and Son and therefore unites that which is ontologically the same essence, is an event of *perichoresis* and not of origins.⁹⁸
- i) Barth's argument for the *filioque* clause displays Barth's stance that the Trinity is ordered in a particular irreversible direction as being an event in which the Father gives existence to the Son, the Son receives his existence from the Father and with the Father gives existence to the Spirit who unites them in love and peace. Barth's Trinity has a definite, irreversible asymmetry.

In the light of the revisions to the doctrine of election in volume two, Barth carries forward the concept of the Spirit's action *ad extra* as 'the element of God's appropriation by man' into II/1 as that which corresponds to the event in which the Father knows the Son and the Son the Father in the Spirit but in that the doctrine of election is now relocated in the doctrine of God as the event in which the triune God elects to reflect himself in himself by himself, the event of the Father and Son's appropriation of one another in the Spirit in the moment of election (the beginning of all God's ways and works *ad extra*) is expressed as the event in which the obedient

⁹⁸ Barth's understanding of *perichoresis* as not to do with origins but as a principle of mutual indwelling to be understood only in the light of the strict ordered, asymmetrical and teleological becoming, means that here the principle of *perichoresis* is used, negatively, to delimit the Spirit's inner-triune action. The theologoumenon of *perichoresis* is subservient to that of triune ordered origins as articulated through Barth's Augustine-Anselm synthesis.

Son, in obedience to the Father in the unity of the Spirit, elects humiliation. This triune asymmetry is expressed as the ruling Father, the obedient Son and ‘the Spirit of this act of obedience’ (II/2, 106). What corresponds to this *ad intra* event *ad extra* (and one has to traverse III/2, IV/1 and IV/2 before this is made clear although Barth begins to lay out his stall in II/2), is the second moment of an election event which has a ‘double reference’. The first moment is the ‘active determination’ in which the Son elects humiliation in obedience in ‘the Spirit of this act of obedience’ and the second moment is the ‘passive determination’ in which the elected man Jesus is exalted to obedience as the event of the *communicatio gratiarum*, elected to obedience to the Father in the unity of the Spirit. Christ’s exaltation to obedience corresponds to the Son’s humiliation in obedience. In this sense, the event of the Spirit *ad extra* as the ‘the element of God’s appropriation by man’ becomes ‘the element of God’s appropriation by the man Jesus’ and the event of our appropriation of God happens as we are enclosed in the event that is Christ’s.

We are particularly concerned to follow the way in which Barth articulates his claim that the *filioque* clause is essential to maintaining the Spirit as the basis of the unity and fellowship between God and mankind given that he revises his doctrine of election from being an event of ‘Revealedness’ *ad extra* to being an event in which God elects to reflect himself as a triune decision made *ad intra*.

Concluding Comments on Chapter II

Barth is a stalwart supporter of the western doctrine of the double procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and Son; the *filioque* clause. His coverage of this doctrine in sections 8-12 of I/1 shows Barth to be incorporating various aspects of the doctrine as developed and used by both Augustine (the concept of the Father as *principaliter*) and Anselm (the argument from existence) and into this admixture adding his own particular ingredient, namely that of the triune life of God as event. The life of the triune God is articulated by Barth to be an event between the Father and Son in the Spirit but with a particular and irreversible direction of determination. The Father gives existence to the Son and the Son receives his existence from the Father and both the Father and Son give existence to the Spirit who, as the third and final repetition of divine existence, unites them in love. This distinctive and

irreversible order of existence, which happens as a ceaseless event, is the ordered direction of determination in which the mutual indwelling of the Father and Son in the Spirit happens. Barth's I/1 doctrine of the Trinity is articulated, quite deliberately, as an asymmetrical event.

Barth rejects any argument that attempts to see the Holy Spirit as a divine mode of being who brings forth another divine mode of being as an originating event and in this respect would not be sympathetic to those who have suggested the need to consider the Holy Spirit as involved in the origin of the Son from the Father. For Barth, the Spirit is active in the *perichoretic* life of the Trinity, not with respect to origins. The Spirit does not bring forth divine existence but unites divine existence and as the one who unites the Father and Son in love, such that neither the Father nor the Son would be who they are without him, there is a sense in which Barth sees the Spirit as the one who completes the Trinity. The uniting act of the Spirit, as the one in whom the Father and Son mutually indwell one another, is very important to Barth for it grounds the uniting action of the Spirit in the economy. The Spirit's work *ad extra* corresponds to who he is *ad intra*. There is, in I/1, evidence that Barth is beginning to explore the economic action of the Trinity in the economy, undivided yet appropriated, as corresponding to who the triune God is.

Starting from the biblical witness to the self-revelation of God in the first half of I/1, Barth articulates the God who reveals himself to mankind in Christ to be apprehended by mankind through the Spirit who is the agent of 'Revealedness'. This epistemic title, however, is not seen by Barth to limit the work of the Spirit in the economy to simply epistemic concerns as is made clear in Barth's reference to a variety of actions predicated of the Spirit such as declaring, sending, appointing, and so on. That the Spirit enables mankind to know God and respond to God's call to a Christian life, as communion with God and others, is the Spirit's particular action in the economy in uniting mankind to the Father in Christ. The Spirit's economic action reflects his immanent action of uniting the Father and Son. We know, Barth argues, that the Spirit unites the Father and Son because the biblical witness proclaims him to unite mankind to the Father in Christ. Williams' concern that 'Revealedness' does not correspond to the life of the immanent Trinity because *ad intra* the Spirit does not make the Father and Son known to one another is somewhat short-sighted given that

Barth has, by the end of I/1, indicated that this concept is broader than simply epistemic and further, in II/1, as will be seen, does talk of the Father and Son knowing one another in the Spirit. As the one who unites the Father and Son in love, the Spirit mediates all aspects of the mutual indwelling of the Father and Son in one another, although it is not until later in the *Dogmatics* that Barth makes more of the Spirit's action as mediation.

The main point to note is that in his first volume of the *Dogmatics*, Barth sees the work of the Spirit in the economy as enabling communion. The Spirit's particular action is uniting action. This action *ad extra* mirrors the action of the Spirit *ad intra*. In the triune life of God the Spirit unites the Father and Son. It is certainly true that at this stage of his writing Barth understood election to be an event in which the Spirit enabled particular people to respond to God and that as such election was pneumatocentric in focus and located in the doctrine of revelation as the event of 'Revealedness'. In making the doctrine of election Christocentric in focus and relocating it in the doctrine of God as an event in which the triune God elects himself to be his own covenant partner, Barth's I/1 doctrine of the Trinity, with its deliberate asymmetrical structure and the Spirit as the one in whom the Father and Son are united in being breathed from them, is already well suited to the modification to the doctrine of election and not, as McCormack has argued, in need of 'critical correction'.

It is the burden of the next chapter to show that Barth's modification to his doctrine of election is one whereby election, as the triune event of God's self-reflection, is the Father, Son and Spirit willing and bringing into existence that which is not God. In placing that which is not God in the space graciously made in the Son, the triune God acts towards it as determining event. In acting towards that which is not God, the triune God (who lives in a definite and particular order of determination from the Father to the Son in the unity of the Spirit) elects to reflect himself. The actions of the triune God overflow, in the event of active determining, into the space graciously made in the Son. Election is the triune event of determination towards that which is posited as ontologically other and so has a definite asymmetry because God's particular ordered existence is asymmetrical. We will be arguing that Barth sees the election event as having a particular irreversible direction of determination

because the God who enacts this is God only in a particular irreversible direction of determination. Prior to discussing the doctrine of election proper in II/2, Barth has, in II/1, much to say about the Spirit as the one in whom the communion of Father and Son happens, stressing God's inner life of ceaseless movement and activity. It is in this part-volume too, that Barth discusses his doctrine of time being enclosed in eternity, which is itself preceded by references to mankind being held in Christ, a spatial metaphor which nevertheless Barth seems to treat in quite a literal sense. In his discussion of the perfection of God's freedom of eternity, Barth sees the Spirit's uniting action between the Father and Son being reflected outwards in his uniting of time and eternity. Again, it has to be stressed that Barth is seeking ways to express the ceaseless moment by moment event that is the triune God's activity both in his works *ad extra* and in his life *ad intra*. It is also in II/1 that the inklings of what will become, in II/2, an overt reference to the obedience of the Son, make an appearance in Barth's reference to the 'holy Son of God' as 'obedient to the Father from eternity to eternity' (II/1, 151) which shows Barth continuing to explore his I/1 stance that the Son stands in an irreversible order to the Father.

III

BARTH'S DOCTRINE OF GOD IN CHURCH DOGMATICS II/1⁹⁹ AND II/2

i) Introduction

In this chapter we will show that in II/1 Barth uses his motif (a spatial metaphor) of mankind being in Christ frequently, displays stirrings of what will become his concept of the obedience of the Son, stresses that God does not need the world to have otherness but has otherness in the Son and in taking a human existence as other to himself *ad extra* is doing something not alien to himself but expressing what is natural.¹⁰⁰ In his discussion of eternity and time Barth continues to resist static conceptualisations and stresses the movement and dynamism of the triune God *ad intra* being mirrored *ad extra* in the enclosing and healing of time in Christ. The Spirit is the one who unites eternity and time as a reflection of his uniting the Father and Son. In II/2, Barth carries through his concept of the Spirit as the divine mode of being in whom the Father and Son are united whereby, in the decision of election, the

⁹⁹ All page references in the first half of the chapter, in parenthesis in the text, will be to CD II/1 unless otherwise stated.

¹⁰⁰ Barth began lecturing on what was published in 1940 as II/1 in the summer of 1937 having given a series of lectures in Debrecen, Hungary in September 1936 which outlined his modified doctrine of election following Pierre Maury's inspirational paper 'Election and Faith' at the Geneva Conference in June of that year. McCormack notes that 'the place where a Christologically grounded, christocentric theology first makes itself felt, is in *Church Dogmatics* II/1, in relation to the particular question of the being of God', *KBCRDT*, 461. Prior to the direction given by Maury, Barth held to a 'dialectical theology in the shadow of an anhypostatic-enhypostatic Christology which was pneumatocentric in focus' meaning that attention was focused upon the 'revelation event in the present moment' rather than the incarnation. The pneumatocentric concentration is, according to McCormack, 'seen most clearly in the highly actualistic conception of election and reprobation which was set forth in the Goettingen Dogmatics and continued to hold sway into the church Dogmatics I/1 and I/2' whereas from mid 1936 onwards the 'dialectical theology in the shadow of an anhypostatic-enhypostatic Christology' had a 'christocentric concentration' shifting attention from a 'concentration on the present actualization of revelation to a concentration on the *Deus dixit* in a strict sense', *KBCRDT*, 21f. McCormack does not comment further on this *Deus dixit* but what he seems to have in mind is Juengel's articulation of this as the triune event in which the obedient Son affirms the determination of the Father in his 'yes' which is to speak his own name "Jesus Christ" and so reserve in himself the incarnational space fulfilled in created time, Juengel, *GBIIB*, 95f., detailed below.

Son, in obedience to the Father through the ‘Spirit of this act of obedience’ (II/2, 106), elects to humiliate himself to human estate and become obedient as man. The event of election is the triune event of the decision of God to reflect himself *ad extra*. The obedience in which the Son elects humiliation is reflected *ad extra* as the event in which he is exalted to obedience as man. The Spirit maintains the incarnate Son’s unity to the Father *ad extra* reflecting his uniting action *ad intra*.

ii) Barth’s Doctrine of God in II/1

The first part volume of Barth’s doctrine of God is to do with God giving himself to be known as the reflection of his triune self-knowing. ‘Gods appropriation by man’ is God ‘awaken[ing], creat[ing] and uphold[ing] our knowledge of Himself as a work of obedience’ (37). God becoming object for us, his ‘secondary objectivity’ in revelation as ‘the sending of the Son and the communion of the Holy Spirit’ is grounded upon his ‘primary objectivity’ whereby ‘[a]s the triune God, God is first and foremost objective to Himself’ (51):

in revelation itself we see God’s self-knowledge, God’s own and original objectivity in the modes of being of the Father and of the Son through the mode of being the Holy Spirit. (51)

God is object to himself and does not need a creature for he is ‘self-sufficient in His own inward encounter’ as ‘the Father to the Son and the Son to the Father, in the eternally irrevocable subjectivity of His own divine objectivity’ (58). The Father and Son know themselves in the Spirit.¹⁰¹ This eternal event of God knowing himself,

¹⁰¹ To reiterate, Barth has a concept of the Spirit as constitutive of the relationship of the Father and Son. The Father and Son do not originate from the Spirit but are not Father and Son without him in the *perichoresis* of the triune event which Barth articulates in I/1 as teleological, asymmetrical, ordered *perichoresis*. In contemporary treatments of triune constitutiveness, much depends upon whether one wants *perichoresis* to do with origins. Juengel tends to talk of the Father and Son knowing themselves in the ‘yes’ of the Son without commenting that for Barth this happens in, by and through the Spirit *qui ex Patre Filioque procedit* is the uniting event and indeed Juengel has little to say about the Spirit in his influential book. See also Thomas Weinandy’s *The Father’s Spirit of Sonship* who puts forward, along the lines of that envisaged by Thomas Smail, the thesis that ‘the Father begets the Son in or by the Holy Spirit’ and therefore ‘the Father and Son experience one another in and through the Holy Spirit’. Whilst Barth would accept the second assertion he would not the first. Weinandy, Thomas G., *The Father’s Spirit of Sonship: Reconceiving the Trinity* (Edinburgh, T & T Clark, 1995) ix and 105 respectively. Smail, Thomas, ‘The Holy Trinity and the Resurrection of Jesus’ in *Different Gospels*, ed., Walker, Andrew, second edition (London, SPCK, 1993) 13-26.

‘the Father knows the Son and the Son the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit’ (49) happens ‘at a stroke and once for all in the same perfection from eternity to eternity’ and in like manner the ‘unity of the eternal Word with the man Jesus happened ‘at a stroke and once for all . . . at the heart of time’ (61).¹⁰² The simultaneity of the eternal becoming of the triune God grounds the event of God having time for us in the becoming of the man Jesus Christ ‘at the heart of time’. We can know God because God ‘gives Himself to man in His Word by the Holy Spirit to be known’ (63). ‘Real man is the man who stands before God because God stands before him’ (66) and this is grounded upon the fact that ‘God stands before Himself’ (49). God’s openness to us is grounded upon God being ‘open to Himself - the Father to the Son and the Son to the Father, by the Holy Spirit’ (68). God encounters us as an act of free grace. God knows himself through himself and reveals himself through himself. The dynamics of this eternal event, witnessed to in scripture, is revealed by our encounter with God through God as event; the event of our being ‘in Christ’ by the Spirit. Having thus laid out his epistemological stall, Barth moves into a sustained one hundred page battle with natural theology and the Roman Catholic *analogia entis* returning to proclaim that ‘man exists in Jesus Christ and in Him alone’ (149).

Barth’s references to mankind being ‘in Christ’ are conspicuous by their frequency of use and the importance of this spatial metaphor for Barth cannot be overstressed; indeed this motif is intricately linked with Barth doctrine of time held in eternity as the event of the triune God electing to be his own covenant partner and it is one which remains crucial throughout the *Dogmatics* from henceforth. Here, in his II/1 epistemology, written in the light of Maury’s insights, to be ‘in Christ’ is to acknowledge ‘Jesus Christ [as] the knowability of God on our side’ (150). The above citations show the ordered being ways of the triune modes of being as the ground of

¹⁰² Juengel, *GBIIB*, who covers this area as ‘God’s being-as-object’ notes that Barth’s articulation of the humanity of Christ as a sacramental reality means that ‘[f]rom the existence of the man Jesus a sacramental continuity stretches backwards . . . and forwards’ whereby ‘in the reality which surrounds us, God brings himself to speech *through* this reality’, emphasis in text, 66. When Juengel covers Barth’s doctrine of election in II/2 as ‘primal history’ (surprised as he is to see Barth take up again a concept which he rejected in I/2 57f.; Juengel, note 57, 90) he articulates Barth’s difficult statement of the man Jesus being in the beginning with God as the event of the Logos speaking the name Jesus as his name such that the Logos is ‘a ‘stop-gap’ for Jesus’ as a place ‘reserv[ed]’ around which ‘eternity is planned’ and ‘in virtue of this plan in the eternal counsel of God the man Jesus *is* in the beginning with God’, 95f., emphasis in text. If you like, the Logos’ “yes” to the Father is to say “Jesus” but Juengel does not interpret Barth as saying this moment is also the creation and assumption of human nature but a reserved space, albeit concrete anticipation and intention. In that the “yes” and the name is said, Jesus concretely exists.

our encounter with God to be an encounter by God and that this happens as a reflection of the way in which God is known to himself, the Father to the Son and the Son to the Father in the unity of the Spirit ('through', 'by', 'in' the Spirit), the importance of the *filioque* clause for Barth's construct in II/1 is evident. To reiterate: God knows himself through himself as the event of the Father knowing the Son and the Son the Father in the unity of the Spirit. To say that Jesus Christ is the knowability of God on our side is to say both that he is the one in whom we know God by the Spirit and also the one who knows the Father and whom the Father knows by the Spirit. The Father knows the Son and the Son the Father in, by, through the Holy Spirit. The triune distinctions are maintained and do not collapse into one another. The principle of *perichoresis* expresses their mutual indwelling, their unity, but the doctrine of origins maintains the distinctions as ordered, successive and asymmetrical.

the only begotten Son of God and therefore God Himself, who is knowable to Himself from eternity to eternity has taken our flesh, has become bearer of our flesh, has come in our flesh, and does not exist as God's Son from eternity to eternity except in our flesh. Our flesh is therefore present when He knows God as the Son of the Father, when God knows Himself. In our flesh God knows Himself. (151)

Barth is tying our epistemic event of knowing God (the 'here and now' of revelation) to the eternal event (the eternal 'there and then, here and now, and will be' that Barth articulates as the eternal *nunc*, to be detailed below) that is the Father and Son knowing one another in the bond that is the Spirit as this event turns outwards and is reflected. Barth is holding together a very complex notion of our space/time event happening in (or as held in) the eternal event that is the life of the triune God as an event which mirrors the eventful life of the triune God. We could perhaps see in Barth's assertion that the 'only begotten Son . . . does not exist as God's Son from eternity to eternity except in our flesh' the possibility that Barth is suggesting that as begotten the Son is begotten en-fleshed. This would mean that the begetting of the Son is the moment of the becoming of the God-man, the *logos enasrkos* and whether or not Barth is saying something like this is the content of the ongoing and intense debate outlined in the introductory chapter.¹⁰³ Here too, early in II/1, we find the

¹⁰³ Other recent commentaries include: Colwell J., *Actuality and Provisionality: Eternity and Election in the Theology of Karl Barth* (Edinburgh: Rutherford House Books, 1989); Sharp, Douglas R., *The Hermeneutics of Election: the Significance of the Doctrine in Barth's Church Dogmatics* (Lanham,

stirrings of what will become in II/2 Barth's concept of 'the obedience of the Son'; here the eternal obedience that grounds obedience that is awakened, created and upheld in us:

He, the pure, holy Son of God, obedient to the Father from eternity to eternity, has Himself become a man. (151)

Christ assumes the only flesh that there is to assume; the flesh that is the enemy of God and 'accepted God's grace in our place and therefore rendered to God the obedience which we continually refuse' (152f.). Christ is 'very God and very man, in His suffering and in his obedience' and '[i]n him the enmity of man against the grace of God is overcome, therefore man is no more outside, . . . [h]e is inside'. The point to note here, is that as very God, Christ suffers, as very man, Christ is obedient. The suffering which by right is ours is taken by the Son of God. The obedience which by right we should render to God, but do not, is rendered by the Son of man. The humiliation of the Son of God to suffering happens as the first moment of obedience.¹⁰⁴ Together with the obedience of the incarnate Son as man for us,¹⁰⁵ the second moment of obedience, these two moments of one event are Christ's 'obedience in suffering' (154) by which we are 'in Him' and therefore 'inside', held within, the event that is God's relationship to himself (as knowing, standing, open to); the Father to the Son and the Son to the Father through the Holy Spirit. The high-priestly office of Christ means that 'Jesus . . . stands before His Father now in eternity for us, and lives for us in God Himself as the Son of God He was and is and will be' who 'consubstantial with the Father . . . therefore has God's own power and God's own will to represent us' (156ff.). Christ represents us, as 'an eternal representing and therefore one which is contemporary to all time' and 'in him' we are truly present in this event, 'genuinely participating in what He is and has done'. This participation of ours in the 'in the person and work of Jesus Christ' is a 'work of the Holy Spirit'.

MD: University of America Press, 1990); Hunsinger, George, *Disruptive Grace: Studies in the Theology of Karl Barth* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2000)); Bowman, D., *The Divine Decision: A Process Doctrine of Election* (Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, 2002); McDonald, Suzanne, 'Barth's 'Other' Doctrine of Election in the *Church Dogmatics*' in *International Journal of Systematic Theology*, 9, 2 (2007).

¹⁰⁴ Articulated in IV/1 as the freely rendered humiliation of the Son in obedience as the obedience of God.

¹⁰⁵ Articulated in IV/2 as the exaltation of the Son of man to obedience.

The Holy Spirit is holy because He is God's Spirit, and therefore the Spirit, the moving and unity of the Father and of the Son from eternity and in eternity. (157)

Our appropriation of God by God as the work of the Holy Spirit reflects the event 'between the Son and the Father' of the 'peace and unity in the Holy Spirit from eternity to eternity'. Whilst this event happens 'there in God' it also happens 'here also to and in us'. The 'outpouring and gift of the Holy Spirit to us and in us' being the 'temporal presence of the eternally present'; the 'unity of the Father and the Son in the form of time'. The 'Holy Spirit is the temporal presence of the Jesus Christ who intercedes for us eternally'.¹⁰⁶ We are 'within in the Holy Spirit' (160); 'in the Holy Spirit the unity of the Father and the Son becomes effectual among us and in us in the twofold form of faith and the Church' (161). The work of the Holy Spirit is the 'temporal form' of the 'eternal event between the Father and Son' (166). Our knowledge of God is 'an event enclosed in the bosom of the Trinity' (205). The Father 'Himself has represented Himself to us in the Son by the Holy Spirit' and returning full circle to starting his excursus on our knowledge of God as obedience by God, Barth asserts: 'God is always the Lord, over whom man has no power, nor can have, except the power to be His child, trusting and obedient to Him' (210). Human obedience to God is God's gift as the 'work of the Word and Spirit of God' (216); whereby we are 'requisitioned' in a 'peculiar freedom . . . bestowed' by God (219) as God's gracious 'command' (232). Everything we can say about mankind's knowledge of God has its basis in 'the grace of the incarnation' and in the last couple of pages before Barth expounds 'the being of God as the one who loves in freedom' (section 28 in chapter VI) reference to the through, by and in of the Holy Spirit's work *ad extra* reflecting the event of his existence *ad intra* is not explicit in the way it has been above although one assumes, by what has gone before, implicit:

on the basis of the acceptance and assumption of man into unity of being with God as it has taken place in Jesus Christ, all this has become truth in this man, in the humanity of Jesus Christ. The eternal Father knows the eternal Son, and the eternal Son knows the eternal Father. But the eternal Son is not only the eternal God. In the unity fulfilled by the grace of the incarnation, He is also the man Jesus of Nazareth. (252)¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ What is generally referred to as Barth's 'Christ present in power' motif which may well have its roots in Barth's assertion that the Spirit unites time and eternity, to be detailed below.

¹⁰⁷ This man 'suffers judgment' and 'becomes our Judge'; bears 'the temptation of God' so that 'it is removed in Him'; in our place 'His manhood' is exalted 'in His resurrection from the dead' and 'He is

To conclude this section, Barth is holding together a dynamic picture of the eternal triune event of the Father and Son united by the Spirit as the ground of our relationship to the Father being in Christ by the Spirit. Our obedience to God happens enclosed in the event of the obedience of the Son to human estate, his subsequent human exaltation to faithfulness, and ‘in him’ the exaltation of mankind’s obedience. This is the event of our being united to God, being with and within, as a real participation in the event of the peace and unity of God himself. Barth is relying upon a certain fluidity of his doctrine of eternity and time, to be detailed below, to give him the capacity to express the freedom of God as a freedom to be eternally, in Christ by the Spirit, our supremely temporal God.

What must be made clear, however, is that inherent in Barth’s articulation of the eternal triune event becoming event for us, our knowing being enclosed in Jesus Christ who is the one who knows the Father and is known by the Father in the unity of the Spirit, is Barth’s continued adherence to the *filioque* clause. References to the Holy Spirit as the ‘temporal event’ of Christ who intercedes eternally; the ‘temporal presence of the eternally present’; the ‘unity of the Father and the Son in the form of time’ (158); the ‘temporal form’ of the ‘eternal event between the Father and Son’ (166) and so on show that as Barth works to unfold the potential of Maury’s insights, he sees the pneumatocentric focus of I/1 as revelation event in the present, ‘mankind’s appropriation of God’, to be grounded in the eternal event of the living triune God anticipating, orientating and turning himself towards creating, upholding and bringing to perfection a fragile humanity. The Spirit’s work in the ‘here and now’ reflects his being in eternity. Barth is articulating the event of the Spirit uniting the Father and Son *ad intra* as being reflected *ad extra*. The Spirit pulses between eternity and time and unites the times; the time of God’s eternity and our time as held in his triune life. But we need to say more about Barth’s doctrine of eternity and time upon which this suggestion is based.

our righteousness before God’ so that we believe ‘with the risen Christ’, for ‘in Him [God] has comforted us all in advance’ (253). What is to come in volume four is present in outline.

iii) God Loves in Freedom

Barth is striving to articulate the freedom of God as a freedom that lives to love. God is free in himself, 'in the inner Trinitarian life of the Father with the Son by the Holy Spirit':

But God Himself is the Son who is the basic truth of that which is other than God. As the Son of God this Other is God Himself. But God Himself becomes Another in the person of His Son. The existence of the world is not needed in order that there should be otherness for Him. Before all worlds, in His Son He has otherness in Himself from eternity to eternity. But because this is so, the creation and preservation of the world, and relationship and fellowship with it, realised as they are in perfect freedom, without compulsion or necessity, do not signify an alien or contradictory expression of God's being, but a natural, *the* natural expression of it *ad extra*. (317, emphasis in text)

'[God] is who He is as the One who loves, not in a substance in which he can be more or less something other than the living God' (321f.). 'It is not that God first lives and then also loves . . . [b]ut God loves, and in this act lives'.

God is free. Because this is the case, we must say expressly in conclusion that the freedom of God is the freedom which consists and fulfils itself in His Son Jesus Christ. In Him God has loved Himself from all eternity. (321)

God expresses his freedom as that which 'consists and fulfils itself' in 'His Son Jesus Christ'. This is not to say that the human existence of the Son is necessary for God to realise his freedom or is constitutive of his freedom but rather that in assuming this human life God displays the sovereignty of his freedom to be God in this way and the nature of his freedom as the God of love. In deciding to be his own covenant partner in the Son who he has loved 'from eternity to eternity', God is faithful to himself for this act of condescension *ad extra* is '*the* natural expression' of his perfect freedom, that is, it perfectly reflects who the triune God of love and freedom is. Perhaps it is the interpretation of the expression of this freedom as fulfillment which is at the heart of the disagreements between those who believe that in saying this Barth is either maintaining or rejecting the concept of the *logos asarkos*. McCormack, for example, would see in the above citation evidence of Barth arguing that God becomes who he is as the God of freedom through the event of the incarnation rather than his freedom

grounding and determining the event of the incarnation despite Barth's comments on page 317 that that which God has created as ontologically other to him is not necessary to his triune life of love and freedom. Barth has something definite to say about the either/or of the *asarkos/ensarkos* debate seeing the primacy of the triune God over all things, the asymmetry of the triune life, and God's freedom to be the eternally living God to maintain that the either/or of the *asarkos/ensarkos* has a 'third possibility'; the eternal transference or transition of one becoming the other, a point to which we shall return and which we think is Barth beginning to articulate the freedom of God as the freedom of reflection.

We now come to Barth's classic treatment of the perfections of God but for the purposes of this study we turn directly to 'God's freedom in a third and final grouping of its perfections', the freedom of eternity (608).¹⁰⁸ Barth's understanding of eternity and time plays a crucial role in his construction of the eternal event of election that encloses the temporal event that is Jesus Christ; of the event of the obedience of the Son as the event that grounds the obedience of the Son of man; as the event of the uniting Holy Spirit.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ McCormack observes that Barth's 'treatment of the 'perfections' of God in Church Dogmatics II/1 [were] also controlled at every point by the Christological concentration', i.e., '[t]he stabilization of election in Jesus Christ (i.e., the affirmation that the eternal will of God in which God determines His own being has as its content Jesus Christ)' as 'in eternity . . . an act of Self-determination', *KBCRDT*, 461f. As already stated McCormack interprets this to mean that God determines himself as triune; election having a logical priority over trinity.

¹⁰⁹ It seems that there has been great preoccupation with on the one hand the space/time coordinate that is the assumption of flesh (when did it happen?) and on the other the eternal election of Jesus Christ who is both the subject and object of election (when did that happen?); with on the one hand the event of revelation as 'here and now' (present) as the Spirit of revealedness makes it happen and on the other the 'there and then' of AD 1-30 having this strange quality of becoming here and now and what will be, its backward and forward reference. This is where Barth's doctrine of eternity and time attempts to unload burdened shoulders, that the eternally living triune God can moment by moment draw this created time into his eternal life, moment by moment be the eternal God whose no is always overtaken by his yes, as the decision of the obedient Son who wills, moment by moment, to be *ensarkos* as a moment by moment humiliation of himself in obedience and moment by moment exaltation of his human nature to obedience and in his ours as an event from the Father in the Spirit which has no ending although a distinct beginning as the first of all God's ways and works *ad extra*. We think Barth is after something like this in his construct of the 'eternal event' as an eternally pulsating moment by moment enclosing, transference and transition. The static concepts all too readily ensnare Barth's theological expression.

iv) The Freedom of Eternity

‘Eternity is the simultaneity of beginning, middle and end, and to that extent it is pure duration’ (608f.). Time is a ‘form’ of God’s creation and is to be distinguished from eternity ‘by that fact that in it beginning, middle and end are distinct and even opposed as past, present and future’. ‘Whenever Holy Scripture speaks of God as eternal, it stresses His freedom’.¹¹⁰ ‘Eternity is before and after, above and below being’. Using Boethius’ definition, Barth expresses eternity as unlimited life possessed totally, simultaneously and perfectly (610).¹¹¹ God has time for us, including our time in ‘His duration’ (612). The living God’s ‘unity does not exclude but includes multiplicity and His constant movement’ (612f.). The ‘living God’ is ‘in Himself identical with His eternity’. God’s movement is peace, his movement is ‘held together by the omnipotence of His knowing and willing’; it is ‘*simul*’. ‘Eternity simply lacks the fleeting nature of the present, the separation between before and after’. God ‘surrounds our time and rules it’. ‘God’s eternity in its eternal Now embraces and contains all parts of time and all things in itself simultaneously and at one moment’ but this is not to say that ‘things are present to God either in physical reality or even in intention in a *nunc aeternitatis*’ for even in knowing and willing them, their existence happens in ‘the positive act of the divine creation’ (614). Time is real and it really happens because it is ever granted and upheld by God; it is determined by God. The result of this act is irreversible there being no ‘pretext for

¹¹⁰ Molnar seems to want it to stress *asarkos*, *DFDIT*, 77-81. For Barth is it not freedom to moment by moment assume *ensarkos* albeit as an obedient act of the eternal Son holding to himself, as an act from the Father in the Spirit, his human nature? All the references chosen by Molnar, *DFDIT*, 71, to claim that Barth advocated the importance of maintaining the *logos asarkos*, even in a limited way, really state this fact, that to Barth the *logos asarkos* as used in the tradition is an abstract, static concept which he wishes to move away from and does so particularly in volume four with talk of the eternally obedient Son.

¹¹¹ Hunsinger’s point is that Barth ‘relocate[s]’ Boethius’ definition ‘within an explicit doctrine of the Trinity’ but that Barth’s ideas of ‘simultaneity and totality . . . seem to imply certain distinctions not found in the Boethian definition’, i.e., ‘[f]rom a Trinitarian standpoint, at least as Barth carries it through, they can be taken to imply temporal distinctions that correlate with the trinitarian *hypostases* . . . in other words the distinctions of beginning, succession, and end’. Hunsinger thinks that articulation of God possessing ‘perfectly, simultaneously, and totally in his interminable trinitarian life’ ‘beginning, succession and end’ is ‘where Barth’s account . . . starts to become slippery and ambiguous’. This slipperiness and ambiguity is, for Hunsinger, the fact that here Barth ‘fails to keep the distinction [between the immanent and economic trinity] clearly before us . . . though it is surely what he intends’, *Disruptive Grace*, 197, 199-200. Perhaps Barth’s intention is not necessarily the same as Hunsinger’s in this respect? Barth understands God’s existence as three modes of being in asymmetrically ordered relationships with an irreversibility of direction and in overflowing towards us expresses who he is as beginning, succession and end.

giving our temporal existence the character of something analogous to His eternity'.¹¹² God's eternal now is the eternal now of the triune God; a God who in himself is ordered succession in which there is no reversal of becoming:

We are speaking about the God who is eternally the Father, who without origin or begetting is Himself the origin and begetter, and therefore undividedly the beginning, succession and end, all at once in His own essence. We are speaking about the God who is also eternally the Son, who is begotten of the Father and yet of the same essence with Him, who as begotten of the Father is also undividedly beginning, succession and end, all at once in His own essence. We are speaking about the God who is also eternally the Spirit, who proceeds from the Father and the Son but is of the same essence as both, who as the Spirit of the Father and the Son is also undividedly beginning, succession and end, all at once in His own essence. (615)¹¹³

Barth explains: this triune God is the eternal God and he is the eternal now 'which cannot come into being or pass away'; is 'conditioned by no distinctions' nor 'disturbed and interrupted but established and confirmed in its unity by its trinity, by the inner movement of the begetting of the Father, the being begotten of the Son and the procession of the Spirit from both' (615). Yet in this inner movement of unity in trinity there is 'order and succession' for '[t]he 'unity is in movement' and, anticipating the stress on the *prius* and *posterius*, superior and inferior of IV/1, '[t]here is a before and after':

God is once and again and a third time, without dissolving the once-for-allness, with out destroying the persons or their special relations to one another, without anything arbitrary in this relationship or the possibility of its reversal. (615)¹¹⁴

¹¹² Here Barth is resisting any suggestion of an *analogia entis* but whether his concept of correspondence, albeit couched in terms of an *analogia relationis*, takes him in this direction remains a live question as Von Balthasar saw. See Von Balthasar, Hans Urs, *The Theology of Karl Barth: Exposition and Interpretation*, trans., Oakes, E.T (San Francisco, Ignatius Press, 1992) and Barth's comments on Von Balthasar in his essay *The Humanity of God*.

¹¹³ The ordered, asymmetrical, teleological nature of the origins of triune life grounds the order of mutual indwelling, that is, *perichoresis* is articulated in the light of the order of becoming/origins as 'their succession one to another' (297). This is consistent with I/1.

¹¹⁴ Whilst Paul Jones doctoral thesis is full of insight into the impact of Barth's revised doctrine of election on his articulation of the humanity of Christ as a real human acting as upheld by God, on the importance of Barth's asymmetrical model of the triune God as ordered, teleological movement in grounding the human acting of Christ, Jones has little to say and this may well be due to his reading Barth's doctrine of the Trinity as structured through sexism. Whilst Barth, being a man of his times, might not have been very interested in interpreting Ephesians 5 in the light of 'all are one in Christ Jesus', the primary motive for structuring the Trinity asymmetrically was not sexism but credal and biblical, my Father is greater than I, etc. If one gets distracted by Barth being a man of his times much is missed and interpretative errors ensue. If Barth then takes his trinitarian model and uses it to make gender judgments that is unfortunate, but it does not detract from the correctness of grappling with Jesus' relationship to his Father and the Spirit as revelatory of who our triune God is. Jones, Paul D.,

Real time is ‘the form of the divine being in its triunity’; this is God’s time. The triune God is ‘a movement which does not signify the passing away of anything, a succession which in itself is also beginning and end’ (615).¹¹⁵ Barth is striving to express the simultaneous, ceaseless event of the becoming of the triune God which is ordered, irreversible *telos*. There is no reversal of this ordered becoming; the asymmetry *ad intra*, as revealed *ad extra*, is strictly maintained as from the Father to the Son and the Son to the Father in the unity of the Spirit. The eternal event of the becoming of the triune God overflows as the event in which ‘in its very power as eternity’ God takes time to himself in the assumption of flesh, ‘in the incarnation of the divine Word in Jesus Christ’ (616f.). In this event, God does not simply embrace our time and rule it, but ‘submit[s] Himself to it, and permit[s] created time to become and be the form of His eternity’. The eternal obedient Son wills to take temporal form and created time is lifted up. God causes it to be ‘His own garment and even His own body’. ‘[T]he eternal God, took time and made it His own’. This is no obligation but is done freely and in power; in superiority and mastery. God ‘re-creates’ and ‘heals [the] wounds’ of time. ‘Real created time acquires in Jesus Christ and in every act of faith in Him the character and stamp of eternity’. The eternal event of God having time for us as an overflowing of his own triune life grounds the event of faith in the ‘here and now’. The pneumatology of the *filioque* clause expresses one aspect of this overflowing triune event, the Spirit uniting us ‘in Christ’ to the Father, catching up our time and holding us within the bosom of the Trinity.

In God, ‘all beginning, continuation and ending form a unique Now, steadfast yet moving, moving yet steadfast’ (617f.). The Son incarnate lifts up time and heals it in the power of ‘His triune being’. God is not compelled to take time to himself but in that he has done so the ‘readiness of eternity for time . . . belongs to His essence’. God has ‘true and absolute time, in his eternity’ and this is ‘a readiness for time’. God

The Humanity of Christ in Karl Barth’s Church Dogmatics, Harvard 2000, unpublished PhD, 257ff., hereafter *HCKBCD*.

¹¹⁵ Thus Gunton: ‘There is a kind of temporality in God, which preserves both the ontological distinction of God from the world and the real relation God has with it. God’s eternity is not non-temporality, but the eternity of the triune life’. Gunton, Colin E., ‘Barth, the Trinity, and Human Freedom’ in *Theology Today* 18, 1 (1986) 318.

takes time to himself in the freedom of non compulsion.¹¹⁶ God always has the prerogative and this is irreversible. The ‘temporality of eternity’, God lifting up and healing our time in Christ, is described by Barth as ‘pre-temporality, supra-temporality and post-temporality’ (619f.). The biblical ‘idea of eternity is continually brought into a positive relationship to time’. God ‘conditions [time] absolutely in His freedom’; ‘He precedes its beginning, He accompanies its duration, and He exists after its end’. God’s eternal now ‘must be understood as the element which surrounds time on all sides and therefore includes its dimensions’. The exaltation and healing of time in Christ is ‘God’s complete temporality’.

i) Pre-Temporality

In Barth’s treatment of pre-temporality there is held in tandem two things; the sovereignty and freedom of God to i) be without us: ‘He could have done without [fellowship with mankind], because He is who He is before and without it’ and ii) to not be without us: God who ‘did in fact chose not to be without us’ determined every thing in Jesus Christ. Barth refers to John 8.58 (‘before Abraham was, I am’) and Ephesians 1.4f. and I Peter 1.18f., whereby we are chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, to stress that ‘the eternal presence of God over and in time is established by reference to a pre-time in which time and with it the existence of man and its renewal is foreseen and determined’ (621ff.). The pre-time of God is to say God exists before us and all things, ‘in Himself’. In this time, God ‘willed to create and elect us’: ‘everything, including time itself, was decided and determined . . . God wrote His decrees . . . decided to call into being the world and man by His Word, in the wisdom and power of His eternal Word, . . . determined to send this eternal Word, . . . exercised providence and foreordination . . . determined the goal of all His willing’ (622).

¹¹⁶ McCormack makes the point that we cannot talk of what God might have not done but only of what he has done for how would we know what he might not have done. In this sense, is not talk of God’s freedom not to create or not become incarnate empty talk? On what ground is talk of the non necessity of creation valid? Barth, nethertheless, sees it as necessary to continually assert the freedom of God to have not established fellowship with mankind, e.g., 621-22.

For this pre-time is the pure time of the Father and the Son in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. And in this divine time there took place the appointment of the eternal Son for the temporal world, there occurred the readiness of the Son to do the will of the eternal Father, and there ruled the peace of the eternal Spirit – the very thing later revealed at the heart of created time in Jesus Christ. (622)

In obedience to the will of the Father in the peace of the uniting Spirit, the second mode of the triune God orientates himself to becoming incarnate as intention in making a space within himself: ‘everything comes from God’s free, eternal love which penetrates and rules from eternity’ that is ‘time, and with it the existence of man and its renewal, is foreseen and determined’, that is to say, ‘determined in Jesus Christ’:

For Jesus Christ is before all time, and therefore eternally the Son and the Word of God, God Himself in His turning to the world, the sum and substance of God in so far as God chose to create and give time, to take time to Himself, and finally to fix for time its end and goal in His eternal hereafter. In His turning to the world, and with it to a time distinct from His eternity, this God, Yahweh Sabaoth, is identical with Jesus Christ. (622)

Barth does not shirk from stressing the existence of Jesus Christ ‘before all time’ in God’s determination to turn outwards towards creation and mankind. To put it crudely, the moment God decides to be God for us, Jesus Christ, in some sense, happens, eternity has a very definite content, but just here great care is needed in interpretation. Because of Barth’s concept of the eternal now as God possessing totally, simultaneously and perfectly unlimited life as the ceaseless event that is his inner movement of himself as the unbegotten Father begetting himself as Son and uniting himself as the Holy Spirit as an event in which there occurs the decision in which the Son freely wills to become, as Paul Jones put it, ontologically complex, there is a movement from the triune God towards the intended ontological distinctness to be as an event in which the triune God overflows determining himself to be for us. Here we must pause. To say that the triune God determines himself in the Son to be for us is not to say that this determination constitutes God as who he is; that this determination has a backwards reference such that it can be said that in deciding to determine himself for us God decides to become triune.¹¹⁷ Is this not to give a

¹¹⁷ It could be argued that Juengel, *GBIiB*, seems to avoid this unsophistication by his assertion that whilst the ‘yes’ of the Word, God saying ‘yes’ to himself as ‘the *mystery* of God’s being’ that ‘one cannot go behind’, ‘constitutes his being as God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit’, 111,

‘backward push’ far in excess of what Barth seems to have in mind when he talks of the triune God determining himself in eternity and therefore eternally to be God for us in Christ? Is this not to give created time the power to determine eternity? Despite the talk of time being gathered up in eternity’s simultaneity, Barth keeps God’s eternity forward moving, in the same way that he sees God’s triune life as asymmetrically ordered teleology. In this sense, full attention must be given to Barth’s concern to see the forward movement of the eternally living triune God as irreversible *telos*. In this sense too, the eternal decision to be God for us is a forward moving decision; irreversible and teleological. We might express this in terms of an eternally forward moving moment of decision. It would be a strange kind of logic to talk of God’s decision to be for us as going backwards as a decision in which God decides to be triune.¹¹⁸ That Christ is contemporary to all times expresses the enfolding of time in eternity and not the determining of eternity by created time.

ii) **Supra-Temporality**

Supra-temporality is to say that God’s eternity accompanies our time, our time is in eternity ‘like a child in the arms of its mother’ and is ‘preserved and kept in it’ (623). God gives us existence and fellowship with him and is in ‘the midst with us’ as his eternity is also ‘in the midst’ (624). ‘All time is really in His hands’ (625). Again the initiative of the divine event is maintained; eternity ‘goes with’, ‘goes over’ and ‘above’ time. Above the ‘movement’ of our time ‘the unalterable hours of eternity strike, which the strokes of our clocks can echo and answer in a childlike or even childish way’ (623). God is not ‘timeless’ but gives us time in him having time for us

(as self-correspondence, self-interpretation, self-reiteration and self-determination) this event is a ‘*becoming proper to his own being*’, 115, whereby God does not ‘*become* what he is only through his relation to another from himself’ but becomes ‘what he *already* is . . . [a]nd in this way, in the self-relatedness of his being in becoming, God is already ours in advance’, 115 note 153, but we are not convinced.

¹¹⁸ Even if one is concerned to expose the ancient metaphysics of God being a substance complete in and for himself before any acts, our point being that Barth’s triune God is full of action towards himself in himself and this is the difference between a metaphysical God and the triune God of the biblical witness; his eventful triunity, even if we only know of this eventful triunity in the triune God’s action towards us.

because in Christ God is supremely temporal.¹¹⁹ Referring to Psalm 2.6f., ‘in which God says to the King set “on Zion my holy mountain”: “Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee”,’ Barth agrees with Calvin’s interpretation of the *hodie* not meaning ‘eternity itself’ for the ‘begetting cannot be the eternal begetting of the Son by the Father’ (625). The text refers, rather, to the ‘appearing of the Messiah King in time’ and ‘in this appearing, as Calvin says, eternity is revealed, or, as we should now say more specifically, the supra-temporality of God as His presence in time’ (626f.). In the event of Christmas we see that time is accompanied by eternity ‘in such a way . . . that time acquires its hidden centre, and therefore both backwards and forwards its significance, its content, its source and its goal, but also continually its significant present’.¹²⁰ Jesus, ‘in His person’ is the bridge between eternity and created time, healing created time even as he accompanies it, fulfilling ‘as man the obedience which makes man the object of the divine good will’.¹²¹ This is the ‘turning’ of created time on the axis that is Christ in whom the two spheres of the past and the future are held as the moment by moment event of transformation, but this transformation too is asymmetrical and always tipped towards the future having a determined *telos* towards wholeness in Christ. In free grace God has decided the outcome of the moment by moment turning as a turning always towards him and healing. Mankind is ‘under this determination’ and the one who stands between the two spheres of created time is Christ and the direction he takes us in is ‘irreversible’, (628f.). There is here too, ‘succession and order’ in this ‘real time healed by God’. This ‘real time healed by God’ is the event of healing that is determined by the Father to be in Christ by the Spirit. The triune life of God, from the Father to the Son in the

¹¹⁹ Hunsinger is reluctant to let go of a concept of God being timeless and tries to argue that Barth maintains this (‘[a] careful reading shows . . . that Barth intends . . . in some strong sense eternity is timeless’, *Disruptive Grace*, 189, but Barth is quite adamant that ‘we are not to speak secretly of a timeless God and therefore of a godless time’, 625. Further, Hunsinger sees Barth’s dialectic of saying in one place ‘time has nothing to do with God’ and in another ‘God . . . is supremely temporal’ to point to a ‘terminological headache’ which is ‘ambiguous’. Hunsinger goes to great lengths to point out Barth’s dialectical method so one would have expected him to see that the examples given above point on one hand to God’s freedom of divine initiative and on the other to the freedom of this initiative to become the Christ (God’s supreme temporality). This is not a ‘vexing case’ of ‘slipperi[ness]’ but simply Barth wrestling, dialectically, with expressing the eternally living God as becoming supremely temporal for us in Christ as an expression of his living eternity as one who loves in freedom.

¹²⁰ Christ is contemporary to all time for it is enclosed in him in the moment of the eternal Son making space within himself in the event of election.

¹²¹ Hunsinger asserts that in Barth’s account ‘time’s healing is distinct from salvation from sin’, *Disruptive Grace*, 204, but if Jesus heals time by being obedient on our behalf, then either Jesus or Hunsinger has got it wrong.

unity of the Spirit, is mirrored in Barth's construct of 'real time' being time healed by God as it is enclosed in Christ and united to the Father in the Spirit.

iii) Post-Temporality

Eternity embraces time. 'We move towards' God (629) for God is the 'eternity to which we move' (631). '[T]ime moves towards a real end' (635). There is a definite teleology. 'In the truth of God there is certainly dynamic particularity' but 'no rivalry' (637) for God's choosing not to be without us in the turning towards us in his existence before us (pre-temporality) and his accompanying us as a moment by moment transformation of our time held in his eternity (supra-temporality), taking us towards that definite consummation that is his will that peace will prevail as the one who 'embraces time and us too from a position in front of us' (631, post-temporality) means that the three forms of God having time for us 'the threefold form of eternity' (639) are in perfect, ordered harmony. 'Eternity is the living God himself' (638). The 'basis of these three forms' in their 'mutually inter-related particularity' is 'in the last resort' the 'three persons of the Trinity' (639, emphasis mine). '[E]ternity is His essence'. 'There really is in it, then, direction, and a direction which is irreversible . . . origin and goal and a way from the one to the other' with no exchanging of confusing of '[i]ts forms' (639). The 'symmetry' of the eternally living God is 'strict'; it is irreversible (639). It is a *perichoresis*; a 'mutual indwelling and interworking of the three forms of eternity'; 'that which is distinct must be seen in its genuine relationship' (640f.). The distinction and the unity must be 'expressed with equal reality and seriousness'. Yet there is an 'irreversible direction without which eternity would not be God's eternity'.

To be the living God is to be the eternal God whose existence as total, simultaneous and unlimited life perfectly possessed is the event of the 'mutually related particularity' of Father and Son united by the Spirit as the one God who chooses not to be without us and determines to be for us, accompanies us in the time he has for us in Christ and embraces our times from ahead of us in the Spirit bringing

to perfection his will for us.¹²² God's time for us as the event of created time happens enclosed within and upheld by, yet always distinct from, the eternal event that is the living God himself. Barth articulates the movement of the eternally living God as teleological perichoretic 'mutual indwelling and interworking', which given Barth's articulation of the triune life in I/1, 8-12, and his outworking of this in the epistemology earlier in this part volume, we know to mean movement that expresses the asymmetry of the triune origins. God exists in a particular way, with a particular ordered, irreversible direction and lives in this way perichoretically. 'God *lives* eternally' is to say '*God* lives eternally' (640, emphasis in text). To Boethius' distinction, Barth adds triune ordered, asymmetrical, teleological movement.¹²³

v) The Glory of God

Barth's treatment of the glory of God, which concludes his doctrine of eternity and time, is concerned to assert several important points which indicate what is to come in the second part of volume two, in part two of volume three and in parts one

¹²² Barth does have a concept of the eschatological Spirit but the detail of this, to be in volume five, was never written.

¹²³ Hunsinger articulates Barth's concept of time as two vectors (one down; the entry of eternity into time and one up, the elevation of time into eternity) intersected by the 'conjunction of simultaneity and sequence in the union of eternity with time', the latter consisting of the three forms of eternity (pre, supra and post). In the downward vector Hunsinger holds on to a concept of timelessness as 'the sense that God does not share in time's imperfections' whilst noting, without comment, that Barth writes that the name Jesus Christ is 'the refutation of the idea of a God who is only timeless', 616; (for good measure Barth also writes: 'we must cling utterly to His [Gods] temporality', 617; 'we cannot understand God's eternity as pure timelessness' but in Christ the eternal God 'took time and made it his own', 617) and although Barth, using his dialectic, talks of a 'God who in Himself [is] both timeless and temporal' he is clashing the fleetingness of our time as disappearing in God's 'timelessness' because of God being for us and taking the fleetingness to himself in his becoming temporal and therefore rejecting 'pure timelessness'. This movement is irreversible. In the upward vector Hunsinger argues that the healing of time is not to do with sin whereas in the pages Hunsinger cites as the basis for his upward vector, Barth is stressing the asymmetrical and irreversible event that is God being not timeless but supremely temporal for us. On the three forms of eternity, Hunsinger does simply exposition without comment and with reference to 'conjunction of simultaneity and sequence' etc., there is the reiteration of the understanding of *perichoresis* as dynamic coinherence 'moving in its own inherent teleology from perfection to perfection' as being the ground to which the three forms of eternity are analogous without any reference to the content of this *perichoresis* being the trinitarian life as teleological and asymmetrical *perichoresis* in which the *filioque* clause, and all that is said within this dynamic of the ordered becoming of God, is integral. The Holy Spirit as the bond between the Father and Son is also the 'bond between eternity and time', 669, and so crucial in any account of Barth's articulation of the trinitarian structure of eternity. Hunsinger sees that there is teleology but does not articulate what is undergirding this.

and two of volume four. The glory of God is to say ‘God endures’ (640) but he endures as one who ‘seeks and finds fellowship, creating and maintaining and controlling it’ (641). God gives himself to be known as self-giving, self-declaration, self-demonstration and self-sufficiency (644) and whilst ‘absolutely pre-eminent’ God ‘changes . . . distance into proximity’ as a ‘divine transition’ which is the ‘heart of the concept of the divine glory’ (649, emphasis mine). This is God’s love and it is ‘irresistible grace’ (645). In unfolding himself in all his perfections it is revealed that ‘God is beautiful’ (650). His freedom and his love are the ‘unity of movement and peace’ of his ‘self-determination’ (658). God’s ‘inward and outward life’ shines out in his ‘self-declaration’ (659). God’s freedom, sovereignty and love are ‘not abstract’ but concrete in his Trinity as Father, Son and Holy Spirit in which he is ‘one but differentiated being’ standing in ‘definite irreversible and non-interchangeable relationships to one another’ (660). We cite at length Barth’s reaffirmation of the ordered teleological existence of the triune God:

Here God in Himself is really distinguished from Himself: God, and God again and differently, and the same a third time. Here there is no mere point, nor is the circle or the triangle the final form. Here there is divine space and divine time, and with them extension, and in this extension, succession and order. But here there is no disparity or dissolution or contradiction. Here there is always one divine being in all three modes of being, as that which is common to them all. Here the three modes of being are always together – so intimate and powerful are the relationships between them. We can never have one without the others. Here one is both by the others and in the others, in a *perichoresis* which nothing can restrict or arrest, so that one mode is neither active nor knowable externally without the others . . . it certainly follows from God’s triunity that the one whole divine being, as the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit whose being it is, must be at the same time identical with itself and non-identical, simple and multiple, a life both in movement and at peace. In this relationship, and therefore in its form, what is repeated and revealed in the whole divine being as such, and in each divine perfection in particular, is the relationship and form of being the Father and the Son in the unity of the Spirit, to the extent that these three are distinct in God but no less one in God, without pre-eminence or subordination but not without succession and order. (660)¹²⁴

The ‘triunity of God is the secret of His beauty but further the ‘centre’, ‘goal’ and ‘hidden beginning’ of all God’s works is the ‘work of the Son’ who ‘forms the centre of the Trinity’ (661f.). ‘[I]n [the Son’s] work, in the name and person of Jesus

¹²⁴ Barth does talk of a ‘before and after’ in God (615) and we know that he will come to talk of ‘superior and subordinate’ in God. What he will not talk of is subordinationism and it is to this that we think he is referring in this citation.

Christ', corresponding to the 'essence of God', the 'beauty of God in a special way and in some sense to a supreme degree' is revealed. This is God's supreme 'self-declaration', 'self-representation' in which 'His divinity overflows [*Ueberstroemt*]' in a 'depth with which He here differentiates Himself from Himself . . . extend[ing] His own existence to co-existence with this other', becoming 'very man' yet remaining 'very God' (662, emphasis mine).¹²⁵ The 'condescension of God Himself' who is so much 'at peace with Himself, that He is capable of this condescension' is the 'confirmation and exemplification of His unity' in adopting to himself, as a bestowal of himself, alienated flesh in humiliation and exaltation. 'It is with this depth that [God] differentiates Himself from Himself' as a 'reflection [*Abbildung*] and image [*Bild*] of His inner, eternal, divine being' (663, emphasis mine). It is crucial that here is grasped that Barth sees the event of self-differentiation (the event of the overflowing/extension of God's glory in freedom and love in gathering to himself 'supreme temporality' in the assumption of human existence by the Son) as an event which is a 'reflection and image' of the inner triune event that is God's life; God himself. Much interpretation of Barth's understanding of God's self-determination as self-differentiation seems to miss that this is a event in which the triune God reflects who he eternally is. God's self-differentiation as the condescension of the Son to assume, enfold and heal human nature bringing it to perfection, is the 'reflection and image' of the giving Father (giving divine existence to the Son in begetting him), the being given and giving Son (receiving divine existence in being begotten and with the Father giving, as spiration, divine existence to the Spirit) and the being given and uniting Spirit (receiving divine existence in his spiration from the Father and Son uniting them in love). This threefold event *ad intra* mirrored *ad extra*, will be articulated in III/2 as Christ being the *imago Dei*, which in volume four is articulated as two ceaseless moments of the history of a transference/transition from *ad intra* to *ad extra*, the *ad extra* mirroring the *ad intra*: in IV/1 as the humiliation of the Son in obedience, the first moment, which in IV/2 is mirrored as the exaltation of the human nature to obedience, the second moment. The inner triune event of the eternally living God, the ordered, asymmetrical and teleological event that is the life of the eternal Trinity, is reflected and imaged in the turning of the Son towards that which is other

¹²⁵ The self-differentiation as extension (overflowing) to co-existence with human existence is the mirroring of the triune life in the ontologically distinct dimension that is primarily the human existence of the Son and secondarily 'in Him' all others.

(665). The obedience of the Son *ad intra* is reflected *ad extra* in his human existence as the obedient Christ. The event of the humiliation of the Son in obedience in gathering and healing time in human existence is articulated by Barth in IV/2 as the determination of the triune God towards the human existence of the Son, using a remolded form of the *communicatio gratiarum* reflecting the ‘eternal co-existence of the Father and the Son by the Holy Spirit’ (667). To talk of the glory of God is also to talk of the ‘glory of the Holy Spirit as well’ (669). Barth reiterates the I/1 emphasis on the Spirit as the bond of our communion with God, the importance of the *filioque* clause again being apparent:

[t]he Holy Spirit is not only the unity of the Father and Son in the eternal life of the Godhead. He is also, in God’s activity in the world, the divine reality by which the creature has its heart opened to God and is made able and willing to receive Him. He is, then, the unity between the creature and God, the bond between eternity and time. If God is glorified through the creature, this is only because by the Holy Spirit the creature is baptised, and born again and called and gathered and enlightened and sanctified and kept close to Jesus Christ in true and genuine faith . . . [i]t is the Holy Spirit who begets the new man in Jesus Christ whose existence is thanksgiving. (669-70)

God is ‘personally present’ to us lifting us up to reflect his glory as an ‘echoing wall’ which is our service of thanksgiving and praise (670). In Christ and by the Spirit we are ‘enabled to participate in the being of God’ as pure gift. Our being enabled to glorify God (as the event of being in Christ by the Spirit) ‘consists simply in the life-obedience of the creature which knows God’ (674). The creature who does this on behalf of all others who are hid in him, is Jesus who is the Son incarnate. Barth is articulating the work of the Spirit *ad extra* as a reflection and image of his action in the life of the eternal Trinity; the one who unites the Father and Son *ad intra*. As the event of our appropriation of God in the here and now Barth’s II/1 doctrine of the Spirit is consistent with his I/1 articulation as detailed in chapter one above and has been interwoven into his doctrine of eternity and time as the triune mode who links, bonds, unites time in eternity, uniting all temporal moments to the richness of the Father’s eternal embrace of, in anticipation and fulfillment, the supremely temporal Son whose name is Jesus Christ in whom all humanity is enclosed. The Spirit’s act in uniting eternity and time reflects and images his act of uniting the Father and Son.

To conclude, Barth's articulation of the triune life as the ordered, simultaneous and teleological becoming of I/1, in which the *filioque* clause is integral, is deeply woven into his treatment of time being embraced in God's eternal *nunc*. What has to be kept in mind is that Barth sees the triune action in and towards time, overarching time, to reflect and image the triune life in eternity. The eternal triune God elects the overflowing of his life, gathering time to himself as a moment by moment determination and enabling. The Spirit is the bond between eternity and time in the event of the downward vector of the humiliation of the Son in obedience and the upward vector of the exaltation of the Son of man to obedience and the bond between the event of pre-temporality and supra-temporality in the event of post-temporality, which is the pulling of pre- and supra- temporality towards eschatological fulfillment. The one that stands between the spheres of eternity and created time is Christ (626) for he inhabits both spheres and 'in Him' there occurs the event of transference and transformation in which human existence is lifted up, healed and held moment by moment and so gifted obedience and freedom as a reflection and image of Christ's freedom in obedience which is itself a reflection of the eternal obedience and freedom of the Son.

vi) **Barth's Revised Doctrine of Election in II/2**¹²⁶

Much has been written about Barth's doctrine of election and in order not to become distracted by the huge and ongoing debate about this part volume, we wish to rehearse only the main points of Barth's argument, picking out those features which are important to this thesis along the way whilst not ignoring salient features of those engaged in the debate. We are particularly concerned to follow Barth's thoughts on the ordered teleological simultaneity of the eternal event of the triune God overflowing in the election of himself to be God for us, particularly Barth's articulation of the Holy Spirit as the event of unity in God which overflows as 'the bond of eternity and time', reflecting and imaging his uniting role in the triune life in his uniting of us in Christ to the Father.

¹²⁶ All page references in this section (in parenthesis in the text) are to *Church Dogmatics* II/2 unless otherwise stated.

In his free love God stands in a 'definite relationship with the other' (6). The 'Subject God' has a 'divine attitude' which is his 'free but definitive decision' that 'it pleased the fullness of God to dwell in Jesus Christ (Col. 1.19)' (7). 'Even if there were no such relationship, even if there were no other outside of Him, [God] would still be love' but once this 'definitive decision' is made it belongs definitively to God Himself, not in His being in and for Himself, but in His being within this relationship' (6). 'Jesus Christ is the decision of God in favour of this attitude or relation . . . He is Himself the relation' (7). In Christ God moves towards mankind, in his movement towards this man, and 'in Him', mankind is enabled to move towards God (7). Note here the way in which Barth is maintaining the divine initiative, the asymmetry of movement being from God to God become man and then from God become man, this man, to us as we are held 'in Him'. There is a 'primal history which is played out between God and this one man . . . and the people represented in Him' (8). There is an 'overflowing [*Ueberstroemen*] of the love which is the being of God' (9). God elects Jesus of Nazareth as a gracious free decision and to this 'there corresponds . . . a very definite claim which He Himself must advance' (11). As the 'divine election of grace' (12) [*Gottes Gnadenwahl*] God ordains Jesus to be his covenant partner and to take responsibility as the judge who will be judged in our place. The 'aim of free grace' is to free us and 'return us to obedience' (30). This demand, summoning, 'compelling and disturbing' is the living God's "Yes", evoking our freedom in obedience; it is our rest, 'the rest of decision and obedience' (31). Our obedience, however, is actualised in the particular man Jesus Christ who is obedient on our behalf, the elect man in whom we are enclosed.

vii) The Election of Jesus Christ as a Triune Event

in Himself, in the primal and basic decision in which He wills to be and actually is God, in the mystery of what takes place from and to all eternity within Himself, within His triune being, God is non other than the One who in His Son or Word elects Himself, and in and with Himself elects His people.
(76)

‘In so far as God not only is love, but loves, in the act of love which determines His whole being God elects. And in so far as this act of love is an election, it is at the same time and as such the act of His freedom’ (76). ‘[F]rom and to all eternity God is the electing God’ (77).¹²⁷ God has ‘from all eternity . . . willed and ordained that He should act in Jesus Christ’ (89).

It is for this reason that we understand the election as ordination, as God’s self-ordaining of Himself. And it is for this reason, then, that we regard the doctrine of election as a constituent part of the doctrine of God. (89)

Barth sees election as God choosing himself to become the saviour, his own covenant partner on our behalf. As opposed to God choosing particular people to either election or reprobation, election is to do with who God is in himself as the one who loves in freedom. Instead of election following on from the work of atonement, it precedes the work of atonement and is located in the doctrine of God because it is the event in which God elects himself to be his own covenant partner in whom we are hid. The event of election is a ‘decision made between Father and Son from all eternity’ and ‘for this reason we must see the election at the beginning of all the ways of God’ (90). ‘[H]aving first determined Himself for man’ God ‘determines man for Himself’ (91f.). This election event is ‘the moment which is the substance and basis of all other moments’. This moment is the ‘divine self-determination’; the ‘primal decision of God’ the content of which is Jesus Christ. It is a divine determination of the triune God to become the covenant partner of man, not a divine determination to become triune. In Christ God moves towards mankind, enclosing human existence in his eternal actuality:

[T]his movement is Jesus Christ Himself. This movement is an eternal movement, and therefore one which encloses man in his finitude and temporality. (92).

God’s actuality in Christ is the free and gracious willing of his good-pleasure. It cannot be withdrawn or rejected for the gracious God is the ‘constantly self-asserting Subject’, that is, election, once begun, is a ceaseless moment by moment event of

¹²⁷ Having surveyed the positioning of the doctrine of election in various sixteenth and seventeenth century theological schema, concluding that Calvin’s 1537 solution is to be preferred, Barth concludes that the most profound word of Dogmatics is to say ‘God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself (2 Cor. 5.19).

enclosing human existence and healing it (92). Barth is now ready to express the eternal dynamic of the loving God as the triune event of election. Jesus Christ is the electing God and elected man: ‘in Him God stands before man and man stands before God’ (94). With a backward glance to Barth’s coverage of mankind’s knowledge of God in chapter five of the *Dogmatics* above, we can see Barth layering his thinking with one set of elucidations being built upon another. The standing of God before God as the basis of our knowledge of God is here expressed as the event of election. Barth is not saying, however, that the assumption of the human nature by the Word is the moment of the begetting of the Son. Jesus Christ is ‘in the beginning of God before which there is no other beginning apart from that of God within Himself’ (94).¹²⁸

He, Jesus Christ, is the free grace of God as not content simply to remain identical with the inward and eternal being of God, but operating *ad extra* in the ways and works of God. . . . There is no *extra* except that which is first willed and posited by God in the presupposing of all His ways and works. (95)

There follows Barth’s exposition of John 1, 1-2.

To say that the Word was in the beginning with God as God is to say that the ‘Logos, is identified with the mode of being and being of the first “He”, God . . . as person (that of the Son) it participates in its own way with the person of “God” (the Father) in the same dignity and perfection of the one divine being’ (96). The fourth century doctrine of the *homoousios* expresses the full divinity of the Word who was in the beginning; the only begotten ‘in the bosom of the Father’ (97f.). The Word is ‘the divine self-communication’ and it is ‘an eternal happening and a temporal’. The eternal happening is ‘in the form of time’ and the temporal happening has ‘the content of eternity’. The divine self-communication that is the event of Jesus Christ ‘in the beginning’ means that ‘we have no need to project anything into eternity, for at this point eternity is time, i.e., the eternal name has become a temporal name, and the

¹²⁸ As outlined in the introductory chapter, Bruce McCormack argues that Barth was not consistent in maintaining the logic of Jesus Christ as the subject of election and moments such as this sentence point to this inconsistency which are what McCormack calls “‘metaphysical moments” in his otherwise anti-metaphysical theology . . . [b]ut such moments are exceptional and function as limit concepts which do not define the overall cast of his thought’, used because ‘Barth knew of no other way to secure the freedom of God in election’, *BgC*, note 47, 25-26. We find these moments occurring with persistent regularity albeit intermittently and believe that what Barth said in these moments was a quite deliberate and necessary part of his theological endeavour.

divine name a human' (98). The triune God has, as a reflection of his love, stooped towards that which is other, anticipating us in Jesus Christ. That he who is *homousios* with the Father is called Jesus Christ, expresses his full humanity. Colossians 1.17 tells us that 'the Son of God – the Son *in concreto* and not *in abstracto*, Jesus Christ, . . . is "before all things" and "in Him all things consist"' (98). '[F]rom all eternity God elected to bear this name' (99f.). 'Jesus Christ is the eternal will of God, the eternal decree of God and the eternal beginning of God'. God makes an eternal decision and that is to elect. This 'leads us to the sphere where God is with Himself, the sphere of His free will and pleasure . . . this sphere is His eternity' (100f.). At this very point, Barth argues, we have to resist the temptation to set up a *decretum absolutum* as something 'higher or more distinctive and essential in God than His electing'. The decree, rather, is Jesus Christ, and this is the 'free decree' of grace. 'God anticipated and determined in Himself (in the power of His love and freedom, of His knowing and willing)' to be God for us before anything distinct from him was brought into existence. The 'beginning' that is the event of election is 'the beginning of all God's ways and works *ad extra*' (103f.). This point is very important and seems to be overlooked in accounts which try to say that Barth has in mind election as the beginning *ad intra*. Jesus Christ, as 'very God' is 'the electing God', and as 'very man' is 'the elected man'. The 'concept of election' thus has a 'double reference' [*einem Doppelten*] and this must be borne in mind in all accounts of Jesus Christ being the subject and object of election:

In so far as He is the electing God, we must obviously – and above all – ascribe to Him the active determination of electing. It is not that He does not also elect as man, i.e., elect God in faith. But this election can only follow His prior election, and that means that it follows the divine electing which is the basic and proper determination of His existence. In so far as He is man, the passive determination of election is also and necessarily proper to Him. It is true that even as God He is elected; elected of His Father. But because as the Son of the Father He has no need of any special election, we must add at once that He is the Son of God elected in His oneness with man, and in fulfilment of God's covenant with man. Primarily, then, electing is the divine determination of the existence of Jesus Christ, and election (being elected) the human. (103, emphasis mine)

This divine determination to elect is a trinitarian event:

In the beginning it was the choice of the Father Himself to establish this covenant with man by giving up His Son for him, that He Himself might

become man in the fulfillment of His grace. In the beginning it was the choice of the Son to be obedient to grace, and therefore to offer Himself and to become man in order that this covenant might be made a reality. In the beginning it was the resolve of the Holy Spirit that the unity of God, of Father and Son should not be disturbed or rent by this covenant with man but that it should be made the more glorious, the deity of God, the divinity of His love and freedom, being confirmed and demonstrated by this offering of the Father and this self-offering of the Son. (101-102)

Jesus Christ, as ‘the subject and object of this choice . . . was at the beginning’. But, and it is a significant but, ‘He was not at the beginning of God, for God has indeed no beginning’ [*Er war nicht an Anfang Gottes: Gotthat ja keinen Anfang*] (102) reiterating what was said on page 94 and established at the beginning of the treatise on page 6 and further, making sense of Barth’s assertion that there is a ‘double reference’ to the election event with two moments the first being the ‘active determination of electing’ and the second being the ‘passive determination of election’. If saying that the beginning of all God’s ways and works *ad extra* as election is to be distinguished from the triune God who has no beginning is an exceptional ‘metaphysical moment’, referring to McCormack’s claim, in which the freedom of God is secured, Barth seems keen to secure it, puncturing the text at regular intervals with this refrain. ‘But He was at the beginning of all things, at the beginning of God’s dealings with the reality which is distinct from Himself’ (102). Whilst the triune God has no beginning, the event of election does; it is the beginning of God’s ways and works ‘at the beginning of all things’ with ‘the reality which is distinct from Himself’, that is, *ad extra*.¹²⁹ That this election event is an ‘eternal’ event is to say that once begun it never ceases. There will never be a time when the eternal Son ceases to be fully human. The decision of election is irreversible.

Is not Barth’s concept of the eternally living triune God who holds our times in his hands as one who possesses unlimited life totally, simultaneously and perfectly in a particular set of ordered and directed relationships playing a crucial role in his articulation of the election of Jesus Christ ‘in the beginning’? Does not Barth’s doctrine of time being held in eternity, being held in the arms of the triune God, allow

¹²⁹ In many ways, as suggested by Steve Holmes in conversation, Barth’s doctrine of election might well have been placed at the beginning of volume three as that which precedes creation but in that Barth sees election as the making of ontologically distinct space within God in which God’s acts towards that space (indwelling it in the human existence of the Son in which our own existence is hid) reflect who he is, Barth places election in his doctrine of God.

Barth to speak of the assumption of flesh to the eternal Son as an event whilst having ontological consequences for God, that the Son never ceases thereafter to be both very God and very man, nevertheless is an event which the triune God determines as a reflection and image of who he is and is not determined by? The asymmetrical and irreversible *telos* of God, albeit a simultaneous movement/event, is here of prime significance.¹³⁰ God might well choose to ontologically complicate his being the Son, but this does not necessarily mean that i) he had to or ii) that this ontological complication determines God being triune.¹³¹ To say this of Barth is to miss one of his most fundamental insights, that God is who he is without us, even in determining himself to be for us. Perhaps Barth's reluctance to let go of McCormack's so called 'metaphysical moments' is evidence that he wanted to continue to affirm this.¹³² Barth's assertion that the Son has 'no need of any special election' but as 'very God' elects, with the Father in the unity of the Spirit, to become man as the first moment of

¹³⁰ What then of Jones' point that God allows himself to be determined by his choice of becoming flesh in that God graciously decides to shape himself as the eternally living triune God who holds our times in his hands to be also the one who is held as supremely temporal by himself? What is problematic is the assertion that God's gracious choice is God choosing to become triune as if there could be the possibility that there could be a God who is not eternally triune. To put a point made by McCormack back to himself, how would we know that there could be a God who is not eternally triune? Barth holds to the irreversible asymmetry and *telos* of the event that is the forward movement of the eternally triune God and this holds at bay the improper suggestion that God elects triunity even if some use the complexity of Barth's doctrine of election to assert this. Although Jones tries to avoid McCormack's conclusion of Barth that election is logically prior to triunity by saying the 'incarnation of God *qua* Son is a decision coincident and coordinate with God's decision to exist as Father, Son and Holy Spirit' and so 'there is no need to prioritize either the Trinity or election', he falls prey to interpretations which fail to recognise the strict asymmetry to Barth's doctrine of God and concept of correspondence. Jones, *HCKBCD*, 92. In discussing Barth, Gunton can also be found, unconsciously we think, to invert the direction of correspondence although his theology as a whole always maintained that the direction of determination is from God to man: 'revelation is truly the presence of God to the world; and therefore it follows that God in some way corresponds to this as an eternal structure of personal events whose reality embraces all the times of the creation, past, present and to come', Gunton, Colin E., *Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth*, second edition (London, SCM, 2001) 237. God does not correspond to revelation, revelation corresponds to God.

¹³¹ As, it has to be said, a triune choice which in itself suggests that the Trinity actually exists in order to choose, but this is to get distracted by logical priorities again. A brief distraction: does not the category of choice/decision not then have logical priority over election? And if choosing or deciding is more basic than election, is this not to return full circle to the triune God as the one who chooses/decides, assuming that is, that the God who decides is indeed triune? If the God who decides to be triune is not triune who is this God? Is there not too much of a theological weight on the category of choice/decision? Is not this category giving rise to debates as to whether God is triune on the basis of a decision?

¹³² We note that McCormack defines Barth's II/2 'actualistic ontology' as 'decision and act' but we also note that Barth does this in such a way that it is the decision and act of the Trinity. The Trinity decides and acts, each one 'no less' than the other. Has this rather fundamental stance of Barth not been overlooked in the jumble sale rush to interpret this as saying God decides to elect, and therefore actualises himself as, Trinity? Does not Barth see the decision and act of the Trinity with regard to election as that which they decide and do, rather than that which is decided and done to them, by whom it may be added? Who is the God who decides to be triune self constituting himself as these three if he is not these three?

‘active determination’ which is followed by the second moment of ‘passive determination’ of the Son as ‘very man’ electing God ‘in faith’ is we think Barth continuing to establish what will become in volume four the two moments of obedience, the first moment of obedience being of the Son who is ‘very God’ actively determining himself for humiliation to human estate (IV/1) with the second moment being his exaltation to electing God in faith, his passive obedience, as the act of the Son ‘very man’ being determined by the triune God, expressed in a remolded form of the *communicatio gratiarum* (IV/2). Barth is maintaining the asymmetry of the divine initiative, God first in all things. Jesus Christ as elected man ‘can be understood only in the light’ of ‘Jesus Christ is the electing God’ (103). Undergirding this assertion is the eternal Son united to the Father in the Spirit being the person of this decision in whom the decision of his human will is evoked in love.¹³³ God ‘makes within Himself in His pre-temporal eternity’ a divine decision in freedom who is Jesus Christ; ‘He Himself . . . the will of God in action’ (104). This willing is the active obedience of the Son who wills election ‘in company with the electing of Father and the Holy Spirit’ (105). To reiterate, the decision of election is a triune event between the dispensing Father and obedient Son in the Spirit who unites them in love and this is repeated *ad extra* in the obedient response of the Son in human existence to the Father in the power of the uniting Spirit:

The obedience which He renders as the Son of God is, as genuine obedience, His own decision and electing, a decision and electing no less divinely free than the electing and decision of the Father and the Holy Spirit.¹³⁴ Even the fact that He is elected corresponds [*entspricht*] as closely as possible to His own electing. In the harmony of the triune God He is no less the original Subject of this electing than He is its original object. And only in this harmony can He really be its object, i.e., completely fulfil not His own will but the will of the Father, and thus confirm and to some extent repeat as elected man the election of God. (105)

¹³³ Barth adheres to Christ possessing a divine and human will. Paul Jones tends to interpret Barth’s use of Christ as *anhypostatos* to refer to Christ not possessing ‘personality’ and argues for a strong emphasis on the active humanity of Christ but with little emphasis on the pneumatological dimension of this enabled activity as articulated by Barth using the *anhypostasia/anhypostasia* formula with its all encompassing acknowledgement of the prevenience of the divine in Christ whatever his action, that is, the *anhypostasia* is not just about Christ not having ‘personality’ but about life lived utterly within the loving determination of the triune God as *anhypostatos*. See Barth’s comments in I/2, 163ff. Jones puts much emphasis on the event of Gethsemane as paradigmatic for understanding Barth’s construal of Christ’s active humanity but Gethsemane has to be seen in the light of the whole passion of Christ’s life and death vindicated in his resurrection, that is, the humiliation in obedience to death (IV/1) can only be understood along with the exaltation of death to life (IV/2). *HCKBCD*, 50.

¹³⁴ What does the Son elect in obedience? That he be obedient as man; the elected obedient man of God.

The one triune Subject God elects, but as the overflowing event of the eventful ordered triune life in which there is direction from the Father to the Son and from the Son to the Father in the Holy Spirit. These three elect in divine freedom, the divine freedom being 'no less' the will of the Father than of the Son and the Holy Spirit, but ordered from the Father to the Son and united in the Spirit, the Son affirming the will of the Father, as an affirmation to which the 'not my will but yours be done' of Gethsemane (which Barth expounds in IV/1) corresponds as 'closely as possible'. This ordered willing in the harmony of the Spirit is the will of the triune God that love prevail. That the Son, the second mode of the one Subject God, elects is his own 'posit[ing]'; his 'participation' in the event of election (105f.). 'He Himself . . . executes the decision'; 'He too, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, is the electing God'. We cannot bypass the Christ to seek this decision of election only in the Father and the Holy Spirit. This decision is disclosed to us only 'where it is executed', that is, it is disclosed only in Jesus Christ who is himself the decision enacted. But this is to say:

So much depends upon our acknowledgement of the Son, of the Son of God, as the Subject of this predestination, because it is only in the Son that it is revealed to us as the predestination of God, and therefore of the Father and the Holy Spirit, and therefore in the one divine election. (105)

Here again we must pause and acknowledge that Barth is maintaining the prevenience of the triune God. Jesus Christ is indeed the Subject of election, but who is Jesus Christ? He is the eternal Son incarnate. As the Subject of election, Barth is stressing that Jesus Christ is very God. The person of Christ is the eternal Son, his human existence having actuality only as upheld and determined by the Son in his unity to the Father in the Spirit. Barth's maintenance of the *an/enhypostasia* formula is evident. The eternal Son is, along with the Father and Spirit, the one Subject God. When we talk of Jesus Christ as the Subject of election, there is to be acknowledged the prevenience of God in his second mode the eternal Son who is the Subject of Jesus Christ. The eternal Son, the eternal obedient Son, elects to assume flesh and give actuality to his human existence. To this event of the eternal Son electing there corresponds as closely as possible the act of his human nature being elected and electing God in return. This is to talk of two moments, two ordered, asymmetrical, teleological, irreversible moments of movement, from God the Son, in response to God the Father in God the Spirit, to that which is ontologically distinct in concrete

anticipation. If you like, these two ordered moments of movement are from eternity to time, and then, and only then, from time into eternity. We cite Barth at length in this important section which displays the drawing together of several crucial motifs: eternity (simultaneous ordered unity), asymmetry, the *filioque* clause, and the obedience of the Son:

[I]n free obedience to His Father He elected to be man, and as man, to do the will of God. If God elects us too, then it is in and with this election of Jesus Christ, in and with this free act of obedience on the part of His Son [dann in und mit diesem freien Gehorsamsakt seines Sohnes]. It is He who is manifestly the concrete and manifest form of the divine decision [goettlichen Entscheidung] – the decision of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit – in favour of the covenant to be established between Him and us. It is in Him that the eternal election becomes immediately and directly the promise of our own election as it is enacted in time, our calling, our summoning to faith, our assent to the divine intervention on our behalf, the revelation of ourselves as the sons of God and of God our Father, the communication of the Holy Spirit who is none other than the Spirit of this act of obedience, the Spirit of obedience itself, and for us the Spirit of adoption. When we ask concerning the reality of the divine election, what can we do but look at the One who performs this act of obedience, who is Himself this act of obedience, who is Himself the very first Subject of this election. (105-106, emphasis mine)¹³⁵

Barth has certainly been building up to a more overt coverage of the obedience of the Son as the obedience that overflows in election. Note the direction of Barth's logic: 'in free obedience . . . He elected'; that is, the Son elects in obedience and not the Son elects obedience. The obedient Son elects to be obedient man for us. The Son's obedience as man mirrors his obedience as God. The 'free act of obedience on the part of [the] Son' to become the obedient man Jesus Christ is through/by/in the 'Spirit of this act of obedience' who is '*der Geist Jesu Christi*' and 'for us the Spirit of adoption'. The Spirit who unites the obedient Son to the Father *ad intra*, unites the incarnate Son to the Father *ad extra*. The Son of God in his free self-offering of obedience elects to be obedient as man; he elects to reflect who he is.¹³⁶ This point is

¹³⁵ The original German does not refer to the 'Spirit of obedience itself' but to the 'Spirit of Jesus Christ', *KD*, 113: '*der ja kein anderer als der Geist dieses Gehorsamsaktes, der Geist Jesu Christi und fuer uns der Geist der Kindschaft ist*'.

¹³⁶ Thus Juengel: '[a]ccording to Barth the eternal Son participates as subject in the election of the Father in that by his own free decision he affirms the determination which the Father wills for him, to be the God who elects the man Jesus and chooses oneness with him. The eternal Son *elects* his election by the Father. Thus in the innertrinitarian being he elects *obedience*', *GBIIB*, 87-88, emphasis in text. On the contrary, Barth is saying that the Son's obedience is presupposed in the event of election; election is an overflowing of his obedient love, united as he is to the Father by the Spirit of this act of obedience. The Son elects in obedience that he be obedient as man.

crucial but the questions thrown up by it will have to wait for an answer until later in the thesis. Does the Son elect to become obedient to the Father as affirmation of the Father's determination that God be for us, that is, is the obedience of the Son to do with the reality distinct from himself or is there an eternal obedience *ad intra* which grounds the obedience *ad extra* (the obedience of the Son of Man as a reflection of the obedience of the Son of God) revealing the obedience *ad intra* as itself not a reflection of who God the Son is but immediately and directly of God the Son himself? Perhaps we could pose this question more sharply; is there a moment in which there is a *logos asarkos* and no obedience? As discussed in the introductory chapter, Molnar holds to Barth maintaining a 'sharp distinction' between the immanent and economic trinities and the *logos asarkos* as an important principle but also, following T.F. Torrance, sees obedience being only to do with the *opus ad extra*; Barth's view of the eternal obedience of the Son as of God *ad intra* being inconsistent with his overall thinking. In this sense, we find it intriguing that interpreters of Barth's doctrine of election who maintain that Barth abandons the *logos asarkos* completely as well as a distinction between the immanent and economic Trinity advocate that the obedience of the Son is actually to do with the *opus ad extra* in the sense that the eternal Son elects obedience as an affirmation of the Father's determination to be for man, election having a logical priority over the obedience of the Son.¹³⁷ Barth's articulation at least is couched resolutely in terms of an active Trinity bringing something to pass; the Father determining, and the obedient Son affirming in the unity of the Spirit of this act of obedience, the event of election. The 'One who performs this act of obedience who is Himself this act of obedience, who is Himself the very first Subject of this election' (106) is to say that the eternal Son who is God in his second mode obedient to God in his first mode from whom he is begotten, is in himself the obedient one who, obedient to the Father, freely accepts to be obedient as man. The possibility that the eternal Son exist as the obedient man of Palestine is grounded upon the eternal obedience of the eternal Son. The event of asymmetrical, ordered, *telos* of the eternally living triune God is reflected in the event of turning towards us in the becoming flesh of the Son. To reiterate a point made severally, this structure will be repeated in IV/1 and IV/2. In IV/2 the obedience of the human nature reflects, as exaltation, the eternal obedience of the Son to humiliation (the obedience of God in IV/1) as the triune event

¹³⁷ Given that election is seen as having logical priority over God's triunity, this is not a surprise. The *opus ad extra* is seen to determine who God is.

ad extra in which the Spirit, as the communion of grace, determines or upholds the human nature, along with the Father and Son, in unity with the divine nature. It is not about God deciding to be obedient as the Son, God the Son is obedient just as God is, in himself, eternally humble. Is it really possible to interpret Barth's doctrine of election as suggesting that the Son elects obedience as the moment of God deciding to become triune such that one might say the begetting of the Son is a begetting of an obedient Son which the Son himself nevertheless elects? But here the limits and straining of this logic, as well as strained readings of Barth's text, are evident and we would hold that this particular line of argument cannot be squeezed out of what Barth is saying in the passage cited above and it is not his intention that it be so. Perhaps Barth makes himself vulnerable to such interpretations simply because he placed his doctrine of election in his doctrine of God?

To say 'in free obedience to the Father [the Son] elected to be man', is to say that this obedience is 'an act of divine sovereignty'. The emptying and humbling (Phil. 2.7f); giving (Gal. 1.4, I Tim. 2.6), offering (Gal. 2.20, Eph. 5.2), and sacrificing of himself (Heb. 7.27, 9.14); 'even in those passages which treat of His obedience (Phil. 2.8, Heb. 5.8), we cannot but see the reflection [*den reflex*] of the divine spontaneity and activity in which His own existence is grounded' (106, emphasis mine). The obedience of the Son is the obedience of God the Son and grounds and evokes the obedience of his human nature. Barth will not say with Aquinas that Christ's election is restricted to his human nature, to a 'passive relationship' but insists that there is, in voluntary, active obedience to the Father, the 'personal electing of the Son of God which precedes this election' (107). The reality of the 'divine-human person Jesus Christ' means that election happened as the 'decision of Jesus Christ' and is not a hidden decree behind him. '[T]he eternal election (both passive and also active) of the Son of God Himself' means that 'we can be absolutely certain that in Jesus Christ we have to do immediately and directly with the electing God' (107-108). God does not elect us at arm's length, tinkering with whether that is to be to heaven or hell, but elects us 'in Christ' and if we are elect in Christ we can be sure that the outcome can only be good. Barth is stressing that we are in Christ in a radical sense; that the eternal Son's free self-offering to assume alienated flesh, to be this Israelite man, means that he, as this man he is to become, chooses us for healing and only healing. The eternal obedient Son affirms, in the peace and rest of the uniting

Spirit, the Father's will that the decree of election is to happen within himself. With Augustine, Barth wants to affirm that the 'eternal God not only foresees and foreordains' Jesus Christ before all created reality but 'He Himself, as the presupposition of its revelation in time, actually is this person' (108f.).¹³⁸ The actual establishment in ultimate authority of what 'was later to be in time' is not to say, however, that Augustine was thinking of the 'Word of God in itself and as such' for this would be to 'defin[e] temporal existence as something externally pre-existent in God'.¹³⁹ Barth reasons that what Augustine had in mind was the 'Word or decree which was in the beginning with God' which if identified with Jesus is the eternal Word actually promised to man. Athanasius' articulation of the matter as seeing the Son being 'laid as a foundation before time was' with the preparation and grounding of our life 'in Christ Jesus long before' being likened to a master builder who builds a house considering at the same time how it is to be repaired. Athanasius has what Barth calls a 'very powerful perception of the third possibility which lies between the being of the eternal Word or Son as such and the reality of the elected man Jesus' (109-110f.). The 'election of the man Jesus and our election' has its foundation 'in the eternity of the Word or Son, an eternity which differs not at all from that of the Father'. Athanasius, Barth suggests, 'ascribed to the eternal Word or Son of God a determination towards the elected man Jesus and towards the election of believers as they are enclosed in Him'. Athanasius kept a 'conception of the pure being of the triune God one the one hand' and on the other a 'conception of the concrete temporal history of salvation willed and fulfilled by God' but 'over and above' this he had a 'conception of the Johannine Logos which was identical with Jesus and which was in the beginning with God'. This is to say that Athanasius saw 'the decree, or predestination, or election' as a 'decision reached at the beginning of all things'.¹⁴⁰ Barth's doctrine of the eternally living triune God drawing temporality to himself continues to work hard within his articulation of the doctrine of election. If awareness of this doctrine is not maintained as running parallel to the articulation of election,

¹³⁸ Augustine, *De civ. Dei* XII, 16.

¹³⁹ Here, in the midst of his doctrine of election, Barth is maintaining careful limits. Eternity is not to be predicated of temporality for there is always the asymmetry of irreversible movement from God to that which is ontologically other. Here again in yet another 'metaphysical moment', Barth injects that careful reminder of God 'in Himself as such', 6, which is Barth's constant reminder of the sovereignty of the living God.

¹⁴⁰ Barth's point is that triune election (the triune God electing himself to be his own covenant partner) precedes and grounds creation. Creation is planned around the obedient Son's willingness to become the Christ.

over-simplistic notions of a static *logos asarkos* and sharp immanent/economic distinctions as well as projections of a static *logos ensarkos* into the being of God and immanent/economic conflations happen all too readily.

What Barth is describing, in his continued offensive against the Calvinistic doctrine of election, is a supralapsarianism which has been carefully remolded from that of the traditional model.¹⁴¹ To talk of election as a decision reached before creation is not to say that the *logos ensarkos* is read back into eternity to the extent to which some contemporary interpreters of Barth want. Barth seems to be holding this charge at bay so far with his careful construct of the decision of election as the ‘third possibility’ between the abstract *logos asarkos* and the fulfillment of God’s eternal will in time in the concrete life and times of Jesus Christ; a ‘third possibility’ in which temporality is moment by moment gathered up into eternity as the event of the obedient Son’s orientation to becoming man for us in humiliation. But when we think of election, Barth insists, ‘it is not enough simply to keep on speaking of it as the unique work of God’, ‘[w]hat we must think of is Jesus Christ’ (112). To reiterate, Barth is looking for a third way of expression between a static and abstract *logos asarkos* and the actuality of the *logos ensarkos* which is not to ‘defin[e] temporal existence as something externally pre-existent in God’ (108) but which is to find a way of saying that God for us means for us to be ‘enclosed in Him’ [*in ihm beschlossenen*] (110) beginning with that which is assumed by the Son. The basis of our obedience is in Jesus’ obedience (his passive election of exaltation to obedience) and the basis of this obedience, *meritum Christi*, is the obedient Son electing himself (active electing) as the electing God, in his second mode of being, which is the active work of the whole Trinity. The Spirit’s part in this work is his acts of ‘resolve’ (101) and ‘electing and decid[ing]’ (105) because he is ‘the Spirit of this act of obedience’ (106). The Son’s participation in the decision of electing, the decree, as ‘divine Subject’ means that he is ‘both *electus* and *eligens*’ (115f.) and these two moments are the movement of the eternally forward moving triune God. There is no naked Godhead, ‘there is no thing as Godhead in itself’ but ‘Godhead is always the Godhead of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit’. Theological concepts that are not

¹⁴¹ Barth refers to Polanus who saw the work of election to be the work of the whole Trinity and thinks him aware of Athanasius’ insights without achieving their ‘loftiness’. See 127ff. for discussion of seventeenth-century supralapsarianism.

grounded absolutely in Jesus Christ as the incarnate Son of the Father, who along with the Father is the giver of the eternal Spirit, are to be set aside as lacking the content that is Christ. Jesus Christ ‘Himself is the One who elects us’; this ‘decision . . . was executed by Him’. What must be stressed here is that there is an order and a *telos* to this event of election; to this deciding and choosing. It is the triune God who elects, each mode ‘no less’ than the others albeit in a particular way as revealed by their actions *ad extra*. The decision of election is from the Father to the obedient Son in the resolve of the Spirit. This event is the pre-temporal event of the one triune Subject and the event in which the Son freely accepts, united to his Father in the Spirit, the assumption of flesh, speaking his name “Jesus Christ” and reserving a place to be fulfilled in the time/space coordinate that is Mary, becoming, even in this pre-temporality, moment by moment *ensarkos* as ‘in Him’ temporality is lifted up and held in God’s anticipatory eternity. Barth’s articulation of election as having a ‘double reference’ is to say that whilst the first moment of election is humiliation in obedience the second moment of election is exaltation to obedience and in the second moment of the one event, anticipated in eternity and fulfilled in time, the exaltation of all humanity is included.

Whilst as ‘the Creator’ Christ elects us, he is, as creature, also elected. Jesus is ‘*the* elect of God’, ‘before all created reality’, ‘before time itself, in the pre-temporal eternity of God’ (116f., emphasis in text). ‘[F]rom eternity itself’ we are ‘as Eph. 1.4 tells us, only “in” Him’.¹⁴² In Him ‘means in His person, in His will, in His own divine choice, in the basic decision of God which He fulfils over against every man’. In his own person, as God, the Son wills that we be elect in ‘His humanity’ and of ‘none other of the elect can it be said that his election carries in it and with it the election of the rest’. God ‘upholds’ this man ‘upon whom He has set His Spirit’, Isaiah 42.1. This man’s election is referred to as ‘passive election’ as that which is accepted and received ‘by the free grace of God’ (118f.). The election of this man, his being ‘conceived and born without sin’ is ‘the work of the Word of God, by the Holy Spirit’ and is ‘by grace alone’. This ‘human nature’ has a ‘destiny’ to ‘exaltation to fellowship with God’; this man is ‘the cause and instrument of our exaltation’. This man’s election is ‘election to suffering’ (120f.). The ‘reality of the passive election of

¹⁴² ‘For he chose us in him before the creation of the world’.

Christ . . . as the object of the divine predestination' must encompass his submission in obedience 'by the grace of God'. Barth reiterates the freedom of God to love:

He might well have been satisfied with the inner glory of His threefold being, His freedom, and His love. The fact that He is not satisfied, but that His inner glory overflows and becomes outward, the fact that He wills the creation, and the man Jesus as the first-born of all creation, is grace, sovereign grace, a condescension inconceivably tender. (121)

'[F]rom the very first (from all eternity)' the free grace of God 'took on' the 'form' of 'obedience unto death' which is to say that in the election of Christ 'rejection' is 'actualised' (122f.). '[I]n the divine counsel the shadow itself is necessary as the object of rejection' and 'in His divine freedom God rejects' this shadow which 'man in himself' has no power to reject. Barth is layering his doctrine of election upon his doctrines of the knowledge and eternity of God in II/1. God is steadfast in love, the man Jesus is obedient in humility; there is 'steadfastness on both sides' and '[i]t is in the unity of this steadfastness both divine and human that we . . . find the peculiar secret of the election of the man Jesus' (125). This secret is that God wills that his triune life overflow, reflecting who he eternally is. The 'twofold steadfastness' is the 'decision willed by God' that 'the actualisation of the overflowing of the inner glory of God' happens as 'the decisive act of history' (125-126). God's 'eternal will is the election of Jesus Christ' (146). The 'eternal God is the electing God' (149) and on page 154 Barth finally acknowledges Pierre Maury's 'impressive treatment' of the topic of predestination at the 1936 Geneva conference.

Barth reiterates that the concept of predestination, as the will of God for us in Jesus Christ, he has been elucidating is 'the beginning of all things' whose beginning is, using his spatial metaphor, 'in God's eternal being in Himself' as the beginning of 'God's relationship with the reality which is distinct from Himself' (155f., emphasis mine). Yet again Barth states that God has an 'eternal being in Himself' that is distinguished from the 'beginning' which is the decision of election in which God wills his relationship with the reality that he creates as distinct from himself and again in close proximity to this Barth reiterates his doctrine of eternity and time. The eternal will of God is to '[tie] Himself to the universe' in 'affirmation' of his freedom:

The eternal will of God which is before time is the same as the eternal will of God which is above time, and which reveals itself as such and operates as

such in time. In fact we perceive the one in the other. For God's eternity is one. God Himself is one. He may only be known either altogether or not at all. When He is known He is known all at once and altogether. (156)

These 'secondary and derivative considerations' are disclosed only by revelation telling us what the 'eternal will of God is, but also what it was and will be' (156). The 'secret of God's good-pleasure' is that God is eternally on our side in Jesus Christ; that God 'Himself in the person of the eternal Son should *be* the lost Son of man' (157f., emphasis in text). This is the eternal decree: the 'Son of God in His whole giving of Himself to the Son of Man, and the Son of Man in his utter oneness with the Son of God' and this decree is 'the decision between God and the reality distinct from Himself'. Here we pause. Does Barth really want to say that the decision of election is a decision between God and the reality distinct from himself? Does Barth's asymmetry of the event that is God and God for us allow for a decision that is also predicated of the passive reception of being elected that is given to the human nature of the Son?

The Son of God determined to give Himself from all eternity. With the Father and the Holy Spirit He chose to unite Himself with the lost Son of Man. The Son of Man was from all eternity the object of the election of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And the reality of this eternal being together of God and man is a concrete decree. It has as its content one name and one person. This decree is Jesus Christ, and for this very reason it cannot be a *decretum absolutum*. (158)

At this point Barth does not answer our question but continues to rebuff the traditional *decretum* substituting it with 'the election of Jesus Christ' (161f.). The eternal will of God is to hazard himself for us; to give himself up for us. This is to say that '[p]rimarily God elected or predestined Himself'. 'The beginning in which the Son became obedient to the Father was with Himself'. There is a double predestination in the sense that there belongs 'two sides' to the will of God; there is a 'two-fold reference'. God's decision of election is God's hazarding of himself and taking of a 'sure and certain risk' for 'God wills to lose in order that man may gain'. God makes a 'severe self-commitment' exposing 'Himself to the actual onslaught and grasp of evil' (164f.). God elects rejection, 'made it His own'; 'bore it and suffered it with all its most bitter consequences'. This is the "no" of predestination, although Barth does not put it like this here.

God elects that his glory should overflow. ‘All God’s willing is primarily the determination of the love of the Father and the Son in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit’ (169f.). The triune God determines that his love shall overflow. This is the ‘Yes of predestination’. God ordains that the glory of ‘His inner life as Father, Son and Holy Spirit . . . should enter the sphere of contradiction’ (170f.).¹⁴³ ‘God wills [evil] only as a shadow which yields and flees’ for in all things God has supremacy. ‘On our behalf the Son of God took the form of a servant and became obedient unto death’ (172) ‘but it is not the Son of God who is glorified’ (173f.) for he has no need of glorifying but rather ‘in the power of His deity, He realises and accomplishes it’.¹⁴⁴ This “no” en-route to the “yes” is the two-fold nature of election.¹⁴⁵ The ‘beginning in which the Son became obedient to the Father’ as an obedience ‘with Himself’ is a moment by moment transference and transition of his eternal obedience to the Father in the unity of Spirit, as an overflowing of this glory, into an obedience unto death in his human nature. It is not that the eternal Son becomes obedient through the event of election but rather that the event of election happens through his obedience.

And now Barth answers our question as to whether he really wants to say that the decision of election is a decision between God and the reality distinct from himself. ‘The eternal will of God is a divine activity in the form of the history, encounter and decision between God and man’ (175f.). God is the living God; the eternal God whose unlimited teleological life is possessed simultaneously, totally and perfectly. ‘God is active in His inner relationships as Father, Son and Holy Ghost’ and this movement which is also rest is to say ‘His being is decision’. What happens *ad extra* reveals who God is *ad intra*, but not only reveals for God’s being is decision, his decision to overflow towards that which is distinct from himself, as a ‘transition from one to the other: from God’s being in and for Himself to His being as Lord of creation’.¹⁴⁶ ‘And what else can this be but activity and event’.

The eternal will of God which is the predestination of all things is God’s life in the form of the history, encounter and decision between Himself and man, a

¹⁴³ Reiterating the triune glory of God of II/1.

¹⁴⁴ Thus II/1: ‘[i]t belongs to the essence of the glory of God not to be *gloria* alone but to become *glorificatio* . . . [t]herefore properly and decisively we can understand even the *glorificatio Dei* which takes place in time by the creatures, only the work of the divine glory’, 667 and following.

¹⁴⁵ Again, IV/1 and IV/2 are here in embryonic form including the direct and immediate relationship of the Son to the Father in the unity of the Spirit, reflected in the remolded *communicatio gratiarum*.

¹⁴⁶ Theoretically, this is yet another of McCormack’s ‘metaphysical moment[s]’, *BgC*, 18.

history, encounter and decision which are already willed and known from all eternity, and to that extent, prior to all external events, are already actual before and for Him. (175)

God's life overflows. This overflowing is the event summed up in the name Jesus Christ. This overflowing is a 'transition' from God *ad intra* to God *ad extra*, if we can be permitted to put it so; a mirroring in the Son. This overflowing has a definite and strict asymmetry: '[i]t is not that God and man begin to have dealings with each other, but that God begins to have dealings with man', for '[w]ithout qualification the precedence is with God' (176f.). 'God decides, and the possibility and actuality of man's decision follow on this decision of God'. But God indeed wills man's decision, wills it by evoking it. Who, Barth asks, has the 'initiative', the 'precedence'; who 'decides', 'rules'? 'God, always God' (177f.). The decision even of this man, Jesus, is one grounded upon the prior decision of God and this again means that the Son of Man receives the 'exaltation and glorification' in exclaiming "not my will but yours be done". The Son of Man receives, receives and receives again but even this receiving is a free decision of obedience. It is his divinely enabled determination which never enslaves but only frees. 'The man Jesus is not a mere puppet moved this way and that by God'. 'The man Jesus prays . . . [h]e speaks and acts' (179). This speaking and action of Jesus is not 'merely a temporal event, but the eternal will of God temporally actualised and revealed in that event'. Jesus' act of prayer is the 'confidence in self [giving] way before confidence in God' as God's eternal will happens as the ceaseless event of the transition of the eternally living triune God gathering temporality into himself in the Son, the transition of life from God to man, exalting man into eternal life. This man of prayer actualises the eternal divine movement towards freedom in obedience for us, for this man 'is made free to do the will of God' and we are held 'in Him' (180f.). The 'history, encounter and decision between God and man' happens 'in the bosom of God'. This event of election, being 'awakened and summoned to elect God,' is to 'exist in freedom before God'. This divinely enabled 'living act' of election happens as 'the will of God . . . encloses as such man and the will and decision of man and the autonomous existence of man'.

Once again, Barth stops to engage with static concepts of predestination undergirded by rigid concepts of time and reiterates his doctrine of God's eternity as

the divine event which above time accompanies and gathers up our time, holding, enclosing and healing it and as this eternal event cannot be petrified in static traditional concepts of absolute decrees whose content serves only to proclaim the inactive god of our own fears. Jesus Christ reveals a living, dynamic, moving God whose very being in freedom is to work tirelessly and endlessly on our behalf to secure our freedom. Barth's doctrine of eternity is crucial to his articulation of Jesus Christ as the electing God and elect man and he returns to it again and again throughout his elucidation of election. Tied resolutely to this eternal event is Barth's doctrine of the Trinity. There does not seem to be a change in the structure of Barth's trinitarian constructs from I/1 as used here in volume II. Barth seems to be putting his I/1 doctrine of the Trinity to good use with any modification being an increased emphasis on the dynamism of triune movement as a dynamism which freely overflows. The event that is this election of grace is a two-sided but asymmetrically directed event and is the 'third possibility'(107), between static concepts of an abstract *logos asarkos* of a petrified timelessness and a *logos ensarkos* of a petrified *decretum absolutum*:

When we speak of God's eternity we must recognise and accept what is "earlier" as something also present and future. God's predestination is a completed work of God, but for this very reason it is not an exhausted work, a work which is behind us. On the contrary, it is a work which still takes place in all its fullness to-day. Before time and above time and at every moment of time God is the predestinating God, positing this beginning of all things with Himself, willing and ordaining, electing and deciding, pledging and committing (us and first of all Himself), establishing the letter of the law which rules over all creaturely life. . . . God is never an echo. He is and continues to be and always will be an independent sound. The predestination of God is unchanged and unchangeably God's activity. (183)

The electing moment, upon which so much has been written, is coupled with willing, ordaining, deciding, pledging and committing all of which express the happening event which is the continuous and inexhaustible moment by moment pulse of the triune God in action towards the world; a spilling out, overflowing and reflection of the pulse of his own inner life. God is not 'His own prisoner' in his activity towards us but is free in his 'eternal happening' (184f.).¹⁴⁷ This event, is 'constant, authoritative and powerful'. This is the 'third possibility' that is the 'concrete decree'

¹⁴⁷ Thus IV/2: '[t]he Father and the Son are not two prisoners. They are not two mutually conditioning factors in reciprocal operation. As the common source of the Spirit, who Himself is also God, they are the Lord of this occurrence. God is the free Lord of His inner union', 345.

of the living God which only ‘as an act of divine life in the Spirit, is it the law which precedes all creaturely life’. God moves and moves decisively. As an ‘act of divine life in the Spirit’, God moves for us in a way that is ‘unbroken and lasting predetermining and decreeing’. This is who God is; ‘God Himself in His triune being as free love’. This is the secret of creation; the ‘existence of the living God’ who creates, sustains and governs all life moment by moment as an event that pulses moment by moment above, beside and ahead of us drawing us towards his willed fulfillment of all things. ‘This movement is, in fact, God’s eternal decree . . . God willed this movement, willed it from all eternity, and continues to will it’ and we are ‘already caught up in this movement’ (186). God’s ‘eternal action in time’ is the moment by moment event of the “no” being overtaken by the “yes”, again and again and again.¹⁴⁸ ‘Before time and above time and at every moment of time God is the predestinating God, positing this beginning of all things with Himself, willing and ordaining, electing and deciding, pledging and committing (us and first of all Himself)’ (183) and this activity as ‘God’s activity’ is his triune activity overflowing towards us as the moment by moment event which precedes, constantly overtakes and pulls us towards his eschatological perfecting of all things in Christ. If we take passages in Barth’s doctrine of election in isolation we might well end up with a decidedly static picture of election logically preceding the triune event who is God, but this in itself is to miss the weight carried by Barth’s doctrine of eternity embracing time as a moment by moment pulsating movement from the triune God to temporality and from temporality as caught up in the triune life to God; it is to miss the constant adherence to the *enhypostasia/anhypostasia* formulae which is implicit in Barth’s construal of Jesus Christ as the subject and object of election and it is to miss the asymmetry of the divine initiative as always from the Father to the Son and from both to the uniting Spirit. It is also to under weigh Barth’s use of the concept of election as overflowing; God mirroring or reflecting himself in the event of election. The event which is the moment by moment humiliation of the obedient Son to human estate is the event of the overflowing of the obedient free love of the Son to the Father in a direction that is irreversible, enfolding and exalting human nature in a loving determination to free obedience in love. The event of election is the hinge upon

¹⁴⁸ Barth expresses something of this in dialectic as ‘the rule of the living God who is free to love where He was wroth and to be wroth where He loved, to bring death to the living and life to the dead, to repent Himself and to repent of His repenting’, 187.

which God turns outward to that which he posits as ontologically other; it is the beginning of all God's ways and works *ad extra*. But this is to preempt what is to come (via Barth's construct of Jesus Christ as 'real man' in volume three part two in which the concept of mirroring is further explored) in the doctrine of reconciliation in volumes one and two and yet here we are in the midst of Barth's great volume on election which is so often read as a *Dogmatics* within a *Dogmatics* and in doing so misses many interwoven motifs and threads from earlier volumes which in turn carry on into the volumes to come.

Barth suggests that this dynamic understanding of predestination might be called 'activist' yet cautions against using it merely as polemic against the static view as 'one assertion against another' (187f.). The mystery of the divine decision cautions against saying too much but the person and work of Jesus Christ as the 'decision of the eternally living God' calls us not to say too little. Here Barth discusses the merits and limitations of another paper at the 1936 Geneva conference given by Peter Barth but as noted by many since, fails to mention that this had been his own view before inspired by Maury. The 'activist' view has a lot to commend it but does not tie God's action securely enough to Jesus Christ as the electing God and elected man. The moment by moment event that is the living God for us must be 'wholly and utterly identified with Jesus Christ' as the event that is 'history, encounter and decision between God and man'; this man. 'God's eternal will precedes every moment of time' as a 'specific act' with a 'definite content' moving 'towards an appointed end'. This 'eternal and self-ordered will' as the will of the living triune God is 'a progressive and constantly renewed act of the Spirit' (193, emphasis mine) and if we go back a few pages the full trinitarian event is expressed thus; for '[t]he Father loves the Son and the Son is obedient to the Father . . . [i]n this love and obedience God gives Himself to man' (188) and as just stated this love and obedience happens as the 'progressive and constantly renewed act of the Spirit'. The eternal triune event that is God's 'eternal self-ordered will' overflows as a reflection and image; the eternal Son moment by moment, in the resolve of the Spirit's 'progressive and constantly renewed act', maintaining within himself a space that is Jesus shaped fulfilled in the space-time

coordinate that is Mary and Bethlehem.¹⁴⁹ The distinction between the immanent and economic Trinity is not ‘sharp’; on the contrary it is a mirroring event full of life giving, overflowing movement, a pulsating moment of transference and transition as time and our humanity is gathered up, moment by moment, and held at God’s side; the triune God himself overflowing and filling time for us.¹⁵⁰ In the final page of Barth’s treatment of Jesus Christ as the electing God and elected man (the deciding God and the enabling of the free decision affirming God’s loving decision by this man) Barth returns to the theme of obedience. The obedience of the Son of Man is not a decision this man has ‘ordained’ for himself but ‘He is foreordained to it’. ‘By this decision He simply declares that He is this man, the Son of God who has become Son of Man’ (194). The ‘election of obedience’ of the Son of Man is to do with God’s sovereignty and the gift of being ‘the image of the predestinating God’, (194f.). It is not to do with synergism but a cooperation that is ‘entirely . . . the working of God’ (194). In Barth’s treatment of God’s dealings with this man as an overflowing of who God is, the eternally living triune God, in the obedience of the Son to the Father in ‘the Spirit of this act of obedience’ (106), there is asymmetry, always asymmetry. Finitude is never capable of infinitude, the triune God always has the initiative as concrete act. The event of election as the event of reflection is a free decision of grace; its movement irreversible. The obedience of the Son of man, his electing God, happens only as a reflection of the obedience of the Son of God to humiliation, his electing to become man and only in this way is it possible to speak of Jesus Christ as the subject and object of election. Election is grounded upon the free obedience of the Son to the Father; it does not constitute the obedience of the Son to the Father. The obedience of the Son is the presupposition of election. We are not convinced that it can be said from Barth’s doctrine of election in II/2 that election is logically prior to the Trinity and, by implication, to the obedience of the Son.

¹⁴⁹ In his interpretation of the Son’s “yes” to the Father as God saying “yes” to himself, Juengel, *GBIIB*, writes: ‘[t]his *Yes* of God to himself constitutes his being as God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit . . . [f]or in God saying ‘Yes’ to himself, God’s being *corresponds* to itself as Father, as Son and as Holy Spirit . . . [i]n this correspondence the being of God takes place as the history of the divine life in the Spirit. And in this history which is constituted through this correspondence God *makes space* within himself for *time*. This making-space-for-time within God is a continuing event . . . conceived as a continuing event we call eternity’, 111, emphasis in text. We think Barth would agree with the *ad extra* corresponding to the triune *ad intra* as a ‘reflection and image’ but believe Juengel’s articulation of this event as God constituting himself as triune is going too far. Is there not in this construct a certain symmetry and symbiosis between God and the reality distinct from himself which would concern Barth?

¹⁵⁰ This distinction could be termed a distinction of correspondence.

viii) Summary of Main Points of Chapter III

Barth's doctrine of eternity enclosing time as the teleological event of the simultaneous, totally and perfectly possessed unlimited life of the living God undergirds his doctrine of election as the triune event which overflows as the constant moment by moment transition of the eternal Son to temporality and the lifting up and healing of that temporality enfolding it within the eternity of God. Election is an act of the triune God as an event in which God reflects and images his being.

Barth wants to maintain Jesus Christ as the electing God and elect man, the subject and object of election, as the 'third possibility' between static concepts of a petrified and abstract *logos asarkos* and an equally static and petrified *logos ensarkos* that is not also the person in whom the moments of rejection and election have already been determined as moments in which reprobation is overcome by election understood as healing and only healing. Election is a triune event that happens from eternity, having a particular beginning as the first of God's ways and works *ad extra*, as a continual moment by moment movement of eternity to time and time being enclosed and healed in eternity. This double event can be likened to a heart beat with the movement of eternity to time being the first pulse and time enclosed and healed in eternity, the second pulse. Barth wants to look 'directly at Jesus Christ', at double predestination as 'the disproportionate relation between the divine taking away [of reprobation] and the divine giving [of election], between the humiliation of God and the exaltation of man, between rejection and election' (174).¹⁵¹ The asymmetry of the divine giving to mankind in the man Jesus Christ is always maintained with its 'irreversible "for"' (243) reflecting the asymmetry of the triune life as triune giving and receiving. The obedience of the Son of man, his electing God, happens only as a reflection of the obedience of the Son of God, his electing to become man and only in this way is it possible to speak of Jesus Christ as the subject and object of election.

Barth's I/1 concern to articulate the Spirit, *qui procedit ex Patre Filioque*, as the bond between God and mankind is present in his articulation of the Spirit who

¹⁵¹ To reiterate yet again, IV/1 and IV/2, via III/2, are here in embryonic form.

unites the dispensing Father and obedient Son as ‘the Spirit of this act of obedience’. Whilst it is not without significance that talk of obedience *ad intra* makes its first appearance in Barth’s doctrine of election, the question is whether the shift in Barth’s doctrine of election is to be understood as God electing triunity with his second hypostasis being begotten as the obedient God-man who nevertheless elects his obedience in the freedom of the Spirit who he, along with the Father breathes¹⁵² or whether election is the moment in which the obedience of the Son to the Father in the Spirit overflows and is reflected in the obedience of Christ with a direction of determination from God to man which is irreversible? That is to say, the obedient Son, united to the Father in the peace of the Spirit, elects humiliation in becoming obedient as man. Much hangs upon one’s interpretation of what can be said about the actions of the economic Trinity revealing the immanent Trinity; whether what is revealed in the actions of the economic Trinity corresponds to who the Trinity is or/as well as determining/constituting who the Trinity is? That is, much depends upon whether one thinks that Barth sees the direction of correspondence as two-way so that it is as true to say that the economic Trinity corresponds to the immanent Trinity as it is the immanent Trinity corresponds to the economic Trinity. The implication of this stance, in the case, for example, of McCormack who recognises its logical ramification, is that God’s decision to elect determines who God is as triune.

If, however, one holds that Barth does not allow for the reversal of the direction of correspondence then the obedience of the Son *ad intra* is seen to be that upon which his obedience *ad extra* is grounded not that which is determined by his incarnate obedience. That is, the obedience *ad extra* corresponds to the obedience *ad intra* and not the obedience *ad intra* corresponding to the obedience *ad extra*. The obedience *ad intra* does not reflect the obedience *ad extra*; obedience in God does not reflect the obedience of Christ. The obedience of Christ does not constitute or determine obedience in God. To put it even more starkly; the exaltation of Christ to obedience does not determine or constitute the obedience of the Son to humiliation. If, *ad extra*, the Spirit is the triune mode in and through whom the obedient Son encloses and enables his human life to be freely obedient to the Father then this economic action reveals that the triune God is within himself one who is obeyed, one

¹⁵² See Juengel who sees the Son electing obedience in the ‘freedom of the Spirit’, understood by the principle of *perichoresis*, *GBiB*, 87-88.

who is obedient and one who unites this not as a reflection of the economic act but as that which grounds the economic act. If the triune event of ordered love *ad intra* overflows, with a direction of determination that is irreversible, to enclose and heal that which is ontologically other, the event of this enclosing and healing is grounded upon the prevenient triune existence of these three hypostases in their particular, asymmetrical relationships. If Barth articulates the action of God towards the world to reflect who he is, obedience in God being reflected in the obedience of Christ, we would argue that the case is strong for the stance that Barth does not reverse his principle of correspondence. The obedience of the Son is an obedience that is ontologically of the Son of God, the obedience of Christ is an obedience that is ontologically of the human existence of the Son of man and is an evoked/determined obedience which reflects divine obedience. The direction of movement is always from the triune God to the human existence and to all humanity represented therein. Barth's use of the terms 'correspondence' [*Entsprechung*] and 'reflection' [*reflex/Abbildung*] are crucial in grasping Barth's articulation of the event of transference and transition that is the eternally living triune God turning towards us and we shall be paying close attention to the use of these terms in the next section of the thesis as we follow Barth's articulation of the humanity of Christ in III/2 in which these concepts are explored further.

ix) Concluding Comments to Chapter III

Barth's decision to revise his doctrine of election and place it within his doctrine of God has caused a theological rumpus ever since. What could Barth possibly have in mind in his claim that election is primarily to do with who God is as God and not with what he brings to pass in the lives of men and women? Surely election is an event that happens in the economy? What has tended to emerge in theological circles is an either/or dichotomy. Either election belongs in the doctrine of God or it belongs in the doctrines pertaining to God's work in the economy. For those who have interpreted Barth's revised doctrine of election as belonging quite properly within the doctrine of God as Barth himself re-placed it, there has emerged serious concerns that this doctrines re-placement has, by default, resulted in another

doctrines displacement within the overall theological consistency of Barth's corpus; namely, the I/1 doctrine of the Trinity. It goes without saying that much hangs upon how Barth's doctrine of election is interpreted.

It is our opinion that Barth's doctrine of election perches precariously between the doctrine of God and the doctrine of creation but in the end Barth was probably right to locate the doctrine in his doctrine of God. This is because election is an event of reflection. Because election is the event in which the triune God reflects himself outwards in becoming our God as a moment by moment enclosing and determining of all that he creates as ontologically distinct within himself in the space graciously made in the Son, there is to Barth's doctrine of election a definite direction of determination. The direction is from the triune God to all that is not the triune God. Barth's doctrine of election has an irreversible direction; it is structured asymmetrically. Election is the triune overflowing; the gracious decision of God to not remain content with his inner life of triune giving and receiving in love but to act out-with this life. In that God does act out-with his life, he nevertheless remains who he is. His actions out-with reflect who he is. Election is the event of the triune God's self-reflection in which the human existence taken by the Son, around which all creation is planned, is determined by the acts of the triune God towards it. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit all act towards that which is not God but in a way that reflects who they are as the triune God. Because election is the hinge of reflection, the triune decision and determination to act out-with, as an event that happens in God by positing ontological distinctness within the Son who is himself the subject of election as the electing God, election happens in God and therefore belongs primarily to the doctrine of God. Because election is also the event in which the Son posits his human existence within himself, in which all human existence is to be hid, and so is the moment of creation, the moment of the object of election being elected, election is also of the doctrine of creation, but secondarily.

Barth's main point is, of course, that election is to do with Jesus Christ. Men and women are elected in him. Jesus is the Son in human existence. The Son takes to himself a human life and, united to the Father in the Spirit, determines his human life in correspondence to who he is as the Son. In the very heart of Barth's doctrine of election, Barth refers to the obedient Son, who in the peace of the uniting Spirit wills

what the ruling Father wills, that he become man and live a human life in correspondence to who he is; the obedient one. What we find in II/2, and in the lead up to it in II/1, is a doctrine of the Trinity quite in line with that of I/1. In I/1, II/1 and II/2, Barth's doctrine of the Trinity is structured asymmetrically with the direction of determination being from the Father to the Son in the unity of the Spirit. Barth structures his doctrine of election asymmetrically, because election is the act of the Trinity. The triune God lives in a definite, particular and irreversible set of relationships. As the act of the Trinity, the event of election is the gracious creating and placing of that which is not God in the space given in the Son. Election is the event in which the Father, Son and Spirit act towards that which is not God as a ceaseless moment by moment determining event which reflects who the Father, Son and Spirit are as the one triune God. In the event of election, the inner triune life of asymmetrical ceaseless action and movement is reflected outwards.

Having established his doctrine of election as the triune act of self-reflection in which God actively determines all that is not God, starting with the human existence of the Son, it is perhaps no surprise that Barth's next volume on the doctrine of creation starts with Jesus Christ as the secret core of creation around which creation is planned and through whom mankind is to be understood albeit as the one man in whom no sin is found. Barth's revised doctrine of election makes sense of his radical re-think of traditional theological anthropology and the new path he carved in his christologically derived anthropology. In that volume II shows Barth beginning to explore the correspondence between the obedient Son electing humiliation and his act of obedience as man, it is consistent with the direction of his thought that in his Christologically derived anthropology Barth discusses what it means to talk of Christ as the image of God.

IV

Barth's Articulation of the Humanity of Christ in III/2¹⁵³

i) Introduction

In III/2 Barth continues to explore the 'correspondence' between the economic and immanent Trinity in his articulation of the Son's human existence being a mirror of his divine. Christ is the *imago Dei* whose human existence is 'indirectly identical' to his divine existence; his unity to the Father being enabled through the Spirit resting upon him. In this part volume, Barth expounds his III/1 theme, built upon his II/2 doctrine of election, that Jesus is the secret core of creation for and through whom God creates and redeems the world, as the basis for his christologically grounded anthropology.¹⁵⁴ Barth interweaves his I/1 doctrine of the Trinity with its ordered structure of triune origins and the theologoumenon of *perichoresis* and, from I/2, the Christology of 'Very God and Very Man' and 'The Miracle of Christmas' in which the *enyhypostasia/anhypostasia* formula is foundational. II/1's doctrine of eternity and time is revisited in III/2's final section entitled 'Man in His Time' starting with 'Jesus, Lord of Time' where the Spirit, *qui procedit ex Patre filioque*, is articulated as the presence of Jesus' lordship to the community between the resurrection and *parousia* as the *Seinsweise* who unites the incarnate Son, and the community of all peoples enclosed in him, to the Father.

In III/2 Barth sets up four themes: man as the creature of God (55-202); man in his determination as the covenant-partner of God (203-285); man as soul and body (285-436) and finally man in his time (437-640). For the purposes of this study we will

¹⁵³ All page references in this chapter, in parenthesis in the text, will be to CD III/2 unless otherwise stated.

¹⁵⁴ III/1, 18, 21.

concentrate upon the first two sections, dipping in to the latter two only briefly, but before we do that we shall show the background to Barth's theology of Christ as 'real man' in section 43 entitled 'Man as the Problem of Dogmatics' (3-54).

ii) **Barth's Christologically Grounded Anthropology**

Barth is concerned to come to an understanding of the reality of man as created by God, not just man's possibilities; he wants to discover what he calls 'real man' (25f.). It is the man Jesus Christ who, as 'the revealing Word of God' (41ff.) reveals 'true man, the true nature behind our corrupted nature'. In love and freedom God elects himself to become our 'Bearer and Representative' in the person of Jesus Christ as an overflowing of who he is. Our relationship to God is 'only in [Jesus Christ] and through Him' for 'properly and primarily' God's relation to mankind is 'His relation to this man alone'. Our sin is not counted against us but rather the obedience of God's 'beloved Son' is imputed as ours. To know mankind we have to start with man in particular and this means with the 'supreme particularity' of 'the one man Jesus'. This man, in 'immediate confrontation and union with God' is a 'concrete Israelitish man'. Barth continually stresses the Jewishness of Jesus as a particular man in space and time but a man who identifies himself with God as the 'Son of Man' depicted in Daniel 7.13ff.:

The name as such means the Son of God, namely, the Son of God who as such has become man, and who as man has acted as the Son of God and proved Himself to be such. . . . the Son of Man in Daniel is a personage equipped with all the marks of the almighty action of God, embodying the kingdom of God in its victorious advent into a shaken world. (45, emphasis mine)

The Son of God has become man, and as this man, Jesus Christ, acts as the Son of God. Reiterating II/1's theme of Jesus standing between God and mankind, the Father knowing the Son enfleshed and the enfleshed Son knowing the Father in the unity of the Spirit, as the ground of our knowing God, Barth stresses the prevenient humanity of Jesus: 'Jesus is man because in Him God stands in man's place, and man is one with God' (46f.). Our humanity exists only in disarray; it exists in 'self-contradiction' and therefore cannot be directly equated with the human existence of Christ which

does not exist in self-contradiction. 'The human nature of Jesus spares and forbids us our own'. This means that the human nature of Jesus and the human nature of mankind are 'in very different spheres'. The human nature of Jesus is sinless whereas the human nature of mankind is a displaced sinful humanness, that is, it exists in antithesis but also 'in Christ'. Our humanness is contained, so to speak, within the humanness of Christ and so our human nature exists only as expressed by the dialectic of God's 'no' to nothingness and chaos and 'yes' to not-nothingness and order.¹⁵⁵ In assuming human nature 'before' creation in the eternal orientation of God towards us in his gracious election event, 'the institution of the covenant fulfilled in Him' (54), Jesus reveals true humanity:¹⁵⁶

In Him are the peace and clarity which are not in ourselves. In Him is the human nature created by God without the self-contradiction which afflicts us and without the self-deception by which we seek to escape from this our shame. In Him is human nature without human sin. (48)

There is a sense then in which we can look through Jesus in order to understand ourselves albeit as a series of negations for Jesus inhabits a 'very different sphere' (48ff.). Jesus Christ 'becomes what we are' but he 'does not do what we do' and so 'He is not what we are'. He is not a sinner but honours God by keeping the covenant. '[I]n view of the human nature as it is in [Jesus]', its blamelessness, God is faithful to himself in justifying mankind's human nature, hid as it is and healed in Christ. The transformation of our alienated human nature by Christ is so radical for Barth that he can say that there is a sense in which sinful nature does not exist:

laden with the sin which is alien to His own nature, He causes Himself to be condemned and rejected with us. Thus the sin of our human nature is not only covered by Him but rightfully removed and destroyed. But this means that it is truly buried and covered, so that before God and in truth there now remains only the pure and free humanity of Jesus as our humanity. (48)

¹⁵⁵ Here we seem to be running parallel to Jenson's take on Barth's understanding of sin as 'the after glow of a vanished glare'; as the ontological impossibility that has no future in the sense that for Barth sinful human nature has no future. Jenson, Robert W., *Alpha and Omega: a Study in the Theology of Karl Barth* (New York, Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1963) 106. Hereafter *Alpha and Omega*.

¹⁵⁶ Jenson makes it very clear that Barth is not being rhetorical when he talks of the 'before' of Jesus Christ: '[Barth] means that in a particular but very real sense the incarnation happened in eternity before all time' and if one does not grasp this then Barth has been misunderstood. *Alpha and Omega*, 86, 72-73. We think that Barth very carefully expresses this, following Athanasius' 'third possibility', as a setting in place of a covenant or decree to be fulfilled in time and therefore a concrete anticipation.

The event of the person and work of Jesus Christ is the ‘connexion between those very different and separated spheres’. Barth is maintaining his stress upon the election of Jesus Christ in whom and with whom, as an inclusive humanity, all others are included. The ‘Son of God who as such has become man, and who as man has acted as the Son of God and proved Himself to be such’ is the one who stands between, connecting, the spheres of God and man, eternity and time, divinity and humanity, the integrity of their respective ontological distinctiveness kept intact. The eternal Son becomes man and as man acts as the eternal Son and so the action of the Son of man as the Son of God cannot be ‘direct[ly] equated’ with our human action because we exist in ‘self-contradiction’ (47): ‘we must not fail to appreciate how different are His nature and ours’, (49).

If we glance back to Barth’s articulation of ‘very God and Very Man’ in I/2, 132-171, for example, ‘[i]n becoming the same as we are, the Son of God is the same in quite a different way from us’ (I/2, 155), we see here in III/2 Barth retracing and adding more layers of thought upon his already frequent excursions into John’s Gospel. In I/2 Barth emphasises that the eternal Son assumed alienated flesh without himself succumbing to that alienation taking with full seriousness the New Testament assertion that “[God] hath made him to be sin” (I/2, 152) and in this respect cites approvingly, albeit from a secondary source, Edward Irving whose particular legacy to theology is his emphasis upon the Holy Spirit’s indwelling of Christ as the basis of his sinlessness and not the assumed human nature as such being sinless and incorruptible (I/2, 154).¹⁵⁷ Barth does not offer any comment upon Irving’s understanding of the Spirit’s work towards Christ and it is possible that he had not read Irving directly. Our point is that Barth pulls through, quite comfortably, aspects of his Trinitarian and Christological thinking prior to his revised doctrine of election and layers it upon, weaving it into, his doctrine of election and proceeding doctrines, seeing it not as incongruous. That does not mean that he is not working through the inter-relatedness of the two doctrines. Certainly in III/2’s Christology Barth seems, initially, to have less to say about the Spirit than the Father and Son and when he does

¹⁵⁷ In I/2 we find statements such as; ‘[the Son of God] did not cease to be what He was before, but he became what He was not before, a man, this man’ (149) and ‘[t]he Word is what He is before and apart from His being Flesh’ (136). See Irving, Edward, *The Collected Writings of Edward Irving*, vol., 5, ed. Carlyle, G., (London, Alexander Strachan, 1865) and Gunton’s essay on him ‘Two dogmas Revisited: Edward Irving’s Christology’ in *Scottish Journal of Theology*, 41 (1998) 151-168.

get to the Spirit the emphasis is on the Spirit as the lordship of Christ present between the resurrection and *parousia*. The Spirit is articulated as the bond or uniting principle between Christ and his community, reflecting who he is between the Father and Son.

Barth maintains three radical, interconnected, distinctions between Christ's human nature and our own: Jesus' relation to the Father and Spirit is 'immediate and direct', Jesus is sinless and only his human nature reveals real human nature. Barth maintains the irreversibility of Jesus' relationship to God as happening in a 'wholly different way' from ours (49). Our relationship to God 'rests upon His grace; on the divine grace addressed to us in His human nature' (50). The 'mighty work of [Jesus'] life, death and resurrection' corresponds to his 'eternal election' in which 'in the eternity of the divine counsel . . . the decision was made who and what true man is' and in Christ was 'accomplished at the heart of time'. Christ is our 'prototype': 'we are partakers of human nature as and because Jesus is first partaker of it' and in forgiving sin 'Jesus again controls what originally belongs to Him' as that which was 'never lost to Him':

In so doing, He merely restores in human nature that which originally corresponds to Him, is like Him, and is constituted by Him. He has the freedom and power to do this. He only has to apply them. (50, emphasis mine)

Jesus has the true human existence that corresponds, as an analogy of relationship, to the life of God. Jesus' humanity is 'one thing in Him and another in us' because his humanity is uniquely related to God.¹⁵⁸ The way in which Jesus is man is 'immediately from God'; in this man there is 'God's immediate presence and action.' Equally the human existence assumed by the eternal Son corresponds to the divine existence, and is constituted or put in place, Barth uses the word 'posit' [*setzt*], by the Son (in IV/2, triune positing is stressed). The human existence assumed by the Son is ontologically distinct, the work achieved in the reality distinct from God is achieved solely by God albeit as 'the Son of God who as such has become man, and who as man has acted as the Son of God'; Barth is maintaining the asymmetry of the divine

¹⁵⁸ Barth is concerned to stress the relationality of human nature/existence as not a thing/organ/body of substance, but a way of relating, to do with relationship, and hence an *analogia relationis* rather than an *analogia entis*. This fits with his understanding of the assumed human nature of Christ as the 'potentiality of being in the flesh' (I/2, 149); the potentiality of existence as a way of existing.

initiative and action towards that which is other as a reflection, overflowing, of who God is.¹⁵⁹

Equally, it is the way in which Jesus is a creature that determines his sinlessness: '[w]hat protects Him and His human nature from temptation is not a particularity of His creatureliness but the particularity of the way in which He is creature (51f.).¹⁶⁰ It is not about Jesus' possessing some sort of incorruptible substance, but a living in relation to God as man without ceasing to be the Son of God and so living in immediate and direct relationship to God. To talk of the Son's human nature is to talk of his human existence in relationship to God and others as an event in which 'the eternal mercy of God' wills to 'maintain itself in vulnerable human nature'. Barth distinguishes between the creaturely human nature/existence of Jesus which was vulnerable and the divine will, the Son's 'immediate personal presence and action' active in him.¹⁶¹

It is for this reason that in various places the New Testament speaks very plainly of the liability of Jesus to temptation, and of the temptation which He had actually to face. But He could not succumb, and therefore could not sin, because as Bearer of humanity He was Himself its Lord, the Creator God active within it. He asserted Himself against temptation with the freedom and power with which God as Creator confronted chaos, separating light from darkness and uttering His Yes to the real and His definitive No to the unreal. (51-52, emphasis mine)

Jesus' strength against temptation is to be found in his being evoked or determined to obedience by his divine will, active within, which is set against chaos and nothingness.¹⁶² Jesus' human freedom against sin is the same freedom in which God decided to become the Creator God of a world upheld in his Word, that is, it is the

¹⁵⁹ To the articulation of I/2's assumption of flesh, Barth has added the concepts of 'correspondence' and the eternal event of election; God being for us in anticipation and fulfillment.

¹⁶⁰ Much has been written on the topic of Jesus sinlessness. For a good summary see, Kavic, Kelly, 'The Son's Assumption of a Human Nature: A Call for Clarity' in *International Journal of Systematic Theology*, 3, 2 (2001) 154-166.

¹⁶¹ It is perhaps the fact that Barth sees Jesus' human nature as his human existence, that is, as to do with existence in relationship that leads him to have such a strong stand on Jesus' inability to sin because this man is the Son of God in person in immediate relationship with the Father and Spirit who, with him, maintain him in perfect human existence as a reflection of his perfect obedience *ad intra*, that is, as a reflection of his existence in relationship *ad intra*. The divine will is asserted over his fragile human existence (fragile human will) in confrontation with sin (bearing in mind Barth supports dithelitism) evoking it to the freedom of obedience.

¹⁶² Barth is maintaining that Christ has a human and divine will, the human evoked to freedom by the divine; this is a determination from God not something Christ was able to do unaided.

freedom of divine power to be God for us. The phrase ‘freedom and power’ occurs several times in this small section (50-53). Jesus’ sinlessness as man is God’s will to be merciful and deliver mankind from his alienation; God’s will to maintain human existence in the human existence of Christ. As such, sin for Jesus is impossible for it is the impossible possibility which is assumed and transformed moment by moment as temporality is gathered into the eternal arms of God, the no being constantly overtaken by the yes.¹⁶³

In Christ real human nature is revealed ‘in its original and basic form’ (52). What then is the difference and sameness with regard to Christ’s humanity and ours? Barth’s answer is that there is a difference in status [*Stand*] but not in constitution [*Beschaffenheit*] between Jesus’ humanity and ours:

If His relation to God is other than our own, and if as a result human nature is His in a different way from that which it is ours, yet it is the same both in Him and us. The threefold fact that it is first in Him, that in Him it is kept and maintained in its purity, and that it is manifested in Him, implies a different status but not a different constitution of His human nature from ours. (53, emphasis mine)

Jesus’ status as the Son of God means that as man he has a unique, immediate and direct relationship to God maintaining him in sinlessness and revealing true humanity. Jesus however is a man and as such his creaturely constitution is no different from ours; we share in his creaturely constitution. Jesus’ otherness to us is found in the fact that he is also God.¹⁶⁴ Jesus is ‘utterly unlike us as God and utterly like us as a man’ and this is the ‘whole secret of His person’.

Barth’s spatial metaphor motif of mankind being ‘in’ Christ, the ‘threefold fact’ of God the Son taking humanity to himself, its being maintained and revealed in him in its purity, is bearing a lot of theological weight in a section in which the overt trinitarian content of I/1, I/2, II/1 and II/2 is noticeably absent. The burden of

¹⁶³ Jenson, *Alpha and Omega*, 97, interpreting Barth, III/2, 54-56, 47f.: Jesus’ ‘sinlessness is exactly His perfect obedience to the Father who orders Him to take our sins on Himself’. See also his discussion of this with respect to Maximus in *Systematic Theology*, vol., 1 (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997) 134ff.

¹⁶⁴ Barth seems to be operating with a concept of human nature as human existence in relationship which is comprised of a constitutional aspect, soul and body, and a status aspect, which in our case is children by adoption and in Jesus’ case, is him being the eternal Son united to the Father in the Spirit.

this section, however, is to stress the prevenience of God in order to ground Christological anthropology whilst making quite clear what cannot be predicated of our human nature. Whilst constitutionally ‘very man’ Christ nevertheless is first and foremost ‘very God’ and this ‘twofold fact’ sets him apart from all others. Christ’s status as ‘very God’ means that his way of relating to the Father and Spirit is different from ours even as he is, constitutionally, ‘very man’. The particularity of Christ is the very fact of his universal significance as the one in whom all humanity is enclosed in his inclusive humanity. Stressed is the very important motif of the assumed human nature of the Son being in the Son and our human nature being in the Son’s human nature; the concentric circles of enclosure as not an enclosing of a metaphysical substance but the enclosing of a way of being, of existence in relationship albeit of particular instances of soul and body, such that decisions and actions are evoked to harmony with God. Tied to this motif is the equally important concept of ‘correspondence’ or ‘reflection’ as will become apparent.

iii) The Particularity of Jesus’ Creatureliness as Saviour

Jesus lives a particular history, but this history does not determine him, he determines it. Jesus’ ‘being’ is ‘reaffirmed and expressed under specific and changing conditions’ in which this man is ‘wholly and utterly who and what He is in the continuity of this history’ (56ff.). Barth starts his quest to understand the particular creature Jesus with reference to a series of Johannine passages where Jesus describes himself using metaphors: ‘the Way’, ‘the Truth’, ‘the Life’ etc in which Jesus ‘is what He is in these actions, in this history’. Jesus is ‘Bearer of an office’ and as he bears this office he is man. Jesus is not first a man who may or may not have become the Saviour; ‘[t]here is no neutral humanity in Jesus’. ‘He is, as He is active in a specific, and always in the same, direction’. His childhood, Barth maintains, is a growing up into his office, he is always about his Father’s business (Luke 3.49). Reiterating I/2 page 199, where more is said about the Spirit than found here, Jesus’ baptism is not the point at which he takes up his office or begins his ministry but the Father’s affirmation of his office by the visible sign of the Spirit resting upon him in the form of a dove. The office of the messiah is what concerned

the disciples not some sort of 'character study' of the man Jesus. The Jesus who was tempted, who prayed and in Gethsemane questioned and 'reaffirmed His presupposed obedience to the will of the Father' is 'precisely and particularly – the Jesus engaged in His office and work'. Jesus is what he does. It is his messianic office that makes Jesus recognisable to the disciples and to this that they witness. Barth will not drive a wedge between the person and work of Christ: 'the real man Jesus is the working Jesus'.

To be sure, it is as the Son of God that He is empowered to act in all this as the Saviour. But this means that with His saving work He is empowered to be a real man. He is not real man in spite but because of the fact that He is the Son of God and therefore acts as the Saviour. For this reason He remains a real man even in His resurrection and ascension and session at the right hand of God, and it is as real man that He will come again. (58)

Jesus is 'always to be identified with His history'. The New Testament never sees Jesus in a neutral light but always in his threefold office as Prophet, Priest and King. There is no point at which he might equally be the Saviour or not. Barth's point is that 'the true humanity of the true Son of God' is saviourhood; it is to be utterly for others, firstly for God and secondly for fellow man. The true humanity of Jesus is that he is the other-orientated God in person. This being for others is his humanity:

He is a human person. He is the human soul of a human body. He is a man among men and in humanity. He has a time; His time. It is not the case, however that He must partake of humanity. On the contrary, humanity must partake of Him. It is not the case, then, that He is subject to those specific determinations and features of humanity. It is not that He is conditioned and limited by them, but in so far as humanity is His it is He who transcends and therefore limits and conditions these features and determinations. (59)

Jesus is a human person, but the particularity of his humanity is 'revealed in Him and therefore in His work' for 'Jesus does not merely have a history but is Himself this history . . . He not only does but is His work' (60). There has been much debate as to what Barth means by Jesus as a 'human person' and indeed this term is quickly dropped in favour of 'humanity' and 'human nature' but whatever a human person is,

Jesus reveals it for ‘humanity’ first and foremost belongs to Christ as that which is determined by God.¹⁶⁵ Jesus ‘true and genuine humanity’ is ‘God’s own work’ (62).

What other being could have the mind or presumption or power to do this work? In what spirit but the Holy Spirit could the will to do so be born? (62)

‘When Jesus performs this work, God is revealed in Him. God acts as Jesus acts’. Returning to John’s gospel, Barth considers Jesus’ singular passion towards completing the Father’s work (63ff.).¹⁶⁶ Jesus is sent by one who is greater than himself (14.28) and everything he does is given by the Father: his being sent (8.42); authority (10.25); action (5.17, 5.19, 14.31); speaking (8.26, 12.49); obedience to the Father’s commands (8.29, 12.49, 15.10). ‘Because the Father dwells in Him, the Son, it is the Father who performs the works through Him (14.10)’ and so the Son is not alone in his action but the Father is with him (8.29); ‘[h]ence He is always one of two (8.16)’ but his being ‘with’ the Father is a being ‘in’ the Father as the Father is ‘in’ him (10.38, 14.10, 20.17, 21.23). ‘But the ultimate word is simply: “I and the Father are one” (10.30, 17.11, [17].22)’. This oneness with God does not mean that ‘the man as such’ is ‘subsumed in the process’ but ‘on the contrary’ this oneness is the very ground of Jesus being ‘Man for God’; these ‘immediate relations’ to the Father, this mutual indwelling of the Father in the incarnate Son and the incarnate Son in the Father. ‘Jesus as a creature finds life and nourishment in the fact that He stands in this relation to the Father’. Jesus Christ is the Son of God become man and ‘in Him’ man is ‘placed . . . wholly at the disposal of God’, that is, first and foremost ‘this man’. Barth’s picture of the eternal Son become man in whom all humanity is enclosed can be viewed as concentric circles with the eternal Son being the outermost circle which encloses his particular and singular sinless human existence, the second circle, in which is enclosed all humanity, the third circle. His human existence is enclosed in him; our human existence is enclosed in his human existence. His human existence and ours remain ontologically distinct from God and are constitutionally identical but the one in whom they are held, moment by moment, is by status the eternal Son, in immediate and direct relationship to the Father, who is man in a way

¹⁶⁵ Waldrop offers a helpful summary of several commentators on what Barth might mean in referring to Jesus as a ‘human person’, Waldrop, C.T., *Karl Barth’s Christology: its Basic Alexandrian Character* (Berlin, de Gruyter, 1984) 202-204.

¹⁶⁶ All scriptural references in this section, in parenthesis in the text, are to John’s Gospel unless otherwise stated.

in which we are not and could never be. In assuming human existence the eternal Son never ceases to be in immediate and direct relationship with the Father in the unity of the Spirit and in this sense the Son does not change into something else when he gives himself to existence as man for he remains in intimate triune relationship. That he lives in human fragility is not denied for his giving is a giving to death and his rising is as the first born from the dead but in this fragility he nevertheless acts as the Son of God in unity with the Father in the Spirit. He lives as man under a triune determination.

Jesus, sent by the Father lives by the Father and is given ‘life in himself’ by the Father (5.26, 6.57), is no vacuum but actively wills and acts (5.21, 17.24, 21.22ff.). He is indeed the object of the Father’s good pleasure but ‘this object is Himself a Subject’ who loves the Father and does his will (14.31, 15.10). Jesus, even though he possesses ‘divine glory’, does not seek to glorify himself (7.18, 8.50, 8.54) but the Father (7.18) and is himself glorified by the Father (8.54, 17.22-23, 17.5). In Jesus’ possession of ‘divine glory’ given by the Father Barth sees Jesus ‘melt[ing] into the divine Subject and therefore [disappearing] as a human Subject’ reappearing as ‘the object of the divine [glorification]’ (65). Barth stresses that this glorification is not an overwhelming of a mere object, ‘in no event which takes place between the Father and the Son is the Son merely an object’, for the texts of 7.39, 11.4, 12.16 and 12.23 are ‘counterbalanced by others in which the roles are clearly reversed’ and the Son glorifies the Father (7.18, 14.13, 12.28). What we have is ‘a regular circle’ to do with ‘the inner life of the Godhead’ and finally Barth brings in the Holy Spirit into the equation, referring to John 14.16; ‘there is ascribed [the Spirit’s] own [glorification] of the Son’. With a backward glance to his treatment of *perichoresis* in I/1 section nine, Barth notes that this ‘fine theologoumenon’ is necessary to any treatment of ‘Johannine Christology’ but the point he wishes to make particularly is that ‘it is not merely the eternal but the incarnate Logos and therefore the man Jesus who is included in this circle’ for ‘He did not give up His eternal divinity when He concealed it to become man’ but is ‘still in the bosom of the Father’ (1.18).¹⁶⁷ The mutual indwelling of the Son in the Father and the Father in the Son *ad intra* and revealed *ad extra* is ‘the very foundation of [Jesus’] true humanity’ (66). It is the eternal Trinity

¹⁶⁷ See I/1 370f., 485f.

who fires or determines the human existence assumed by the Son. That the Father and Son are one, immediately and directly, and are 'in' one another such that the Father's work is completed in the Son and the Son in doing the Father's will glorifies the Father and is glorified; this very fact of divine unity, of giving and receiving in the Spirit, in love, is the source and power of the overflowing of this love in the event, 'in the beginning', that is the history of the Father and the incarnate Son and 'in Him' us.¹⁶⁸ It is '[Jesus'] very participation in the divine which is the basis of His humanity' such that his humanity lives out of the fullness of the giving God, freely gracious and obedient, exposing our human grasping to glorify ourselves as the depravity it is. As opposed to being able to talk coherently of an abstract *logos asarkos*, we only know the 'eternal divine Logos' in 'this man Jesus' at the point where this triune lover of otherness overflows towards us *ensarkos*.

Jesus' history is a 'human history within the history of all men' but as God and man, this man inhabits not 'two separate spheres' side by side but unites these spheres in himself and by his action as the Son of God become man reveals the 'divine history of this primal moment of divine volition and execution'. That is, this 'mystery' as 'a hidden movement in the inner life of the Godhead', 'the intra-divine movement', has become known. The mutual indwelling of the Father and Son in the unity of the Spirit as the foundation of the Son's humanity has been made manifest. Human existence as such, naked humanity, does not reveal God but this man bearing 'real humanity', particular and singular, reveals God as one who lives out of the fullness of God. Jesus 'lived as man in the power of the divine providence directed to him through the Word of God' (68f.). In this man 'the presence of God . . . is beyond discussion'; '[i]n and through the being of [this] man there immediately meets us at this point the being of God also', something that cannot be said of any other creature. Whereas for the rest of creation 'the vision of the Creator in the creature can only be indirect' in this man 'the vision and concept of the Creator are both direct and immediate in the creature' for 'God is present and revealed as this creature is present and revealed'. God 'wills and works . . . in this man, for each and every man'; in this man God is 'resolved, energetic and active in a specific direction'; 'He is the

¹⁶⁸ See Torrance, T.F., *The Christian Doctrine of God, One Being Three Persons* (Edinburgh, T & T Clark, 1996) for a helpful description of what it means to talk of the involvement of the Father and Spirit in the incarnation.

Saviour'. The presence of God in this man is 'not just a fact but an act'. God acts 'in Him' and reveals himself 'in Him' making this history 'in Him' known. God's action in this man is a 'divine-human history' but an asymmetrical history with an irreversible *telos* for 'it exists in the lordship of God' within the divine sovereignty. This man, 'a person . . . the soul of a body' who 'has time and so on' becomes and is real man 'in and by the sovereign being of God of which He is born and by which He is sustained and preserved and upheld'. Jesus' actuality is divinely determined:

Not two juxtaposed realities – a divine and then a human – constitute the essence of man, this man, but the one divine reality, in which as such the human is posited, contained and included. Man, this man, is the immanent kingdom of God, nothing more and nothing in and for Himself. Similarly, the kingdom of God is utterly and unreservedly this man. He is as He is in the Word of God. (69-70)

The prevenience of God is again asserted with reference to the doctrine of the *anhypostasia/enhypostasia* which is undergirding Barth's Christology, here as always, and he makes this explicit on page 70 referring the reader back to his coverage of this in 'I/2, pp. 163ff.':

The correctness of this theologoumenon is seen in the fact that its negative statement is only the delimitation of the positive. Because the man Jesus came into being and is by the Word of God, it is only by the Word of God that he came into being and is. Because He is the Son of God, it is only as such He is real man. (70)

Jesus is 'real man' only because he is the Son of God. The Son of God become man, the man Jesus, lives out of the fullness of the indwelling Father and uniting Spirit, although Barth does not make explicit the implicit indwelling Spirit apart from the small reference to John 14.16 above. The point Barth is stressing is that 'this creature is in the Word of God' (70, emphasis mine). The eternal Son is the determining Subject of the man Jesus. The eternal Son encloses his human existence within himself and is and remains the divine Subject determining his humanity. It is as this Son of God, in whom is enclosed his human existence and in this existence ours, that the event of God's history with mankind happens. This is the event of the 'one divine reality' which in volume four one and two will be articulated as the two moments of humiliation and exaltation respectively. This event has a definite asymmetry and *telos*: '[d]eriving from God, man is in God, and therefore for God'. Again, the human nature assumed by the eternal Son (by God) is in the Son (in God) and so enabled,

because of the 'in' and 'by', to be 'for God', to act as Saviour.¹⁶⁹ Barth will not drive a wedge between the Son and his human existence, between the person and work of God in this man. Jesus is not an 'object of divine deliverance' for '[t]here can be no question of divine grace being imparted to [this creature] in the sense that it needs it, but only in the sense that it may itself be the active grace of God'. 'For by the fact that God dwells in [this creature] the work of God is already in full operation'. The eternal Son who is the Subject of his human existence actualises his creatureliness. As Jesus acts, God's grace is present, for Jesus is the grace of God in action. Jesus' human existence does not need divine deliverance, as the human existence assumed by and to the Son it is maintained sinless, and so this need never arises but equally as the human existence of the Son it is the form in which the Son acts as man, as the deliverer.¹⁷⁰ The Son comes in flesh as grace in person and as man acts as the Son of God because determined by God.

Barth's stance here is open to misinterpretation. On the one hand Barth holds that the human existence of the Son is constitutionally, like ours, 'liable to temptation' but in that it is the Son's human existence it is held in purity by the will and power of God. In this sense, Jesus' human existence needs the will and power of God to be maintained sinless but the point is this: to say it has no need of grace is to say it has no need of deliverance for sin never happens here. Deliverance is the incarnate Son's graceful action; what he does for us. Grace is communicated to the Son's human mode of existence, articulated in IV/2 using a remolded *communicatio gratiarum*, but it is not the grace of deliverance for this man needs no deliverance. Does this not suggest that the assumed human existence of body and soul is immune? Barth does not see the human nature/existence as a thing, a substance, acted upon which tends to be the thinking behind concepts of an immune human nature. Human existence (nature/essence) is a way of relationship that happens in a human besouled body in space and time and hence the terms human nature and human existence are

¹⁶⁹ Gunton argues that those 'features of Jesus' ministry which really interest Barth are the ways in which Jesus' actions are godlike' but Barth, albeit with a different pneumatological weighting to Gunton, does see Jesus' actions as divinely enabled human action, which is what Gunton is after. *Intellect and Action*, 79.

¹⁷⁰ The 'form' [*Gestalt*] of humanity could simply be the Son's particular human existence as that which mirrors his divine existence, form as existence in flesh, that is, the divinely determined human existence of the Son.

interchangeable and we have been using them thus.¹⁷¹ Barth is striving to unfold the decision and actions of Jesus Christ, aspects of existence in relationship, as those of a man who is ‘very God’ and ‘very man’ and therefore the unique and singular decisions and actions of a very particular human existence; this particular man’s will to obey, to be in obedient relationship to his Father. This means that from the very first the human existence of the eternal Son needs the prevenient action of God in maintaining, moment by moment, obedience (to use the one word which encapsulates sinlessness or Jesus’ total orientation towards the Father; his way of relationship to the Father as obedient decision and act) but in that this happens, and Barth will articulate this in more detail below, Jesus never needs the grace of deliverance but grace is communicated to him as that which pours forth from him in gracious action towards others. The communication of this grace is Jesus’ exaltation to obedience. The assumed human nature is not, to put it crudely, an immune thing or stuff but the Son’s physical bodily presence in time and space in a human mode of existence as a body of an obedient soul. His body is to be sure important, he could not be without it, but the burning point is what this man, as besouled body, thinks, wills and does in relationship to his Father and then towards all others. Barth is concerned with the Son’s human existence as existence in relationship determined from, in and to God as a reflection of his divine existence as being from the Father to the Father in the unity of the Spirit. The Son’s human existence reflects his divine existence and is determined immediately and directly by God as a reflection of who he is. The determination is immediate and direct. What is determined is ontologically distinct human existence and it is determined in such a way that it reflects the divine life, and so Jesus is the imago Dei.

iv) Jesus is ‘Real Man’: the Image of God

¹⁷¹ We do not, therefore, see Barth making a distinction between ‘essence’ and ‘existence’ in the way that McCormack suggests, *BgC*, 16. It is beyond the scope of the thesis to engage in depth with McCormack’s claim that if it is held that the eternal Word is who he is without becoming flesh then in becoming flesh what happens at the level of his human existence has no effect on who the Son is ‘essentially’ and therefore a swing occurs in the direction of Nestorius because one has made Christ into two subjects. McCormack’s point seems to be that if Christ is one subject then what happens in his human existence has to determine who he is as one subject, as the eternal Word. Barth is adamant, however, that the direction of determination is from God to man and that this is irreversible. The Son’s decisions and actions in the flesh (his human existence in relationship) reflect who he is as the Son (his divine existence in relationship) because they are determined by him in his unity to the Father in the Spirit. The Son’s acts in the flesh are really his acts because they reflect who he is.

The main contention of this sub-section is that between Jesus Christ and ourselves there exists an 'irremovable difference' (71f.) because this man is the image of God in which we are held twice removed, so to speak, from God's triune relationality. 'We live in the same world and have the same humanity as this man, [but] we are contrasted as men with this very different man' (72). Between Christ and ourselves there stands the mystery of his identity with God. There also stands the mystery of our alienation from God. However, the difference between Jesus and ourselves is not total but partial. Jesus is 'a participant in the same human nature as ours'. Barth wishes to stress that our relationship with God is essential to the understanding of who we are as creatures, although it will be 'a different relationship from that which we have found to be characteristic of the man Jesus'. As the man Jesus cannot be seen apart from God and as we ourselves cannot be seen apart from God, there is a partial similarity. The dissimilarity is the nature of Jesus' relationship to God which, in contrast to our own, is immediate and direct. Our relationship to God is an analogy, or image, of Jesus' relationship. Jesus' relationship to God is primary and decisive, ours exists through his. Jesus is the mediator of our relationship to the Father. Our ontological condition is to be brought into relationship with God but it is an *analogia relationis* of Jesus' own relationship to God. Jesus is both 'apart from all other men and among them' (74). Mankind exists in a history that has its origin in God's attitude towards it. That is, mankind's essential being is understood within the framework of the manward orientation that is God's decision. Mankind is elected to belong to and be in relationship with God, but first and foremost, the elected man is Jesus.

During this section Barth engages with a number of thinkers such as Polanus, Otto Titius, Harnack, Johann Fichte, Karl Jaspers and Emil Brunner who offer theories of the phenomena of the human. None manage to come to grips with 'real man', and offer only limited glimpses of human nature that Barth believes can be reduced to ethics or theories of human transcendence. It is just not possible to attribute any kind of natural knowledge or self-transcendence to mankind; 'noetically and ontically ... God *acts* towards man'. On the basis of God's revelation in Christ we need, Barth argues, to change from an autonomous to a theonomous understanding of the self

(124 and 125). Jesus Christ is not only the revelation of God but the revelation of real man.¹⁷²

We remember who and what the man Jesus is. As we have seen, He is the one creaturely being in whose existence we have to do immediately and directly with the being of God also. Again, He is the creaturely being in whose existence God's act of deliverance has taken place for all other men. He is the creaturely being in whom God as the Saviour of all other men also reveals and affirms His own glory as the Creator. He is the creaturely being who as such embodies the sovereignty of God, or conversely the sovereignty of God which as such actualises this creaturely being. He is the creaturely being whose existence consists in his fulfilment of the will of God. And finally He is the creaturely being who as such not only exists from God and in God but absolutely for God instead of for Himself. (132-133)

This is the reality of 'real man'. Barth warns us not to confuse this with offerings of the 'mere phenomena of man' (133ff.). The essence of mankind's creaturely being is to be in relationship with God. It is for the 'glory, lordship, purpose and service of God'. Again, creaturely being is to be like Jesus' creaturely being 'for all His unlikeness'. It is because Jesus is man that 'every man in his place and time is changed' and that 'he is something other than what he would have been if this One had not been man too'. There is a 'point of contact' between Jesus and ourselves and it is that his human nature is constitutionally continuous with our own. However there is also a kind of confrontation between Jesus the man and ourselves and it is that in this man 'we are confronted by the divine Other'. The person or subject of Jesus is the eternal Son and he is ontologically continuous with God; his status is ontological continuity with the Father and Spirit. Barth brings to the fore once more the otherness of Jesus to mankind which he stresses, in line with his understanding of the asymmetrical nature of the relationship between God and mankind, over the sameness of Jesus to us. Jesus is our 'divine Counterpart' [*goettliche Gegenueber*]. This means that he is above all other creaturely beings and confronts us 'in a divine manner, in divine existence, action, rule and service'. Jesus is the 'ontological determination [*ontologische Bestimmung*] of all men' and as such stands in a relation to all other men confronting them 'as a true and absolute Counterpart [*absoluten Gegenueber*]'.

¹⁷² Emil Brunner called this part volume the 'most human' of Barth's works but struggled to articulate Barth's 'curious concept of real man' (126) which Brunner understood as both Jesus and mankind. For Barth, 'real man' is strictly Jesus Christ. Brunner, 'The New Barth: Observations on Karl Barth's Doctrine of Man', *Scottish Journal of Theology*, 4 (1951) 123-135. Modern interpretations of Barth that see a symbiosis between God and humanity equally fail to see that Barth never relinquishes his stance of God's determining action being irreversible.

The uniqueness and particularity of the man Jesus is that he is the Son of God in person. The humanity of Jesus is the ‘creaturely correspondence [*kreatuerliche Entsprechung*], reflection [*Weiderholung*] and representation [*Darstellung*]’ of God. The transcendence of God finds its creaturely image in this man. Of all men, Jesus is the image of God. Our essential human nature is to be ‘in Christ’; to be ‘in this the true and absolute Counterpart’ (emphasis mine). Our essential human nature is to be in relationship with God and we do this as we are found to be ‘in Christ’ who is himself God in person. ‘Basically and comprehensively, therefore, to be a man is to be with God’. ‘Man is with God because he is with Jesus’. Our being in Christ is about our being held in a right relationship to God by God. The human existence assumed by the Son, as that which is in the Son, is the event of this particular and singular human existence being held in a right relationship to God by God; being determined by God as utterly for God and all others. The human existence of the Son is held in right relationship to God and in this human existence our own human existence is held in right relationship to God. Being held in Christ is about being held in relationship.

Having made mention of the rest of creation as also being with God, Barth asserts that only in the human realm do we find Jesus as the ‘Representative and Revealer of the majestic transcendence of God’: ‘[a]s in the form of a human creature the Creator becomes the true and absolute Counterpart of all other human creatures’ (137-138). It is in IV/2 that Barth’s understanding of the ‘form’ of Jesus’ creatureliness is made more explicit.¹⁷³ For now, since Jesus is the creaturely form (reflection even) of the creator, the creator God confronts mankind and reveals himself in a ‘direct and immediate manner’ (139). Jesus’ constitution, even in its confrontation to us, is the same as ours but his status as the eternal Son means that Jesus is ‘the Bearer of the uniqueness and transcendence of God’. In words reminiscent of his Epistle to the Romans, Barth sees Jesus as the breaking in of the kingdom of God into the human sphere, (140-1).¹⁷⁴ God’s radical invasion of the human sphere is God making history

¹⁷³ Gunton, ‘[m]uch hangs on the meaning of *Gestalt*’. Gunton, Colin E., *A Brief Theology of Revelation* (Edinburgh, T & T Clark, 1995) 5 note 9. We think Barth is elucidating Jesus’ particular human *Gestalt* as Saviourhood (obedient willing and action), that is, enabled human right relationship to God by God as that which reflects God.

¹⁷⁴ Barth, Karl, *The Epistle to the Romans*, trans. from sixth edition by E.C. Hoskyns (London, Oxford University Press, 1933) 91-114.

in the person of Christ. It is the happening that corresponds to God's will and is accomplished in his power:

But here God acts and rules and makes history; and He does so in the sovereignty of His omnipotence, in the power of the Creator dealing with His creature, as the Lord of lords and the King of kings. (141)

Barth stresses the glory of the kingdom of God and mankind's utter reliance on God for his very being. God is immediately and directly present in the person of Jesus Christ who is the kingdom of God come into the world confronting us as one of us.

Barth is holding together two important motifs. Firstly the 'direct and immediate' presence of God in Jesus and secondly, the assumed, determined human existence as that which 'corresponds' to and 'reflects' the divine life. These two motifs elucidate the 'very God' and 'very man' formula respectively. The direct and immediate presence of God in flesh is the divine Subject the eternal Son, 'very God'. The form [*gestalt*] of his human existence in ontological distinction from God, 'very man', corresponds to and reflects his divine life with the Father and Spirit. This man lives in perfect ordered relationality to the Father reflecting, mirroring, corresponding to the perfect ordered relationality of the triune God, that is, the Son's ordered relationship to the Father and Spirit (as the only begotten of the Father who along with the Father breathes the Spirit and so is united to the Father in the Spirit) is reflected in the event of the triune subject determining the assumed human existence of the Son. The Son's human existence is the image of God's existence, it is that which reflects God; the *imago Dei*.¹⁷⁵

v) Jesus as the Embodiment of the Divine Will to Save: Election

¹⁷⁵ The Son's human existence as the *imago Dei* is his human existence in relationship as determined by God as a reflection of his divine existence in relationship as determined from the Father in the unity of the Spirit. The analogy between the two existences is one of relationship determined in a particular ordered way. Barth will not talk in terms of the traditional *analogia entis* with its underlying premise that human existence is in some sense self-determining as God is self-determining. Barth's point seems to be that God's existence is sovereign existence and there can be no analogy between the divine and human with regard to sovereignty. Mankind is not sovereign over his own existence.

Barth is now concerned to tie the event that is Jesus Christ as the *imago Dei* firmly to the doctrine of election. This has certainly been fuelling his coverage of 'real man'; now it is made explicit. Jesus Christ is the elect man of God: '[a]mong all other men and all other creatures He is the penetrating spearhead of the will of God their creator' (143f.). The will of God is this: that 'His creation should prevail', that is, have being and not non-being. Jesus is the only one of whom it can be said that the will of God for creation has been fulfilled: 'His existence is determined from the beginning, before the foundation of the world'; 'He alone is the archetypal man whom all threatened and enslaved men and creatures must follow'. Barth returns to consider 'the concept of man in general' and pursues this from page 145 until the end of this section, page 202, inter-weaving comments about 'man in general' with the particular man Jesus in whom 'man in general' is enclosed and one has to pick very carefully through the text so as to avoid erroneous predications. In some ways Barth seems to be using his observations of mankind as a contrast to Christ's particular and singular human existence as Saviour and exegetical considerations are noticeably lacking in this respect. Our particular focus is the humanity of Christ and so brief comments on this section suffice as we seek to pick out Barth's particular comments about Jesus human existence in relationship as that which corresponds to the relationships of the triune God.

Jesus is the covenant partner of God for the sake of the world, 'the embodiment of the divine will to save' (147).

All this is concretely expressed in the fact that the man Jesus is the Word of God; that He is to the created world and therefore *ad extra* what the Son of God as the eternal Logos is within the triune being of God. If the eternal Logos is the Word in which God speaks with Himself, thinks Himself and is conscious of Himself, then in its identity with the man Jesus it is the Word in which God thinks the cosmos, speaks with the cosmos and imparts to the cosmos the consciousness of its God. (147)

Barth's Augustinian style of rhetoric here, reiterating his epistemology of II/1, in the use of the threefold inner knowledge and speech of God, God's inner history perhaps, points to the eternal Word's identity with Jesus in whom our response is actualised; the event by which, as *fides quaerens intellectum*, we can acknowledge God. Jesus is the will of God happening; he is the actualisation of the electing will of God; 'in Him the divine address and summons to each and every man is actualised' (148). Jesus'

own creaturely being is wholly dedicated to the purposes of God and as such ‘God’s lordship over Him’ is ‘His own freedom for this service’. In this portrayal of the man Jesus we find the ‘sovereignty of the Creator’ and the ‘freedom of the creature’ (148). Barth is at pains to stress that God’s Lordship is not by external domination or dictatorship but a ‘supreme power . . . an almighty address’ of salvation, deliverance and mercy in the very existence of Jesus. Indeed it is the power of the presence of the creator in Christ that facilitates his creaturely response in freedom. Jesus is obedient in freedom because the will of God enables this to be so. Jesus Christ is both ‘summoned’ man and the one who summons (151ff.). As summoned man, Jesus is the chosen prototype of all humanity:

But there is a pre-existence of man as the one who is summoned by God . . . namely a pre-existence in the counsel of God, and to that extent, in God Himself, i.e., in the Son of God, in so far as the Son is the uncreated prototype of the humanity which is to be linked with God, man in his unity with God, and therefore “the firstborn of every creature” (Col. 1.15). As God Himself is mirrored in this image [*Indem Gott sich selbst in diesem Bild vor Augen steht*],¹⁷⁶ He creates man as the one whom He summons into life. He creates him as His eternal Word has this specific content to which He adheres in His action. This eternal Word of God with this specific content is the divine reality apart from which man as summoned by God has nothing behind him. (155, emphasis mine)

Returning to ‘man in general’ Barth sees this being summoned as a dynamic movement from God and back to God, using, for example, Michaelangelo’s depiction of the creation of Adam as man ‘set in movement in relation to God’ corresponding to, mirroring, the action of God perhaps intimating indirectly that Michaelangelo’s Adam is the second Adam in whom we are hid (150). Barth offers a concept of ‘being as history’ in the ‘existence of the man Jesus’ as ‘a state which is in movement’:

This creature is what it is as creature in a dynamic movement of the Creator to itself and itself to the Creator. It exists in this movement from another to itself and itself to this other - (159)

This movement from and to God empowered and determined by God is not an inner spherical movement but an event evoked from without by the divine other; a ‘transcendence and transcending’ quite different from mankind’s impotent so called

¹⁷⁶ ‘*Indem Gott sich selbst in diesem Bild vor Augen steht, erschafft er den Menschen zu seinem Aufgerufenen.*’ KD, 186.

self-transcendence.¹⁷⁷ Mankind exists only as it is created and drawn to God by God and it is only as it exists in this history, in this movement of divine creation and sustenance, that it can be at all. Barth sees mankind's history as grounded upon the history of the man Jesus: '[h]ere if anywhere, the use of the term "primal history" is perhaps appropriate' (157). This man exists because God is utterly for him and he is utterly for God. 'The existence of the man Jesus is this history ... [i]t is nothing more ... [i]t has nothing behind it but the eternal will and counsel of God'. Barth makes the point explicit, 'Jesus is, as this history takes place' (160). Barth is highlighting his doctrine of election as a moment by moment pulsating event that happens first and foremost as the eternal Son's history whereby the Son wills to assume in obedience to the Father in the unity of the Spirit, moment by moment, human existence as the two moments of humiliation and exaltation (eternity gathering time and time being taken up into eternity). Jesus is the 'history of the covenant and salvation and revelation inaugurated by God in and with the act of creation'. Barth does not use the II/2 terms 'transference' or 'transition' but is paralleling his II/2 vision of the event of election being a dynamic movement from God to that which is other by God, in which God reflects his inner movement of order and love in freedom.

vi) Jesus as the Embodiment of Grace Enabling Human Obedience and Freedom

This certainly means that in the original and immediate sense He alone is the man to whom God has given Himself. He alone is the man whom God has elected and who elects God in return. (160)

Jesus is 'divinely kept' and therefore 'divinely keeps' the covenant (160ff.). Jesus embodies 'God for man' as one who is both unlike and like mankind. In this

¹⁷⁷ Barth's argument runs as follows: history happens when 'something new and other than its own nature befalls [a being]'. It 'does not occur when the being is involved in changes or different modes of behaviour intrinsic to itself' but 'begins, continues and is completed when something other than itself and transcending its own nature encounters it, approaches it and determines its being . . . so that it is compelled and enabled to transcend itself in response and relation to this new factor'. 'The history of a being occurs when it is caught up in this movement, change and relation, when its circular movement is broken from without by a movement towards it and the corresponding movement from it, when it is transcended from without so that it must and can transcend itself outwards'. (158) If the words 'nature' and 'being' are replaced by 'existence' Barth's argument becomes clearer.

embodiment Jesus enables the human state to be ‘burst open from without and outwards’ such that it can, because ‘this one man [dwells] at the heart of humanity’, transcend outwards. We share in ‘what He is and therefore in the history actualised in Him’, and this history means that we are ‘transcended from without and thus able to transcend ... outwards’, for we are now ‘with Him’.¹⁷⁸ As Jesus’ history, the embodiment of the will of God, is the movement of the Son of God into the world and returning to God, so mankind’s history is connected to this ‘one “primal history”’. Hence mankind is as it is moved by God and so is enabled to move to Jesus and therefore to God. In this way mankind is ‘a being which is transcended in its limitation from without and transcends its limitation outwards’. Jesus is both the ‘Whence and Whither’ of mankind’s existence. Of mankind Barth insists ‘his true being is his being in the history grounded in the man Jesus, in which God wills to be for him and he may be for God’; there is no ‘self-centered movement’ of man. Mankind’s history is ‘secondary, derived, indirect history’ in relation to the primary history of Jesus Christ, secondary to ‘[t]he special counsel with a special intention in relation to a special object’: ‘[w]hen we say that the being of man rests on the election of God, we say that it springs from a history which has its prototype and origin in God Himself’.¹⁷⁹ Our history is realised in God’s actualisation of the history of Jesus Christ, the triune event of election in which the history of the assumption of human existence to the Son is determined and fulfilled as that which reflects the history/event of the triune life.

To be a human creature is to hear the Word of God, that is, God’s call embodied in Jesus. God’s will and power carry out this decision of grace. We are human creatures in our relation to this embodied grace of God in the person of Jesus Christ. Grace is ‘the breaking through of the Creator to the creature, by which the being of the latter is opened from without and [a relation to that superior reality from without]

¹⁷⁸ *‘In diesem Faktum begegnet uns ja der Mensch selbst in seinem Zustand als das von aussen ueberschrittene und nach aussen sich selbst ueberschreitende Wesen.’ KD, 192.* Human ‘transcendence’ is being summoned by God ‘to be called out of oneself and beyond oneself’ towards a particular direction; to trust in God, obey him and be grateful. This true human action ‘corresponds’ to grace. The ‘being of man is a being in gratitude’, God-given transcendence in ‘a Godward direction’ (166ff.). In volume four parts three and four, particularly, section 71, Barth returns to this when he considers mankind’s vocation and calling.

¹⁷⁹ ‘The special counsel and intention in relation to man are the inner works of the free God working on His own conscious initiative’ (163).

is established' (165ff.).¹⁸⁰ We are 'with God' because God is first with us in the person of Jesus. Grace is God's prevenient gracious action in election; in moving towards creaturliness, catching it up and establishing it in free grateful obedience, that is, opening it up towards the other and keeping it on this track moment by moment by indwelling it. 'Obedience means that this Word claims [the creature]' evoking gratitude.¹⁸¹ At this stage Barth is skirting around explicit comments about Jesus' own obedience as 'very God' and 'very man'. Mankind's being in the Word of God is the 'Word of grace determinin[ing] the direction' of man's summoning to 'hear and obey'. The 'Word of God makes for Himself a dwelling place in man' and man lives as a 'being in gratitude'.

Man receives grace from the Subject God and is the object of this receiving. Only because of this is God the object of man's gratitude and man the subject of gratitude. Mankind's gratitude, as 'obedience, faith, love or trust', 'exactly and fully corresponds and is adequate to God's Word of grace' (170f.). The only thing man can do for God, and this itself is gift deriving from God, is thank him and only as he does this does he 'fulfil his true being'; responding 'subjectively and spontaneously to the objective, receptive foundation of his being in the Word of God'. Mankind is evoked to spontaneous obedience in gratitude as his responsibility towards God and in this he is 'distinguished from all other creatures' (174f.).¹⁸² This response to God is 'the word of thanks rather than the Word of grace' and is 'rooted in the latter but not identical with it; and yet addressed and returning to it, corresponding to it as a word'.¹⁸³ Mankind is the 'second and knowing subject [who] is summoned to action' and only in this summoning is 'made subject' of an object who is 'the primary and true Subject'. This happening is an event, a 'movement' (176f.). '[B]y deciding in relation to God and opening itself and moving towards God' the 'being of man' 'corresponds to what God does to it' and 'arises and goes to his Father'. This

¹⁸⁰ We note Gunton and Jenson's concern towards substituting grace for the person of the Spirit; see, for example, Gunton *Intellect and Action*, 77, but here Barth sees grace as Jesus Christ in whom mankind is summoned, redirected and evoked to gratitude.

¹⁸¹ 'Obedience without gratitude would be nothing' (170).

¹⁸² Barth remains agnostic as to the rest of the creation's praise of God (172-74).

¹⁸³ Barth is maintaining an asymmetry of human existence in contrasting our human existence with the very different human existence of Jesus. Grace is what God does towards us. The Son incarnate is not in need of grace but is the grace of God towards us in grounding our very being as human beings but he, along with the Father and Spirit, determines his own creaturely existence and in IV/2 this is articulated as the communication of grace as the triune event of determination.

reference to the parable of the Prodigal Son becomes an important motif in IV/1 where Barth offers a new reading whereby Jesus Christ is the one who leaves his Father in obedience and humiliates himself to human existence in going to the far country and redeeming mankind returning exalted by and to the Father, IV/2, with our humanity exalted in his. At this stage Barth is articulating the being of mankind as resting upon the election of Jesus Christ's particular and singular history as dynamic event from God and to God and in God. Mankind 'being as history' is 'posited' by God as that which corresponds to God the Son's human existence (the primary positing of human existence by God) and in this divine positing mankind 'posits himself'. Mankind's action of thankfulness towards God is a divinely enabled human action which corresponds to Christ the 'Word of grace' by being the graciously given human word of gratitude to God.

vii) Obedience

Although Barth claims to be grounding his anthropology upon Christology, one has to pick carefully through his comments about obedience in order to glean more about the obedience of Christ because comments about the obedience of mankind dominate. 'As hearing becomes the act of the subject, it becomes obedience' (179f.). 'Knowledge itself is an act, an active participation in the process of knowledge which comes from God and returns to Him'. Our action is caught up in God's prevenient action as the event of movement of the 'active Creator'. 'Man is, of course, purely receptive as regards the movement from God, but he is also purely spontaneous in the movement to God'. Human willing, as the obedient response to hearing God, is positing oneself as subject and it is not 'simply a gift' endowed but a commissioned task. Mankind's 'being as history' is seeing oneself as 'the one I shall be, as the one it is my task to be'. 'To will is to obey' but 'to obey is also to will' for it is not about being 'impelled' but about spontaneous freedom to decide and act. 'The being of man as obedience is being in this choice and decision' not 'simply a willing corresponding' to God's claim lagging behind one's real life but rather a 'doing [that] is chosen, determined and willed' as that which is 'embodied in event'; the event of God's intervening act as the one who is 'the primary Subject of this

history' (182). Obedience as 'the active form of hearing God's Word' originates from God and returns to God enclosed in the event that is God giving of himself in the Son incarnate.¹⁸⁴ We take the trajectory of Barth's logic to be: we are enabled to respond freely as held in Christ who first responds freely for us because his human action is a divinely enabled free human response of obedience to the Father in the unity of the Spirit; our obedience corresponds to the Son's human obedience and his human obedience corresponds to his divine obedience to the Father in the unity of the Spirit.

There is however a 'supreme disparity between the coming of God and the going of man, between the objective and the subjective basis of human being' for the grace of God towards man and the response of man to God as evoked by God 'take[s] place on two very different levels and in two very different ways' (187). God does not need man and 'could be content with that inner glory' but God's gracious action 'is a free overflowing of His glory' which 'He simply does'. Mankind, however, needs God and lives by the grace of God and is not 'self-contained' and 'self-content':

The Yes in which man answers the divine Yes, man's knowledge of God and obedience to Him, can never have more force than the force and reach of an echo ... it happens with all the difference between what he is enabled and obliged to do as a creature and what God is free and powerful to do as the Creator. (188)

Mankind's being 'in correspondence with God's Word of grace', as 'the second and not the first subject in the history inaugurated by God', is his only possibility; anything else is 'non-being'. The only possible being open to mankind is his real 'being in history' as the active obedience of 'creaturely activity' that 'corresponds to the activity of the Creator' (192). This being in obedience is also a being in freedom as a 'freedom in the Spirit' and follows God's prevenient freedom 'in relation to' mankind. Mankind's freedom in obedience corresponds to God's freedom: 'the divine attitude, which is itself free . . . that in the creative counsel of this God man for his part was foreseen and willed and created as a free being' (193). Man is only free when he acts obediently to God, choosing only this, anything else is not freedom

¹⁸⁴ The source of Barth's thinking here is the opening question of Calvin's 1542 catechism: 'What is man's chief end'? The answer being: 'man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever'.

because choosing to sin is to renounce freedom; to lose oneself but not to be lost to God.

In the next section Barth returns to Jesus Christ as the real man in whom mankind has 'being as history'. We find Barth's ordering of these sections intriguing for one might have expected him to work through Jesus as the 'real man', 'Man in His Determination as the Covenant-Partner of God,' (section 45) before he worked through 'mankind in general', 'Man as the Creature of God'. Equally, one might have expected more on the obedience of Christ before Barth considered the obedience of mankind.

viii) The Son's Human existence as 'Indirectly Identical' to his Divine Existence

'Man in His Determination as the Covenant-Partner of God', an important section of III/2, is where we find Barth's construct of the human existence of Christ as 'indirectly identical' with his divine existence as an elucidation of *analogia relationis* and Christ as the *imago Dei*. Jesus is the only 'real man' whose human existence is wholly for God as the man 'created' to be God's 'covenant-partner' (203ff). Mankind is 'un-real man', whose human existence is 'denied and obscured' by sin. Although mankind exists in antithesis as alienated from God, man remains God's creature: 'Sin is not creative. It cannot replace the creature of God by a different reality'. Barth is seeking to explore further the analogy of relation that exists between divine and human existence as enclosed in Jesus Christ as that which is 'determined by God for life with God' bearing in mind that that 'as the Son of God' Jesus is 'man for God' in a 'unique way'. This man Jesus as 'God's partner by God's election and calling' who thanks, knows, obeys, calls and 'enjoys freedom [as given] from [God] and to [God]' has a 'specific history' and is 'a special creature, standing in connexion [*Beziehung*] and correspondence [*Entsprechung*] with his divinely given determination' (205). There is an 'inner relationship', an 'inner connexion [*inneren Beziehung*]', between Jesus divine determination and his 'creaturely form'. Barth wishes to understand in what way the 'humanity of man genuinely corresponds

[*entspricht*] and is similar [*aehnlich*] to his divine determination' as revealed in the 'mystery of faith' in the man Jesus.

Jesus, 'true man' and 'true God', is 'real man only in' the 'unity of the Son with the Father' (207ff.). His divinity, 'a divine determination of His humanity' itself 'not lacking in genuine humanity', 'consists in the fact that God exists immediately and directly in and with Him, this creature' so that Jesus is 'in the activity of the grace of God'; 'man as the living Word of God'. His divinity means that 'He is man for God' and his humanity means that 'He is man for man, for other men, His fellows'. Barth is working through his analogy of relation such that Jesus' divine existence is his unity, immediately and directly, to divine other, the Father by the bond of love that is the Spirit. As 'very God' Jesus is utterly for God in unity with him in the Spirit and corresponding to this, his existence as real man is to be 'absolutely' for other men living and breathing the will of God to save:

From the very first, in the fact that He is a man, Jesus is not without His fellow-men, but to them and with them and for them. He is sent and ordained by God to be their Deliverer. Nothing else? No, really, nothing else. For whatever else the humanity of Jesus may be, can be reduced to this denominator and find here its key and explanation. To His divinity there corresponds exactly this form of His humanity – His being as it is directed to His fellows. (209)

Jesus' humanity as man for others is 'primary, internal and necessary' (210f.). That is, Jesus' relationship to his fellows is something that belongs to 'His innermost being'. It is to do with his prevenient divine being (existence) as it is directed towards the Father in the Spirit. Jesus' 'active solidarity' is the 'concrete correlative of His divinity [*konkrete Korrelat zu seiner Divinitaet*], of His anointing with the Spirit and power' for 'His humanity consists wholly and exhaustively in the fact that he is for man'.

He is originally and properly Word of God to men, and therefore His orientation to others and reciprocal relationship with them are not accidental, external or subsequent, but primary, internal and necessary. It is on the basis of this eternal order [*ewigen Zuordnung*] that He shows himself to be the Neighbour and Saviour of men in time. (210)

Total inclusive other-orientation in reciprocal relatedness is who the triune God is and it is this 'eternal order' that is reflected in the human existence of the Son of God.

Jesus is ‘immediately and directly affected by the existence of His fellows’ because as the eternal Son eternally orientated towards reciprocal relatedness as being for the divine other, overflowing to include the human other, his being utterly for the human other is who he is. He can be no other. Being for the other is the divine triune life as divine existence in relationship. The overflowing of this other orientated existence, this inclusiveness of otherness, in the human existence of the eternal Son is his being for the other as man simply reflecting the way in which he is in his triune existence. This being for the other as being for us is ‘comprehensive and radical’; Jesus takes utter responsibility for us; ‘being made sin’ (214) and sacrificing himself for us he makes our fate his own so that it is no longer ours but his (212). As the all inclusive servant, the incarnate Son is wholly himself, a ‘supreme I wholly determined by and to the Thou’ (216). Ontologically the Son of God puts himself in our place; his human existence reflecting his divine:

In His divinity He is from and to God. In His humanity He is from and to the cosmos. . . . But His humanity is in the closest correspondence with His divinity [*Seine Humanitaet entspricht aber aufs genaueste seiner Divinitaet*]. It mirrors and reflects it [*sie bildet sie ab, sie spiegelt sie*]. Conversely, His divinity has its correspondence and image in the humanity in which it is mirrored. At this point there is similarity [*So besteht hier Aehnlichkeit*]. Each is to be recognised in the other. (216)

The Son’s human existence has a ‘twofold determination’ [*doppelten Bestimmung*] which is in ‘harmony’ likened to ‘the two-fold law of love’ for God and for neighbour as, for example, in Mathew 12. 29-31.¹⁸⁵ Love of God is primary, stemming from which is love of neighbour as secondary, as that which is ‘distinct but connected’ to primary love of God. So too Jesus’ ‘twofold yet not opposed but harmonious orientation’ is reflected in ‘His divinity and humanity as this is achieved without admixture or change, and yet also without separation or limitation’. Between Jesus’ divine and human existence ‘there is an inner material connexion [*ein innerer sachlicher Zusammenhang*] as well as a formal parallelism [*formaler Parallelismus*]’. The ‘correspondence and similarity [*Entsprechung und Aehnlichkeit*] between His divinity and humanity . . . has a material basis [*sachlich begrundet*]’ and it is found in God being ‘true to Himself’ in his election of Jesus Christ from all eternity as that which expresses who his. We cite Barth at length at this important juncture:

¹⁸⁵ Compare this with Barth’s account of the ‘double reference’ of election with its ‘active’ and ‘passive’ determination, II/2, 103ff.

If “God for man” is the eternal covenant revealed and effective in time in the humanity of Jesus, in this decision of the Creator for the creature there arises a relationship which is not alien to the Creator, to God as God, but we might almost say appropriate and natural to Him. God repeats in this relationship *ad extra* a relationship proper to Himself in His inner divine essence. Entering into this relationship He makes a copy of Himself. Even in His inner divine being there is relationship. To be sure, God is One in Himself. But He is not alone. There is in Him a co-existence, co-inherence and reciprocity. God in Himself is not just simple, but in the simplicity of His essence He is threefold – the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. He posits Himself, is posited by Himself, and confirms Himself in both respects, as His own origin and His own goal. He is Himself the One who loves eternally, the One who is eternally loved, and eternal love; and in this triunity He is the original and source of every I and Thou, of the I which is eternally from and to the thou and therefore supremely I. And it is this relationship in the inner divine being which is repeated and reflected in God’s eternal covenant with man as revealed and operative in time in the humanity of Jesus. . . . The humanity of Jesus is not merely the repetition and reflection of His divinity, or of God’s controlling will; it is the repetition and reflection of God Himself, no more and no less. It is the image of God, the *imago Dei*. (218-219)

Simply put, the eternal Son’s human existence reflects the triune God; God reflects himself. Election is a reflection of ‘God Himself, no more and no less’. This latter assertion, particularly the reference to the ‘no less’ (the ‘no more’ being Barth’s characteristic style of dialectic which is not always necessary and helpful), is making the point that the Son is not alone in his human existence for he is never without the Father and Spirit who, whilst not becoming incarnate, are intimately involved in the Son’s mission. Remember Barth’s exposition of John’s gospel account of the Son being in the Father and the Father working through and in the Son in the unity of the Spirit. Barth’s II/2 doctrine of election, 105-106, is emphatic about the triune event of election being the act of the Trinity, one mode ‘no less’ involved than another. In that it is the Son who becomes incarnate, the human existence of the Son ‘for man’ corresponds and is similar to his divine existence as the second being way of the triune God as being for and in the other. The terms ‘reflection’, ‘correspondence’, ‘similarity’, ‘repetition’, ‘correlation’ and ‘mirroring’ function to acknowledge the ontological differentiation between divine and human existence, one does not collapse into the other, but they also function to express that who the Son is *ad extra* is who he is *ad intra*. Eternity is repeated in time. Eternity delves into time. The movement of the eternally triune God, these three who are for and in one another, stretches into space and time as an event of triune determination in creating and gathering up temporal, spatial existence tuning and molding it through radical healing

in the incarnate Son into unity with, but ever ontologically distinct from, the eternally harmonious movement of the triune life.

When Barth talks of divine existence he is talking of the triune God. Divine nature does not exist naked, as some sort of substance that can be envisaged or deliberated about distinct from the one, triune God; distinct from the particular and singular God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The one, triune God exists in a particular ordered way; this is his divine existence (nature/essence), there is no other. This God repeats and reflects himself in the event of his dealings with man; in the event of the assumption of human existence to the Son. Election is a triune event, revelation is a triune event and the assumption of human existence to the Son and seeing this salvific work through is a triune event. The determination of our human existence as held within the Son's is a triune event as we are brought into relationship to the Father through the Son in the unity of the Spirit.

ix) The Son's Human Existence Mirrors his Divine Existence

Jesus is the *imago Dei*. Barth reminds the reader that the limitation involved in the term image must not be forgotten. Jesus as the image [*Das Bild*] of God means that his humanity is not 'directly identical' but 'indirectly identical' with God. A mirror reflects an exact image but in a different dimension and so the image it reflects is indirectly identical to the original. Of the humanity Barth writes:

It belongs intrinsically to the creaturely world, to the cosmos. Hence it does not belong to the inner sphere of the essence, but to the outer sphere of the work of God. It does not present God in Himself and in His relation to Himself, but in His relation to the reality distinct from Himself. In it we have to do with God and man rather than God and God. There is a difference in this respect. We cannot, therefore, expect more than a correspondence and similarity. We cannot maintain identity. Between God and God, the Father and the Son and the Son and the Father, there is unity of essence, the perfect satisfaction of self-grounded reality, and a blessedness eternally self-originated and self-renewed. But there can be no question of this between God and man, and it cannot therefore find expression in the humanity of Jesus, in His fellow-humanity as the image of God. (219)

The 'immediate and direct' relationship Jesus has with the Father and Spirit in his being, as the Son, 'very God' is his being ever in the inner triune *perichoresis*; this is his divine existence and can be the existence of only these divine three who are one. Jesus human existence as 'very man' is 'indirectly identical' to this and the reason why is to do with two different ontological realities. Human existence needs and is totally dependent upon the sovereignty and grace of God; this is the ontology of human existence, its ontological determination from God, whereas 'God in Himself', divine ontology ('between God and God'), is self-positing, self-grounded, self-originating and self-renewed.¹⁸⁶ This cannot be of the Son's human existence, of human ontology, which needs the divine initiative and upholding. The direction of determination, from God to man, is irreversible.¹⁸⁷ God redeems us in the human existence of the eternal Son but this existence itself is posited and upheld by the triune God. The Son's human existence perfectly reflects the triune existence in total orientation to others, but this event relies upon the one in whom this existence is upheld, the eternal Son in unity with the Father in the Spirit. The eternal Son's human existence is an existence lived in a different, ontologically distinct, dimension to his divine existence albeit inter-connected in his person (the hypostatic union).

It is in the humanity, the saving work of Jesus Christ that the connexion between God and man is brought before us. It is in this alone that it takes place and is realised. Hence there is a disparity between the relationship of God and man and the prior relationship of the Father to the Son and the Son to the Father, of God to Himself. (219-220)

The disparity is simply the ontological distinction of existence in relationship with all that this means for what God can and does do as opposed to what mankind can and does do, even with regard to the humanity of Christ. Despite this disparity, there is nevertheless a correspondence and similarity, an *analogia relationis*, but not, Barth is emphatic to point out an *analogia entis*; '[t]he being of God cannot be compared with

¹⁸⁶ Again, Barth is maintaining that God's existence is sovereign existence. Human existence is not analogous to this; there is no *analogia entis* with respect to mankind's existence and God's existence as 'self-positing, self-grounded, self-originating and self-renewed'.

¹⁸⁷ In that Barth holds to ordered triune origins, there is irreversibility too in God as from the Father to the Son and only then from the Son to the Father united in the Spirit, the Spirit being breathed and not himself breathing divine existence in an originating sense. Barth's main point here seems to be the ontological disparity between divine and human existence in which human existence is never divinised but always upheld by God.

that of man' (220).¹⁸⁸ The Son's human existence as 'indirectly identical' to his divine is to say that it mirrors his divine existence as existence in relationship; there is an exact imaging in the different ontological dimension of space/time/creatureliness. In Christ we really see who God is as the one who loves in freedom and not of necessity or caprice. It is this form of inner divine love, of Father and Son in the bond of peace ('blessedness') who is the Spirit, which is poured out towards mankind and so reflected '*ad extra* in the humanity of Jesus' (220). The divine original is 'the relationship within the divine being, the inner divine co-existence, co-inherence and reciprocity'. The similarity *ad extra* is this: the relationship that the eternal Son has with the Father in the inner life of the Trinity is 'repeated and reflected [*sich wiederhole und nachbilde*]' on a 'new level' and in a 'new relationship' in the humanity of Jesus (221). Jesus' relationship to others as being utterly for them reflects anew the Father being utterly for the Son and the Son utterly for the Father in the unity, one would surmise, of the Spirit, for Barth concentrates on the Father-Son relationship at this point and explicit references to the Spirit are sparse.

Thus the divine original creates for Himself a copy in the creaturely world. The Father and the Son are reflected in the man Jesus. There could be no plainer reference to the *analogia relationis* and therefore the *imago Dei* in the most central, i.e., the christological sense of the term. (221)

The divine existence of the Father and Son united in the Spirit, the immediate and direct triune relationship, is copied, reflected, mirrored, and imaged in the human existence of the eternal Son incarnate. The eternal Son in becoming flesh has two natures or modes of existence, a divine existence in unity with the Father and Spirit and a human existence in unity with mankind. In this one person there is held two modes of existence in relationship neither collapsing into the other but held in distinction and harmony. Barth is exploring, using concepts and terms of his own, the ancient dilemma set up by the debate between Alexandria and Antioch, revisited with passion in the debate between the Calvinists and Lutherans and chronicled in Heppe's

¹⁸⁸ Barth's point seems to be that the distinct ontology of divinity and creaturliness is not comparable but their existence as existence in relationship is. This is a difficult stance but what seems to be at stake for Barth, as intimated above, is that God's existence is a sovereign existence whilst ours is not. Whilst mankind's existence as existence in relationship is a determination from God to God and God's own existence in relationship is from and to himself in being from the Father to the Son in the Spirit, there is an *analogia relationis* but in that God is God and sovereign over his and our existence, there is no comparison between mankind and God. Mankind has no sovereignty comparable with God. The sovereign triune God determines that the *analogia relationis* exist, first in the human existence assumed by the Son and only then in mankind as held in Christ.

Compendium of Reformed Dogmatics, a source much used by Barth, and to which he returns explicitly in volume four.

The main point to be stressed, is that Barth is exploring the two natures of Christ as ways of existence, ways of relating, as to do with relationships, that is, relationships which reflect *ad intra* relationships. This point has often been overlooked in much contemporary critiques of Barth possibly because of his trenchant adherence to the *filioque* clause and therefore without further ado his relegation to a heap marked ‘non-relational ontology’ because anyone who adheres to the *filioque* must also, by default, fail to have a Cappadocian concept of the Trinity as community in relation because the personal particularity of the Holy Spirit (his being a triune person) is undermined and therefore his particular relational aspect of perfecting triune relationality, as asserted by Basil of Caesarea, according to some of these sources, is missing.¹⁸⁹ At best, trinitarian relationality with the *filioque* clause can be only binitarian. And yet Barth seeks to understand the existence of God as relational and as relationally reciprocal and it is this ‘eternal order’ and event that is reflected in the eternal Son’s human existence for us.

... the inner relationship in this man is a relationship of clear agreement because His humanity, in correspondence and similarity with His determination for God and therefore with God Himself, as God’s image, consists in the fact that, as He is for God, He is also for man, for His fellows. (221-222)

Ad intra there are relationships of determination; a being for one another that is God’s very being/existence. The determination of the Son’s incarnate life is also a being for the other; this is human being/existence, as an existence determined by God.¹⁹⁰ Incarnate ‘being for’ reflects divine ‘being for’. The action of the Father, Son and Spirit as ‘reciprocal relatedness’ *ad intra* is reflected in their actions *ad extra*; in the Son being sent and obediently going united as he is to the Father in the harmony, peace and love of the Spirit, in the ‘Spirit of this act of obedience’ (II/2, 106). As can be seen in the citations from pages 218-20 of III/2 given above, Barth remains resolutely with Augustine’s use of Hilary in seeing the Spirit as the bond of blessedness and love between the Father and Son and so it is not unreasonable to

¹⁸⁹ See, for example, Gunton, Colin, E., *Becoming and Being*, 232.

¹⁹⁰ Again, God is sovereign over his own existence and that which he posits as ontologically other.

assume that Barth's Trinitarian structuring has not changed from I/1 but is intrinsic to Barth seeing the asymmetrical, teleological order of the triune life mirrored in the human existence of the Son (and so our existence as held and healed in the Son) with the Son in his human existence remaining united to the Father in the Spirit. Barth's doctrine of eternity and time, revisited in the final section of this part volume, expresses the Spirit as the triune mode who makes Christ present to his community between the resurrection and *parousia* as the eschatological dimension of God's time for us as post-temporality. In this sense, as in II/1, the Spirit unites eternity and time (the time in which we are held 'in Christ') as he also unites the incarnate Son to the Father as a reflection of his uniting the Father and Son in eternity.

Our second point: regarding those who hold that Barth maintains a 'sharp distinction' between the immanent and economic Trinity, we wonder whether this is what Barth is trying to assert with his use of 'correspondence' and 'reflection'? Is it correspondence/reflection as 'sharp distinction' or a replication in a different dimension (a mirror reflects an exact image but in a different ontological dimension and so it is 'indirectly identical') and to what extent does Barth's doctrine of time as being held in eternity, the eternal event enfolding temporal spatial event, express that the eternal Trinity is replicated in the dimension of enclosing and healing all that which is implicated in time? What, exactly, is this distinction that is so sharp? The argument that Barth seeks 'sharp distinctions' is not a convincing one in the light of the event of the immanent Trinity being reflected/replicated/copied in the economic. Barth is not looking to express sharp distinctions but an overflowing event of triune repetition in an ontologically distinct dimension, created to be that which is already and ever will be held in the arms of God. The 'sharp distinction' that Barth does hold to is that of the one between God and that which is ontologically other to him and the fact that the direction of determination is always from God to that which is other to him but we are not convinced that Barth's use of the concept of 'correspondence' warrants asserting a 'sharp distinction' between the economic and immanent Trinity. Barth seeks rather to understand the 'correspondence' between the economic and immanent, the similarity, and indeed this is what revelation is all about otherwise what would we be our criteria for talk of God?

x) The 'irreversible For' of the Son's Human Existence

In this section we briefly touch upon an intriguing aspect of Barth's concept of the human existence of Christ mirroring his divine existence as being for the other; the mirroring of divine reciprocal relationality. The triune God is who he is in reciprocal relatedness, albeit in an ordered asymmetry of *perichoretic* movement. Jesus human existence is not, however, one that receives anything from mankind because the Subject of Jesus human existence is the eternal Son, God in his second mode of being. Jesus is the image of God in a way that 'others cannot even approach, just as they cannot be for God in the sense that He is' (222). Jesus is unlike mankind not only in the nature of his relationship to God, being unable to sin and being the revelation of true man but also in the way in which he is human, i.e., in being utterly for other men.

He alone is the Son of God, and therefore His humanity alone can be described as the being of an I which is wholly from and to the fellow-human Thou, and therefore a genuine I. (222)

In what sense, Barth asks, are we like Jesus? If Jesus' humanity is to be wholly for his fellow men, then our humanity too is to be understood in this way albeit as an image of the *imago Dei* who is Jesus:

But only the humanity of Jesus can be absolutely exhaustively and exclusively described as being for man. There can be no question of a total being for others as the determination of any other men but Jesus. And to the humanity of other men there necessarily belongs reciprocity. Others are for them as they are for others. This reciprocity cannot arise in the humanity of Jesus with its irreversible "for". (243)

Jesus is wholly for the other as the eternal Son incarnate. He does not receive from others that which constitutes his human existence.¹⁹¹ His being utterly for the other is a function of his divine determination to be the covenant partner of God on behalf of mankind and a reflection of his unity with the Father. For mankind, to be human is to be a 'being in encounter with the being of the Thou' otherwise it is 'inhumanity' (247). As Jesus is the image of God, our humanity is the image of Jesus' humanity:

¹⁹¹ Neither, it has to be said, does mankind because as Barth makes clear in his rejection of an *analogia entis*, mankind is constituted as human by God in being in relationship to God in Christ. Mankind is not self-constituting.

‘This is the reach of the likeness in unlikeness, of the correspondence and similarity between the man Jesus and us other men’. We exist in ‘correspondence and similarity’ to Jesus just as he exists in correspondence and similarity to God. There is a definite and irreversible asymmetry and *telos* to the determination of God towards human existence, both towards that of the Son’s human existence and in his ours. Barth then goes into more depth as to the nature of humanity in general being ‘in encounter’. He covers aspects of this encounter as that which distinguishes us from each other (248) as that which must involve looking at each other and speaking to each other and as such the essential reciprocal nature of being human, (252 and 253). To be human is also to offer one another mutual assistance, to have fellowship with one another (260f.). Barth concludes that we cannot replace one another, we are not ‘inter-changeable’. Here again, Barth finds a difference with respect to the man Jesus:

If the man Jesus, even though He is Himself, is for us in the strictest sense living for us, accepting responsibility for us, in this respect, acting as the Son of God in the power of the Creator, He differs from us. This is His prerogative, and no other man can be compared with Him. Correspondence to His being and action consists in the more limited fact that we render mutual assistance. ... God alone, and the man Jesus as the Son of God, has no need of assistance, and is thus able to render far more than assistance to man, namely, to represent him. (261-262)

The ‘irreversible “for”’ of Christ’s ‘being for the other’ is simply his human existence as the Saviour. We are enclosed in Christ, he holds us and stands in our place replacing, if you like, our human existence with his; radically representing us to the extent that there is an exchange. The only reflection of this that can be found in our human nature is ‘mutual assistance’, our action cannot be salvific. Jesus’ human existence is his office as Saviour and it is total inclusive being for the other as exclusively that which Christ does. Our being in otherness (reciprocal relatedness), reflecting ‘His being *for* others’ as Saviour, is our ‘being *with* others’ as a ‘free co-existence of man and man’ (274f., emphasis in text). We leave to one side the excursus into the relationship of male and female (285-324) except to note that the final page of this section being created male and female corresponds to God himself not being solitary: ‘primarily and properly [God] is in connexion and fellowship . . . [as] the Father of the Son and the Son of the Father He Himself I and Thou, confronting Himself and yet always one and the same in the Holy Ghost’ (324). ‘God

is in relationship and so too is the man created by Him'. This 'similarity in dissimilarity' is the analogy of relationship.

Only God can redeem. The Son's human existence is to redeem our human existence from non-humanity and restore right relationship to God and therefore to one another. No other human except Christ can do this and there is nothing we can give to him which constitutes his human existence. On the contrary, it is the human existence of the Son which constitutes our human existence and this happens because of the Son's divine status; because the Son is 'very God'. Every aspect and action of the Son's human existence is salvific. Contemporary theologies which concentrate on being human as being constituted by others, reciprocal constitutiveness, might well misunderstand Barth here.¹⁹² There is, for him, no human constitutiveness that can be seen apart from Christ and the event of mankind's human constitutiveness happens as enclosed in the Son's salvific human existence. Theologies which bypass this and see mankind as constituting mankind are in danger of offering various, albeit modern, reproductions of nineteenth-century theories of the human. Jesus does not simply reveal mankind in a general sense, but constitutes mankind in a very specific sense. Ontologically, mankind is not self-constituting. To be constituted as human is to be constituted by God and this is a salvific event. The direction of determination is always from God and Barth maintains a rigorous asymmetry in this respect.

xi) Jesus' Unique Relationship to the Holy Spirit

It takes Barth a long time to get to explicit references to the Holy Spirit in his Christologically derived anthropology but in section 46, 'Man as Soul and Body' through the 'Spirit of God', this finally happens as well as explicit references to the obedience of Christ (325ff.). Jesus is 'supremely true man' and far from existing 'as

¹⁹² Gunton, influenced by Zizioulas, is a well known example but it does not follow that his theology seeks to see mankind apart from Christ. There is not the space to go into this important debate here. See Zizioulas, John D., *Being as Communion* (London, Darton Longman and Todd, 1985) and Gunton, Colin E., *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, second edition (Edinburgh, T & T Clark, 1997).

the union of two parts or two “substances”, He is one whole man, embodied soul and besouled body: the one in the other and never merely beside it’. This does not cease to be the case even in dying and being resurrected: ‘[b]etween the death and the resurrection of Jesus there is a transformation of the human form but ‘the body does not remain behind, nor does the soul depart’.

He does not fulfil His office and His work from His miraculous annunciation to His fulfilment in such a way that we can separate His outer form from His inner or His inner form from His outer. Everything is the revelation of an inner, invisible, spiritual plane of life. But it is almost more striking and characteristic that everything has an outer, visible, bodily form. (327)

Of this bodily form, Barth notes the human characteristics listed by scripture such as weeping, being troubled in spirit and the fear of death. Of these situations Barth concludes:

What we thus learn of the inner life of Jesus is certainly not little, but it is definitely not very much, and it falls far short of all that we should like to know. ... By all these passages we are only made aware that Jesus had a really human inner life. But we are given no guidance for reflection concerning it, and for forming a picture of this matter we are in fact offered no material at all. (329)

Barth remains agnostic concerning Jesus’ physical life also, although the scriptures witness to him being a real man born of a woman: ‘[a]n impenetrable veil of silence lies over the fact that He was a male (Jn. 4.27)’ (330). To seek other information about Jesus such as his inner development from childhood to adulthood simply detracts from the gospel message. The New Testament witness simply attests to this man as a whole man. The narrative points to a man who not only spoke but who effected what he said, ‘Jesus not only announced the forgiveness of sins but really effected it’ (331ff.). Again, Barth maintains the oneness of the person and work of Christ. The Son’s human existence is ‘ordered oneness and wholeness . . . in an order that derives from Himself’ and not something foreign forced upon him’. Jesus’ life as ordered to God is a determination to love in freedom by God as that which reflects God’s inner ordered life of freedom and love:

Rather He is His own law, and He is subject to it in a free obedience arising [*entspringenden*] in Himself and proceeding from Himself. Jesus wills and fulfils Himself ... He lives in such a way that command and obedience,

ordination and subordination, plan and execution, goal and aim proceed from Himself and thus partake of an equal inward necessity. (332)

Jesus' human obedience, the external necessity, which is not a compulsion but 'wholly free', mirrors the obedience of the eternal Son to the Father, the internal necessity. This obedience arises and proceeds from him mirroring, one might suggest for Barth does so only indirectly, the Son's breathing of the Spirit in whom he is united to the Father. Jesus has full authority over his 'life of soul and body' freely giving this life, 'living it for many others and in them'. With respect to all this, the human existence of Jesus is in an 'absolutely unique relation with the Holy Spirit'.

[I]t is not this special relationship to the Holy Spirit which makes this man the Messiah and the Son of God. On the contrary, it is because this man is the Messiah and the Son of God that He stands to the Holy Spirit in this special relationship. We have here to regard this relationship as the particular determination of the human constitution of Jesus'. (333)

Barth lists a range of texts which point to the relationship of Jesus to the Spirit including a reference to the baptism, John 1.32 and Isaiah 11.1 ff. where the Spirit is seen to 'rest upon' Jesus. Barth states that Jesus speaks the words of God through the empowering Spirit.

He is to be a man who is pervasively and constantly, intensively and totally filled and governed by this kingly Spirit. Hence Jn. 1.32 ... Lk. 4.1 ... Mt. 12.18 ... Lk. 4.18 . . . Jn. 3.34: "For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him" ... ; and Jn. 6.63: "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." (333)

Citing Romans 1.3f and I Peter 3.18, the resurrection is grounded on the double determination of Jesus 'put to death in the body' but 'made alive by the Spirit' as 'a divine necessity' and the last Adam of I Corinthians 15.45 as the 'life giving Spirit' who in II Corinthians 3.17 is the giver of freedom identified with 'the Lord' as 'the Spirit of the Lord'. The 'close and special' relation of the Spirit to Christ is expressed in the 'most fundamental New Testament statement' that Jesus is conceived 'by the Holy Spirit' as the 'miraculous sign of the mystery of His Messiahship and divine Sonship' and here Barth refers the reader back to I/2, 172ff., 'the Miracle of Christmas'. 'The relationship of this man to the Holy Spirit is so close and special that He owes no more and no less than His existence itself and as such to the Holy Spirit'. But 'in the Old and New Testaments the Holy Spirit is God Himself in His

creative movement to His creation' and in making possible this particular instance of human existence 'the creative movement of God has come primarily, originally and therefore definitively'. Jesus' human existence as the one on whom the Spirit rests is 'exclusively Messianic'. The possibility of human existence that is made actual by the Spirit in the assumption of flesh by the Son is Messianic human existence: Jesus being utterly for others.

We recall Barth's I/1 comments upon the Holy Spirit making possible 'the assumption of human existence in the Virgin Mary into unity with God in the mode of being of the Logos' as not a 'work . . . of the Spirit on the Son of God Himself' but enabling 'the possibility of the flesh existing for [the Son], so that He, the Word, can become flesh' (I/1, 486). Enabling, that is, that the Son's human existence 'is there for God, for fellowship and even unity with God'. The Spirit's work towards the Son incarnate is in uniting him to the Father. Barth is maintaining his stance that the mutual indwelling of the Son in the Father and the Father in the Son in the Spirit is an ordered relationship with a definite ontological *telos*. The Spirit comes from and is given by the Son, as given him so to do by the Father, and the event of the Spirit *ad intra* is a uniting whose presupposition is that the Spirit originates from those whom he unites, the very event of his being spirated is a uniting event. This event is reflected in the Spirit's work *ad extra* in uniting the incarnate Son to the Father and so with the Father and Son enabling the Son's human existence to be salvifically for all others out of which there occurs the Spirit's work in enabling not only our Christian life but also his activity as the breath of all created life. As the Spirit unites the Father and Son *ad intra* he unites the Father and the Son *ad extra* as the triune event of the determination of the human existence assumed by the Son.

Barth distinguishes between the spirit of life given to man in general and the Spirit of this man Jesus throwing, for our purposes, more light upon Jesus' relationship to the Spirit:

That this Spirit rests on man, is laid on Him and remains over Him, that man is full of the Spirit and his being and doing are consequently spiritual, and He Himself is spirit because created by the Spirit – these biblical statements are not anthropological but exclusively Messianic. (334)

The Holy Spirit is God's gift to man but not his possession and if at times there are special events where God turns towards man and 'enables him' these are temporary happenings for the 'Holy Spirit does not dwell lastingly in men; He comes to them'. Here Barth is critical of Western pneumatology with its stress on the Spirit as some sort of possession. We share Barth's concern and prefer to speak of the Spirit 'being to us' as an event given moment by moment; '[t]ht Holy Spirit does not dwell lastingly in men; He comes to them'. The translators use a small 's' for spirit [*Geist*] when Barth wishes to refer to us 'having soul' and here he will speak of us 'having spirit [*Geist*]' but understood in the sense as when the bible speaks of the spirit of man (*ruach*) it is referring to the 'soul living through the Spirit' (*nephesh*).

Occasionally the New Testament speaks of the soul of Jesus in this sense. When Jesus sighs or is moved or angered or troubled in spirit [*Geist*], when He commends His spirit [*Geist*] into the hands of God (Lk. 23.46), and when He gives up the spirit [*Geist*] (Mt. 27.50, Jn. 19.30), the word "spirit" is used in a general anthropological sense for the word "soul" and does not refer at all (or only indirectly) to the Holy Spirit. For Jesus does not have the Holy Spirit in the way in which it can be said of any man that he has the Spirit [*dass er Geist hat*]. He does not have Him only in virtue of an occasional, transitory and partial bestowal. He could not be without Him, and would be thus subject to death and corruption. Jesus has the Holy Spirit lastingly and totally. He is the man to whom the creative movement of God has come primarily, originally and therefore definitively, who derives in His existence as soul and body from this movement, and for whom to be the "living soul" of an earthly body and earthly body of a "living soul" is not a mere possibility but a most proper reality. He breathes lastingly and totally in the air of the "life-giving Spirit". He not only has the Spirit, but primarily and basically He is Spirit as He is soul and body. For this reason and in this way He lives. This is His absolutely unique relationship to the Holy Spirit. (334)

As God is Spirit, Jesus Christ as the eternal Son incarnate is Spirit; the Holy Spirit is in him; perichoretically indwelling as the man 'who does not merely live from the Spirit but in the Spirit'. Barth is repeating his point that the eternal Son incarnate lives within the *perichoretic* life of the Trinity. Jesus is 'very God'. Jesus not only lives 'from the Spirit but in the Spirit' and as such is 'the man who lives in sovereignty' (334ff.). Jesus is also 'very man' but his being 'very God' has pre-eminence and means that his human existence is empowered like no other man. Jesus as the enfleshed eternal Son 'has power of Himself to live in likeness to God', the power to do this is from a 'quite inexhaustible source'. Barth highlights a series of New Testament passages which refer to Jesus being, and having life and enclosing

our life in his (John 1.4, 5.26, 6.35, 14.19, 10.10, 11.25, 14.6; I John 1.2, 4.9, 5.12; Hebrews 7.3 and 7.16; Acts 3.15; Romans 5.10; 2 Corinthians 4.10; Colossians 3.3; Philippians 1.21; Galatians 2.20) as ‘affirmation’ of him being the ‘perfect Recipient and Bearer of the Holy Spirit’. This means that Jesus has life in all its fulness because ‘His life as soul and body is a personal life, permeated [*durchdrungenes*] and determined [*bestimmtes*] by His I, by Himself . . . [t]he life which rests upon Him is the life which corresponds to that kingly Spirit [*das jenem Königsgeist entspricht*]’.¹⁹³ The eternal Son of God in all his kingly and divine power determines his life in the flesh for the Son ‘is Spirit’ as the Spirit is in him and again we surmise as breathed from him, uniting him to the Father from whom the Spirit is principally breathed. The Spirit who is the bond of the Father and Son, proceeding from both, permeates the life of the Son’s human existence so that the kingdom of God is itself ‘present in creaturely form’ and not ‘only announced but present and effective’. We may surmise: the Father and Son together breathe the Spirit who unites them and in taking human existence to himself, the Spirit breathed by the Son is breathed ‘lastingly and totally’ upon the Son’s human existence as soul and body. The human existence of the Son receives and bears the Spirit that the Son himself, along with the Father, breathes.

Thus the immediate and direct relationship of the Son to the Spirit in the Spirit being breathed by the Son, is reflected/mirrored in the Spirit’s action towards the Son’s human existence (mirrored in the ontologically distinct dimension) but Barth does not offer any explicit thoughts upon this and in many ways his coverage of Christ’s unique relationship to the Spirit is frustratingly brief. To talk of the last Adam being the ‘life giving Spirit’ as well as being permeated by this Spirit as this Spirit rests upon him is somewhat confusing and seems to be a merging of the Son and the Spirit. Barth wants to see the eternal Son as immediately and directly in relation to the Spirit, albeit an ordered teleological relationship, such that talk of him being Spirit is to acknowledge the Holy Spirit in him uniting him to the Father as the Spirit he himself breathes, whereas talk of the Spirit permeating and resting upon, determining, Jesus is to recognise the Spirit’s action enabling the Son’s human existence as a reflection of his activity *ad intra*. *Ad intra*, the Son along with the

¹⁹³ That is, ‘the divine kingdom is present in creaturely form [*die gottliche [kingdom] in kreaturlicher Gestalt*]’ (335) *KD*, 403.

Father breathes the Spirit who unites. This uniting event is reflected *ad extra* in the Spirit being breathed by the Father and Son towards the Son's human existence.

xii) The Transformation of Jesus' Sinful Flesh to Ordered Obedient Existence

... something happens to the flesh and therefore to the intrinsically more than dubious being of man when the Logos becomes flesh and the human person of Jesus is constituted in this way ... The flesh, which in itself is disobedient, becomes obedient. (336)

Human existence, 'in itself lost', is assumed by the eternal Son and therefore 'attains a determination and a hope' and becomes 'the object and subject of saving passion and action'. '[T]his man as soul and body is a whole, shaped and ordered by and of Himself, and therefore not a chaos but a cosmos' for the 'formation and ordering' of this human existence 'when the Logos becomes flesh and the Spirit rests upon this man' is a gathering up of human existence in advance and a creating of something new in it:

The new subject which flesh now becomes suspends its old predicates and demands and supplies new predicates. And this is just the formation and ordering, of the soul and body of the man Jesus accomplished by and of itself, the passing of the old and the coming into being of a new form in the flesh. The human existence of Jesus is in its totality the event of this formation and ordering and therefore this conquest and renewal of the flesh, its slaying and displacement in the old form and its quickening and coming to life in a new. (336)

In the biblical witness, there is never a time when 'this event is not yet, or as yet only partially, in progress', for it happens as the event of the moment by moment act of God in anticipating, creating and sustaining human existence in the particular human existence of the Son and in him ours. 'The resurrection adds nothing new to what

happened in the beginning . . . [i]t only crowns this event as its disclosure and revelation' (336ff.). The incarnation is both a 'completed and perfect fact' and 'continually worked out in [Jesus'] whole existence'. The 'existence of Jesus' is 'the totality of [this] event'; the 'passion and action' of Jesus' life 'in sovereignty' in the Spirit resting upon him:

That the Spirit rests upon Him is, of course, His possession and status; it is proper to Him as the Messiah of Israel and Son of God. But even this implies in practice that His whole being consists in the event in which soul and body come into formation and order, in which chaos is left behind and cosmos is realised . . . [o]f the incarnation of the Word of God we may truly say both that in the conception of Jesus by the Holy Spirit and His birth of the Virgin Mary it was a completed and perfect fact, yet also that it was continually worked out in His whole existence . . . as a procedure which unfolded itself . . . with a necessity originally imposed upon Jesus. (337)

The transformation of Jesus' human nature, the Son incarnate living his particular and singular human existence as the Messiah of God, is not the transformation of some sort of metaphysical substance but the moment by moment action of the Father, Son and Spirit, anticipating, creating, enabling and sustaining the human existence of the Son in perfectly ordered relationship to the Father in the Spirit (and so to all others as they are enclosed in him) as that, it seems, which reflects the perfect relationship of the Son to the Father in the Spirit. That the Spirit rests upon Jesus, 'lastingly and totally', is a fact of his status as the eternal Son for the eternal Son breathes the Spirit.¹⁹⁴ Again we interpret Barth as saying the eternal Son possesses the Spirit as the Spirit who he, as given by the Father, breathes. Breathing the Spirit is 'proper' to his divine existence as existence in relationship. We recall that in II/2, this Spirit is the 'Spirit of [the Son's act of] obedience' (106), so breathing the Spirit who unites acts of obedience to the Father is 'proper' to the Son's divine existence as existence in relationship. This Spirit, who the eternal Son along with the Father breathes, prepares a body for the Son in the womb of Mary so that the anticipated assumption of flesh might be fulfilled in harmonious obedient relationships (between God and man and man and man). This creation, orientating and upholding of the right relationship towards God and his fellows happens as 'completed and perfect

¹⁹⁴ Following this section Barth will discuss how he sees mankind's constitution as being constituted by the action of the Holy Spirit but we have not room to engage with this *analogia relationis* of Christ's unique relationship to the Spirit, proper to his status, in any depth. We do not constitute one another but rather the triune God constitutes us and grounds our being with one another in 'mutual assistance' (love).

fact' in the very moment of the conception of Jesus by the Spirit and yet is 'continually worked out' in every moment of Jesus life. It is an event from God to God by God, a constant moment by moment movement of divine and therefore, in the Son incarnate, truly free human activity. John 10.17 ff., Hebrews 5.7 ff. and the temptations as well as the Gethsemane story are mentioned as pointing to the kingly freedom of Jesus as a Sonship that, in becoming flesh, included learning 'obedience by the things which He suffered' as the path of 'being made perfect' and '[becoming] the author of eternal salvation'. Barth interprets these passages as pointing to 'the incarnation freely executed' and does not labour, as do more modern exegetes, over what it means to talk of Jesus learning obedience or being made perfect but seems to see such texts as simply affirming the moment by moment ordering of the Son's human existence (of obedience) to his divine existence (of obedience); to a perfectly ordered orientation to God and so to all others. In seeking to understand the eternal Son's 'quite specific relationship of His being as soul and body', Barth is taking full account of the 'kingly Spirit' that 'rests upon Jesus'; of the 'meeting of "willing spirit" and "weak flesh" (Mt. 26.41)' in this occurrence in which there is pursued 'a victorious course in favour of the Spirit'. Whilst there is no attempt to express this event explicitly as a reflection of triune ordered relationships we think that this is undergirding Barth's thoughts.

Jesus is victorious over any assaults to his 'psycho-physical humanity' for in that the flesh is exalted by the presence of the Logos, his flesh submits to his soul.

In the fidelity of the Son towards the Father and therefore in necessary obedience to His own most proper being and therefore in supreme freedom, He gave up Himself . . . and therefore He gave up His soul and also His body, giving Himself to the service of the mercy of God towards men . . . (338)

Here we must pause. We find at this point a definite stance by Barth in respect to the obedience of Jesus as a reflection of or correspondence to the obedience of the eternal Son to the Father as a 'fidelity' that is a 'necessary obedience' which is the eternal Son's 'most proper being' and indicative of his 'supreme freedom'. In the freedom of his own 'most proper' fidelity (faithfulness) to the Father the obedient Son assumes a particular and singular human existence and orders, by the Spirit resting upon him who he himself breathes as the Spirit of his acts of obedience, the two moments of this existence, soul and body, into peaceful harmony

reflecting the peaceful harmony of his triune life of obedience to the Father in the unity of the Spirit. Barth does not elucidate the matter so starkly and is frustratingly un-explicit in making this connection clear but it seems reasonable to suggest that this is what is weaved into his text albeit subterraneanly. Barth's next port of call is to begin to build up a picture of the asymmetrically related yet harmonious happening that is the event of Jesus' 'psycho-physical humanity' and again, we see here, the under-current of triune order from the Father to the Son and the Son to the Father in the Spirit.

The ordering of the body submitting to the soul as 'super- and subordination' is an 'order of peace in which both moments, each in its own place and function, have equal share in the dignity of the whole' that is in the 'dignity of the one man Jesus and therefore in the fullness of the Spirit that rests upon Him and the glory of the Logos incarnate in Him'. This 'equal dignity' as 'an order of peace' however 'necessarily includes the inequality of position and function' and 'superior and inferior' for there is 'that which controls and that which is controlled' and this 'irreversible order' is that the body submits to the soul. 'It is thus that He is organised and disposed by the Spirit that rests upon Him' (339f.). Jesus 'action and passion are first . . . those of His soul' and only then of his body'. What Jesus does, as a body 'impregnated with soul' and 'filled with this consciousness', he does self-consciously for his speech and action are conscious of the Spirit's resting, a resting in which the soul is prior and the body follows; there is 'that which controls [*geherrscht*] and that which is controlled' [*beherrscht*]. '[Jesus'] body is the body of his soul and not *vice versa*' and 'in this way the body, too, acquires its full and undiminished share in the Spirit that rests upon this man' (339). The basis of Jesus' obedient life, of his body submitting to his soul, is his 'life based on this Spirit' and is manifested in the total yet ordered unity of Jesus' 'words and acts' in which '[t]he Word leads; the sign follows', the 'Word affirms; the sign confirms'. The 'ordered unity' of Jesus work has within it a 'precedence' which is also reflected in his 'preaching and healing' in which there is again 'a firm leading and following'. If Barth's determination to press this point is somewhat disconcerting because it seems almost too forced and artificial a distinction, Barth nevertheless presses his point:

Jesus' human existence 'unfolds' in the 'two moments' of his 'meaningfully ordered unity of soul and body'.

Although the major burden of volume three is to do anthropology through Christology and seeking aspects of Barth's underlying doctrine of God in this volume is not without peril, surely one might adduce that the ordering of the soul and body of the eternal Son's human existence through the 'kingly Spirit' that rests upon him, the ordering of the soul and body to obedience, simply reflects the ordered life of the eternal Trinity in which the Father, Son and Spirit live in ordered fidelity, ordered faithfulness to one another in which the Father is obeyed by the obedient Son in the unity and peace of the Spirit. This is the existence of the Trinity in freedom and love. The Spirit as breathed by the Father and Son as the one who unites their ordered life is himself directed from the Father and Son, taking his lead from them so to speak just as the Son takes his lead from the Father.

Guided by the New Testament, we must think of the Holy Spirit, and more especially of the presence and efficacy [*Gegenwart und Wirksamkeit*] of the Holy Spirit, if we would give an account of the special constitution of this man. . . . Can we disregard or fail to note that the constitution of His being as man is a repetition [*eine Wiederholung*], imitation [*eine Abbildung*] and correlation [*eine Entsprechung*] of the relationship in which He is primarily and at the same time true God and as such also true man? (340-341)¹⁹⁵

Despite this firm assertion Barth goes no further in his deliberations. There are several moments when Barth seems as if he is about to go into greater detail on this most important insight but it is not until volume four that he is more explicit in asserting obedience in God.

The 'meaningfully ordered relation' of Jesus' soul and body happens as 'superior and inferior, lordship and service, command and obedience, leadership and following' and this is a 'constant and irreversible relation [*in stetiger unumkehrbarer Beziehung*]' (341). Jesus' body and soul are transformed and ordered by the Spirit because this man is himself true God. Jesus' constitution as man is a 'repetition, imitation and correlation of the relationship in which He is primarily and at the same time true God and as such also true man'. Here again is the *analogia relationis*. The

¹⁹⁵ This stance, reiterating what Barth says on page 333, challenges all commentators who suggest that Barth does not give weight to the Spirit's action in enabling the human existence of the Son.

subordination of the body to the soul is a reflection of the obedience of the Son to the Father; the trinitarian ordering of relationship. The humanity is 'transcended and enveloped' by the divinity. Barth wishes to move away from any suggestion that the soul of Jesus is of his divinity and the body of his humanity but maintains that Jesus' soul is analogous or comparable to his divinity while the body is comparable to his humanity. Barth tries to maintain the unity of body and soul while differentiating between them, using the vocabulary of 'superior' and 'inferior', so offensive to modern ears, to refer respectively to soul and body; Jesus' freedom 'contains a first and a second ... a command and therefore that which controls, an obedience and therefore that which is controlled' (338f.).¹⁹⁶ It is the 'power and necessity of the Holy Spirit' resting on Jesus that makes him whole man; that orders his soul and body into a dignified 'order of peace'.

This immediately reminds us of the supreme particularity that this true man is primarily and at the same time the true God Himself. ... But the power and necessity in which Jesus is whole man are not grounded in themselves but in the fact that He is primarily and at the same time true God and true man. We have seen that they are the power and necessity of the Holy Spirit resting upon Him. (340-341)

Barth stresses the irreversibility of these analogous relationships and points out that these ordered, irreversible relationships also exist between Christ (the 'Head') and his community (the body), starting with the disciples. The ordering of the body to the soul as a 'meaningfully ordered unity', and from this the ordering of Christ as the head of his community (as an analogy of the analogy), reflects God's self ordered unity of his divine existence.

We can and must look both upwards and downwards from the structure of the human existence of Jesus – upwards to the mystery of His being with God and downwards to the no less mystery of His being with men. It is no accident that here too, for all the other differences, the proportions are the same . . . [t]he soul and body of Jesus are mutually related to one another as are God and man in His person, and Himself and His community. (343-344)

Barth's I/1 doctrine of the Trinity is most definitely present materially in, but below the surface of, his deliberations on the human existence of the Son despite being referred to formally only in a limited sense. Nevertheless, Barth's adherence to the

¹⁹⁶ *Er ist sber ein Solcher Friede, in welchem es ein Ersres und ein Zweites, ein Oben und ein Untem, ein Befehlen und also ein Beherrschendes, ein Gehorchen und also ein Beherrschtes gibt. KD, 407*

filioque clause is integral to his theology of the triune life *ad intra* being reflected *ad extra* in the determination of the Son's human existence.

xiii) The Spirit as Basis of Soul and Body

Anthropological deliberations as unfolded by the prototype relationship of Christ's soul and body is Barth's next concern and this is what is pursued throughout the remainder of section 46. Again, we pick out only those factors which shed light upon our theme but in brief Barth is musing around his central tenet that 'man is as he has spirit'. God creates and therefore gives mankind his creatureliness. The soul is the life of the body and could not exist without bodiliness. As creatures we are 'earthly and therefore material'. Body would not be body if it were not besouled (349 and 350). The life-giving force of mankind is God. 'As he really lives, and is thus the soul of his body, he is always and immediately of God' (353f.). That is, 'man is as he has spirit'. By this Barth means that the spirit is 'something that comes to man, something not essentially his own but to be received'. Indeed, Barth goes on, man is possessed by the spirit, indeed 'the spirit has him'. To say that man 'has spirit' is thus to say that he is a 'spiritual soul'. Barth distinguishes between the Holy Spirit and our spirit. Our spirit is wholly the gift of God, that is, an enabled spiritual soul in no way continuous with the divine Spirit which enables. Barth then returns to assess Mt. 27.50 where it is recorded that Jesus 'yielded up' his spirit and Lk. 23.46 where he commended it into his Father's hands. He does not say here what became of the spiritual soul of Jesus in his death but asserts that as we are body and soul but not spirit, 'death is equivalent to absence of spirit'.

In mankind in general, spirit as spiritual soul is 'the principle of man's relation to God, of man's fellowship with Him' (356ff.). Thereafter the reference, in translation, to spirit with a small 's' (spiritual soul) does not recur and all further references to spirit is to Spirit with a capital 'S', signifying the Holy Spirit who is 'God's free encounter with man' (358), until page 365 where Barth refers to Jesus' sighing in his spirit by which he means again life-animated soul or 'spiritual soul'. The Holy Spirit is God's mode of movement towards mankind, uniting mankind to the Father through

the Son. The continual giving of the Spirit as event is what allows man to have life but there is also a ‘second determination’ of the Spirit that is the living in the covenant of grace. For Barth the Spirit ‘in His being *ad extra* is neither a divine nor a created something, but an action and attitude of the Creator in relation to His creation’:

We cannot say that the Spirit is, but that He takes place as the divine basis of this relation and fellowship. Spirit is precisely the essence of God’s operation in relation to His creature. Spirit is thus the powerful and exclusive meeting initiated by God between Creator and creature . . . we have primarily and originally to understand the movement of God towards man and therefore the principle of human relation to him and fellowship with Him, in which we do not have to do with man’s natural constitution but in some sense with his standing in covenant with God . . . Spirit in His fundamental significance is the element in virtue of which man is actively and passively introduced as a partner in the covenant of grace . . . (357).

The ‘being way’ who is the Spirit is seen as the creative event of God’s free love: ‘[t]he Spirit, God’s free encounter with man’, is the ‘principle’ or ‘element’ of ‘the divine operation of grace’ (359) which propels and maintains particular men and women in God’s service (358). ‘Spirit is the event of the gift of life whose subject is God; and this event must be continually repeated as God’s act if man is to live’ (359). The Spirit is our ‘life-principle’ for ‘the living breath of God gives life and sustains it’ (361). Barth refers to the Spirit as the ‘creative Spirit’ (360) as the ‘free act of God’ (362) upon whose ‘transcendent enabling’ our life rests (363). Barth is articulating what it means to talk of the Spirit as God’s third *Seinweise* who unites.

Barth then looks at the way in which our relation to the Spirit is analogous to Christ’s and referring to Paul ‘twice (I Cor. 15.45, 2 Cor. 3.17, 18) ventur[ing] the equation [*kyrios*] = [*pneuma*]’:

These passages tell us that this man, because in His humanity He was also the Son of God, accomplished and still accomplishes in His own person the mighty quickening action of God in relation to all other men. (363)¹⁹⁷

Barth’s point seems to be that as the Son is the person God, so too is the Spirit. It is to be recalled that Barth reserves the term person for the triune God, for the one God,

¹⁹⁷ The I Corinthians text could be read as the second Adam being a life-giving person, that is the Son, especially as Paul goes on to describe the one who gives life as ‘the man from heaven’. The II Corinthians text offers a distinctly immediate identification between the incarnate Son and the Spirit.

and uses the term *Seinweisen* (modes of being) to refer to the triune hypostases. God is one person albeit differentiated in three being ways.¹⁹⁸ As we can see from the exposition above, Barth sees the Holy Spirit as the event of the one person God's third mode of being who not only is the principle of mankind having life at all but also is the event in which particular people are called into active service for God. As the Spirit is one with the Son as the event in which the Father and Son are united, what corresponds to this event *ad extra*, as enclosed in the Son incarnate, is not only mankind being given life as creatures of the creator God but also, and primarily, particular persons being called to service. The one person God is intimately involved in the event that is his, the triune God's, enfolding of mankind in the human existence anticipated and fulfilled in himself, in the Son, and this event *ad extra* corresponds to his triune life *ad intra*. Again, Barth is not as clear as we would wish in untangling the triune threads of activity *ad extra* as that which corresponds to the triune life *ad intra* and interestingly enough has so much more to say about the life of mankind as an ordered relationship between soul and body (all the way to page 436) than he does about Jesus' own life of ordered soul and body as 'transcendently enabled'. A distinctive motif that does emerge in Barth's deliberations in this section of the part volume is his concern to see the correspondence of order between the divine life *ad intra* and its overflowing *ad extra* and in this sense at least we have continuity with Barth's doctrine of the Trinity in I/1 in which the triune ordering is explored. The triune hypostases co-inhere *perichoretically* but in an order correlating to their origins and in a similar way the soul and body of the incarnate Son is ordered co-inherence and 'in Him' our own soul and body existence is ordered unity. Barth is much clearer in expressing the ordered relationship of the Father and Son as reflected *ad extra* than he is at expressing the uniting Spirit as reflected *ad extra*. Perhaps Barth would have returned to this in more depth in volume five.

With regard to mankind, Barth sees the Spirit as standing in a direct relationship to the soul and an indirect relationship to the body. The Spirit is 'the principle which makes man into a subject' and 'coming and going, lives His own life over against . . . man' (364-365). The Spirit 'dwells especially in the soul, and

¹⁹⁸ For an interesting discussion of Barth's early trinitarian thought as concomitant with his mature thinking, see Taylor, Iain, 'In Defence of Karl Barth's Doctrine of the Trinity' in *International Journal of Systematic Theology*, 5, 1 (2003) 33-46.

therefore the soul especially is spiritual soul, the Spirit participates in the motions and experiences of the soul' (365). This is how he then interprets passages that refer to Jesus sighing in his spirit, and again by reference to *Geist* with a small 's' the translators indicate that Barth means 'spiritual soul', Mk.8.12, groaning or being troubled in his spirit, Jn. 11.33 and Jn. 13.21 respectively. That is, the texts often refer to spirit when talking about the feelings of the soul, because the Spirit 'dwells especially in the soul'. From this Barth concludes that the 'Holy Spirit is immediate to the soul, but through the soul He is also mediate to the body' (365 and 366). On page 393 Barth refers to the Spirit as the 'immediate action of God Himself, which grounds, constitutes and maintains man as soul of his body'.

In many ways Barth's deliberations throughout the rest of this section covering 'Soul and Body in their Interconnexion', 'Soul and Body in their Particularity' and 'Soul and Body in their Order' are somewhat unsatisfying from the standpoint of Christological material which, after all, is to be their foundation. One might have expected Barth to prefix each of these sections with some Christological, and hopefully some Trinitarian, deliberations but this is not the case and instead, for the purposes of this thesis, there is surprising little to be gleaned. For example Barth considers the 'unity of desiring and willing' as 'the desiring of the soul which is put into effect by the body' (415-416) and from here to see the spiritual soul to which the Spirit is immediate as the event of man being addressed by God and so the event of freedom of the soul over the body even describing this human event in pneumatological terms:

As he acts in this freedom, as in thinking and willing he is his own lord and director, he is spiritual soul. For in order to be active in this way, he is given Spirit by God and through the Spirit he is awakened to be a living being. In this activity, in a specific thinking and willing and so in the specific act of his living, he is undoubtedly summoned and claimed by the Spirit of God, as God has dealings with him. (424-425)

but there is no Christological prefix to these interesting deliberations on the event of unity between God and man as the Spirit's action, not even to remind the reader of the differences between this event for us and for the incarnate Son in whom this event has its basis. Barth's main concern in these deliberations is to 'reject and abandon . . . materialistic and spiritualistic doctrines' and 'theories of psycho-physical parallelism

and psycho-physical alteration' as developed in the nineteenth-century which sought to understand mankind 'in abstraction from his historical relation to God' after the way of Spinoza (428).¹⁹⁹

xiv) The Son of God Lives in Space and Time

Barth returns to his doctrine of eternity and time in section 47 and seeks to show that mankind's temporality, as held in Christ, reflects Christ's temporality but is also dissimilar for Christ's temporality has also the character of eternity. 'Man in His Time' is grounded upon Jesus' lifetime and in this sense our temporality corresponds to his in that time has an impact on his life in both his being in space and time and fearing its end in death but our temporality is also different for only his lifetime is redemptive for all others. Reiterating II/1 Barth asserts that time originates with God who is 'supremely temporal' in that 'present, past and future ... are not successive, but simultaneous', but man is not God and needs time ('an inauthentic temporality distinct from eternity') as successive moments in order to live and this time is 'given him by the Spirit of God to be the soul of his body' (437-438). Jesus, however, lives in unity with and for God and in unity with mankind and for mankind: 'His time becomes time for God, and therefore for all men' (439). Jesus' time is contemporary to all times lived, living and to be lived by mankind. His life is 'at once the centre and the beginning and end of all the times of all the lifetimes of all men' because 'He lives for God and for them all' (440). Jesus' time 'acquires in relation to their times the character of God's time, of eternity, in which present, past and future are simultaneous'. Barth certainly stresses the importance of the temporality and location of Jesus' life but 'the New Testament has something more to say of Him' (441). 'At the very point where the history of any other man would inevitably stop . . . Jesus has a further history beginning on the third day after his death'. The resurrection of Jesus is God's authentic time breaking into our inauthentic time. As Jesus is also 'Lord of time', 'His time is not only the time of a man, but the time of God, eternal time', (464). Jesus is 'divinely temporal', (465). His being in our time is the fulfilment of

¹⁹⁹ Again, contemporary theologies of human persons being constituted by their relationships would no doubt concern Barth.

God having time for us.²⁰⁰ The time of Jesus at the 'heart of all other times, both before and after' is 'God in His Word hav[ing] time for us' in 'this particular time, the eternal time of God' by which 'all other times are now controlled', that is, 'dominated, limited and determined by their proximity to it' (455).

The mission of the Son actually brings the fullness of time with it, and not *vice versa*. With the mission of the Son, with His entry into the time process, a new era of time has dawned, . . . [t]his is the event which gives time its fullness. (459)

Time moves towards and from this event which is 'before and after all other time'; the 'absolutely unique event marking an end and a new beginning in time', the 'irruption' which is the advent of Jesus. That time was there before Christ means it was there only because 'this day was to come' as 'the centre which dominates all other times'. Time in Galatians 4, Ephesians 1 and Mark 1 is 'pictured as an empty vessel, not yet filled, but waiting to be filled at a particular time' (461f.). In Jesus 'all time is brought to an end and begins afresh as full and proper time'. Jesus 'brought in the fulness of time'. 'Jesus is the Lord of time because He is the Son of God and as such the eternal God in person, the creator of all time and therefore its sovereign Ruler' and we know this 'because in the resurrection His appearance has proved to be that of the eternal God'. What can be said about Jesus the Lord of time starts with his resurrection. The eternal Son, united to the Father in the Spirit, is sovereign over his incarnate existence.

His life embraces a past, present and future. Here is no timeless being, but a strictly temporal one, though of course it differs from all other temporal being as that which is divinely temporal. (465)

Interpreting Revelation 1, 8 and 17-18, in which the resurrected Christ proclaims himself as the Alpha and Omega, Barth sees the life of Christ as a divine temporality in which '[e]ven as present' He is 'He who was and will be'. His divine temporality is not a past, present and future that follow successively but 'all this simultaneously'. Jesus' time is 'always simultaneously past, present and future'; a 'present [that]

²⁰⁰ See Jenson who, interpreting Gregory of Nyssa, sees God's infinity as his unbounded and unhindered freedom to fulfil his God-inclusiveness by bringing to pass the resurrection of Jesus as the promised future breaking into our time. Jenson seeks to redress Barth's doctrine of time and the triune relationships, founded he believes upon Augustine's and Hegel's Platonism. Molnar believes Jenson's redress to have concerning implications. Molnar, *DFDIT*, chapter three. Jenson, Robert W., *The Triune Identity* (Philadelphia, Fortress Press, 1982) chapters four and five.

includes the past and future' as 'the first and last of all other times'. Our temporality as that which is integral to our human existence is held in Christ's inclusive human temporality and this is true for all human existence of any time; '[t]here is no time which does not belong to Him' for he is the same yesterday, today and for ever, Hebrews 13.8 (466). At this point Barth considers the Christian community who proclaimed Jesus' existence as present to all times as the recipients of the Holy Spirit given by the resurrected and ascended Christ who 'lives at the right hand of God' and 'even now . . . is absolutely present temporally'. The presence of Jesus' Holy Spirit means that Jesus is present to the community in anticipation as a presence that 'is' but is also 'not yet'; 'the presence of Jesus in the Spirit' is a 'pledge or first instalment of what awaits the community as well as the whole universe, His return in glory' (468). The 'thorough-going eschatology' of Jesus' presence in his Spirit "'between the times'" is 'real recollection' and 'real expectation'. We leave to one side Barth's exposition of the Holy Spirit as Christ present in power to his community except to note that Barth reads the breathing of the Spirit by Jesus upon his disciples through the lens of 2 Corinthians 3.17-18 to mean that 'the risen Lord is Himself the Spirit whose presence means liberty'. This event is the 'bridging of the gulf between His past and their present; the assumption of their time into His' (470). The conversion of Saul of Tarsus shows, Barth believes, that 'even after His earthly time [Jesus] is still an acting Subject, doing new things, creating in history' as 'the Lord who is Himself Spirit, conducting His own cause, and present amongst them in the hiddenness of God . . . with supreme reality' (471). The Spirit unites the community to Christ and 'in Him' to the Father.

Just as Christ encloses every moment now and to come, he also encloses all yesterdays: 'so he had been in the counsel of God before creation and therefore before all time'; 'in all prior time right back to the eternity of God Himself, He is one who comes: coming in the eternal counsel of the Father' (477). Barth picks up the thread of his doctrine of election at regular intervals, reminding his reader that '[t]ime in its beginning was enclosed by His time, and to that extent was itself His time' (484). The eternal God anticipates, creates, encloses and heals temporality as that which is posited in the Son in the triune event of election.

xv) The Spirit as the One in Whom the Community is United to the Father in Christ

As far as the Christian community is concerned, their living in hope is grounded upon Jesus' 'living presence, lordship and grace among them, His being in the Spirit in the life, upbuilding and mission of His community, their present life in His Spirit' (485). Jesus' 'direct presence as created by the fellowship of the Holy Spirit' accompanies his 'followers' through 'the interim time with its great "not yet"' (491). Barth's pneumatology here is somewhat perplexing for whilst he seems to see the Spirit as the one who creates fellowship between the risen Christ and his community, reflecting his uniting of the Father and Son, he also sees the Spirit, via his stress on 2 Corinthians 3.17-18, as the 'direct presence' of Christ to the extent that Christ is the Holy Spirit. The 2 Corinthians text has to be handled carefully, for whilst it does seem to equate the Son and the Holy Spirit ('now the Lord is the Spirit'; 'the Lord, who is the Spirit') it also points to the Holy Spirit being the 'Spirit of the Lord' and to a certain extent one has to make an exegetical decision as to how these two statements are to be interpreted for the Son is not the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit is not the Son; these two are distinct triune hypostases. It is particularly in his doctrine that the Holy Spirit is Christ present to the Christian community that Barth seems to open to the criticism that he conflates the Son and the Spirit. It is one thing to talk of the Holy Spirit uniting believers to Christ who is in a manner present and in a manner absent until he comes again (for example, Barth's point that 'by His Spirit' Jesus 'accompanies His followers') as a reflection of his uniting the Father and Son, it is quite another to say that the Spirit is the presence of Christ unless the word 'presence' somehow maintains that there is a distinction between the Spirit and Christ, i.e., the Spirit is not Christ but his presence, although this in itself would be a perplexing stance. Further, where has the Father gone in all this and the ascended Christ as our High Priest who intercedes for us before the Father? Barth fleetingly touches on the Holy Spirit as interceding for us in our prayers as a 'cry of yearning' (488) but there is little to grasp about the particular work of the Spirit in this.

Barth's doctrine of eternity and time is in this section covering a lot of theological ground and in continuity with II/1 Jesus is the central pin, the axis,

between eternity and time. Whilst II/1 tended to emphasise a descending and ascending; an overflowing of divine life into time and a gathering up of temporal life to the side of God in Christ, Barth is here concentrating upon the simultaneity of time in Christ; past and future held and given content by a Christological centre. Jesus is the one who was anticipated by the prophets and whose advent, life, death and resurrection inaugurated a new beginning with retroactive power but whose eternal election before all time determined that his time, and therefore all time, would be. Jesus is the one who accompanies his community by his Spirit as the one who is to come again. That the community receives the Spirit as a pledge of the final consummation is to say that the community is given the gift of God that is not yet distributed ‘among all the people’ as the ‘full harvest’ of the *parousia* when ‘the knees of all things in heaven and earth bow to Him’. There is a *telos* of time in Barth’s account; a moving of time towards the eschaton. Time has a ‘forward direction and eschatological orientation’ (497):

The New Testament witness to the Messianic “now” is unmistakeable, yet it is shot through with the “not yet” . . . in the very centre of the picture Jesus Himself waits, looking forward to things to come, to His own future. (498)

Barth mentions Jesus ignorance about the date of the second coming as recorded in Mk. 13.32: ‘Jesus Himself admitted that He shared the human uncertainty understandable in this respect’, (498). Apart from this careful statement, Barth throws no light on the matter except to assert that the Son is wholly obedient to the Father who is the one who appoints the time. The Christian community ‘exhibits and experiences the lordship of Jesus in the form of the lordship of His Spirit . . . [t]hat it has the form of the Spirit means that the community not only derives temporally from this commencement and moves towards this consummation, but that it is effectively established and gathered by the One who was and who comes, being not only ruled but continually nourished and quickened by Him’ (505). But does not Christ send the Holy Spirit as ‘another comforter’ who is the one who distinctly quickens? This would allow for the concept of correspondence to operate for the Spirit sent to the community as a breathing of the Spirit from the incarnate Son, uniting the community to the Father, would correspond to the breathing of the Spirit from the Son *ad intra*. Barth does not say this, however, and seems to be conflating the Son and Spirit in his talk of the Spirit being Christ present. At the same time, Barth is also able to talk of

the Spirit as distinct from Jesus as ‘the Spirit of Christ’ who is sent ‘from heaven’ and by whom the community testifies, preaches, is taught and works (495). Is Barth articulating the Holy Spirit as the one who is both sent by Christ (seated at the right hand of the Father) and who is Christ present?

The community lives under the lordship of Jesus in the form of the Spirit. In the Spirit the double proximity is actual presence. In the Spirit Jesus at every moment of the interim is not only at the right hand of the Father, but also here on earth. (509)

The Holy Spirit is the ‘driving and drawing force behind the community in the time between the resurrection and the *parousia* . . . [f]or through the Spirit the lordship of Jesus is never merely past or merely future . . . [i]t is always present’ evoking an ‘eager expectation of the *parousia*’ but also maintaining the community as ‘on the march’ (509f.). Finally, as Barth turns to consider what the anthropological implications of his Christological deliberations on time might be, Barth asserts that as Lord of time, in his incarnation and resurrection from the dead, Jesus fulfils all time ‘which, as His own time, extends backwards and embraces all prior time as its beginning, the beginning of all time, and extends forwards and embraces all subsequent time as its end, the end of all time’ (511-512). Because the man Jesus exists in time, time is given to man and is therefore real. The event of Jesus Christ validates our time. ‘If I have God (or rather, if God has me), I need no more. I have space and therefore time’ (530). We exist with the one man Jesus and are ‘under and with God in ... time’ for ‘... the man Jesus Himself, is God for us in the whole majesty and condescension of the divine being and action’ (552 and 571 respectively). The main point to note here is that Barth is trying to paint his picture of his vision of the being and action of God as a moment by moment pulsating event in which the Spirit is the uniting principle. Barth’s vision of the event that is God’s trinitarian life breaking into the time and space he has created for us in the event that is Jesus Christ, is like an overarching, pulsating, simultaneous movement from above to below and from below to above having, as far as created time is concerned, ‘backward’ and ‘forward’ wave like motion. This event happens as the electing act in which God wills that his triune life be reflected, but in this section Barth does not elucidate the Spirit as the one who unites time and eternity with reference to his concept of correspondence. Barth’s vision of God as the moment by moment

ceaseless event holding our time together is, however, a deep thread that weaves through *Church Dogmatics*.

The Spirit as ‘the form’ of Jesus’ ‘lordship’ is an interesting pneumatological stance and goes some way to shedding light upon Barth’s Christological pneumatology but perhaps more revealing is Barth using his doctrine of time, II/1, more than his doctrine of the Trinity of I/1 to expound his pneumatology of the Spirit as the form of Christ’s presence between the resurrection and parousia. In Barth’s doctrine of eternity and time in volume two part one, after the impact of Maury, there is offered a three-fold form of time, pre- supra- and post temporality to which Barth links the Father, Son and Spirit respectively. The Spirit is seen to be particularly associated with eschatological events and so, here, in considering the Spirit as the triune mode who pulls the times towards final consummation, Barth is linking Jesus as ‘Lord of time’, the centre from which all time takes its meaning, with the Spirit. Barth’s concern is always to be Christocentric and he pushes this to such an extent that at times his exegesis seems very strained for it is being pressed into service to support what can come across at times as rather artificial constructs. In a section which displays little reference to the concept of correspondence, Barth offers a view of the Spirit as God’s mode of existence which unites Christ and his community and who is Christ present to the community. The former would work with Barth’s concept of correspondence but in what sense would the Spirit being Christ present correspond to the relationship between the Son and Spirit *ad intra*?

xvi) Summary of Main Points of Chapter IV

Barth covers a huge amount of ground in volume three part two of the *Dogmatics* and develops a number of motifs crucial to his Christology as a whole as well as setting in place a new starting point for theological anthropology by grounding it upon Christology. For the purposes of this thesis in discovering how Barth understands the triune life to be reflected *ad extra*, particularly the relationship of the Son and Spirit *ad extra* as a reflection of their relationship *ad intra* and the

effect of Barth's adherence to and particular use of the *filioque* clause, we note the following:

- i) Barth reasserts his stance that God is prevenient in all things with a determination which is irreversible. It can never be said that that which God creates and heals determines him in any way but the direction of determination is always from God to that which is other to him.
- ii) Divine and human 'nature' is to do with divine and human existence in relationship, with true human existence being lived only by the man Jesus whose human existence in relationship to God and all others mirrors, corresponds to, his divine existence in relationship to the Father in the Spirit.
- iii) The human existence assumed by the Son is enclosed in the Son. Our human existence is enclosed in the Son's human existence. Barth is operating with a picture of concentric circles of the enclosure of existence in relationship; each circle of existence corresponding to the one which encloses it. The direction of correspondence is irreversible. The Son's human existence in relationship corresponds to his divine existence in relationship. Our human existence in relationship corresponds, by grace, to Christ's.
- iv) With regard to the human existence of the Son (his human constitution) as the mirror of his divine existence (his divine status), the Son incarnate is the *imago Dei*; his human existence is 'indirectly identical' to his divine. It is Barth's concept of correspondence which elucidates this stance.
- v) The Son's human existence of obedience to the Father in the uniting Spirit corresponds to his divine existence of obedience to the Father in the uniting Spirit. The *filioque* clause is integral to Barth's theology of the triune life *ad intra* being reflected *ad extra* in determining the human existence of the Son.
- vi) Barth's discussion of the Spirit uniting eternity and time as the one in whom the community is united to the Father 'in Christ' is couched in terms of seeing the Spirit as Christ present to the community between the resurrection and parousia. It is one thing to say that in or through the uniting Spirit Jesus is present to the community but another to say that the

Spirit is the presence of Christ. Barth does not employ his concept of correspondence in articulating this and indeed it is difficult to see how he could do so. Whilst the concept of correspondence would work with the assertion that in the Spirit Christ is present to the community, corresponding to the Father and Son being present to one another in the Spirit, the assertion that the Spirit is Christ present to the community would suggest a corresponding triune conflation *ad intra* out of sync with Barth's overall trinitarian theology, but it is beyond the scope of the thesis to engage with this.

xvii) Concluding Comments to Chapter IV

It is in III/2 that Barth's use of the concept of correspondence, the stirrings of which are evident in volume two, begins to gather pace. Appreciating Barth's articulation of the humanity of Christ as the *imago Dei* is essential to any theology which attempts to critique the structural consistency of Barth's Christology with other doctrines in the *Dogmatics*. In this respect Williams, McCormack and Molnar have a hiatus in their exposition.²⁰¹

Whilst Barth argues for an understanding of anthropology gleaned from Christology and so begins his exploration of who we are as human creatures of God by considering our similarities and, most notably, our dissimilarities to Christ, there are, however, many instances when Barth offers less Christological material than hoped for particularly when considering the relationship of the Holy Spirit to Christ in the enabling of this man's human obedience. Explicit references to the Spirit are scarce in this part-volume and Barth, on the whole, does tend to concentrate on the Father-Son relationship until he gets to section 46 and even here one has to pick carefully through Barth's text to ascertain how Barth understands the action of the Spirit in enabling the human existence of the Son. This is not to say that Barth's pneumatology is deficient in his articulation of the Son's human existence as

²⁰¹ As does Paul Jones which is remarkable given that his entire work is on the humanity of Christ.

mirroring his divine existence, the humanity of Christ as the *imago Dei*, but that we would have liked Barth to have said more. It is certainly possible that Barth would have returned to the pneumatological topics lighted upon here in volume five had he lived to write it and in this respect disagree with those who might suggest that Barth could not have written a volume on the Spirit because he did not sufficiently regard the Holy Spirit as an active divine hypostasis. The pneumatological comments that Barth does make when considering the Holy Spirit's action in determining the human constitution of Jesus indicate to us, especially when one takes into consideration Barth's explicit references to the *filioque* clause and the Holy Spirit's action as mediation to come in IV/2, that there is much material to which Barth might have returned.

In terms of continuity with the pneumatology of earlier volumes and the Spirit as the one who unites the ruling Father and obedient Son incarnate, Barth's references to the Spirit, both implicit and explicit, in the material we have considered in III/2 indicate a pneumatology still in line with that in II/2, II/1 and I/1. Barth continues to see the Spirit as the divine mode of being in whom the Father and Son are united in love and who unites the events of time with those of eternity. Jesus has a special and unique relationship to the Spirit because he is the Son of God in person. The relationship the Son has with the Spirit in their triune life is 'repeated and reflected' (III/2, 218-19) in time. It seems clear to us that Barth is continuing to explore and build up a picture of the way in which the economic Trinity corresponds to the immanent Trinity. The action of the Spirit towards the Son's human existence, the Spirits 'resting upon' the soul and body, being the powerful permeation of determining unity upholding the soul and body of Jesus in perfect orientation to the Father and all others. Barth is certainly clear that particular attention has been given to the Holy Spirit's action, his 'presence and efficacy' (340-41), if the unique and singular humanity of Christ is to be understood and this goes some way towards challenging those who hold that Barth did not give due recognition to the Spirit's role in enabling Jesus.

In the final chapter of the thesis we shall explore Barth's articulation of the triune event of the determination of the human existence of the Son. The incarnate Son is exalted to obedience to the Father in the unity of the Spirit (IV/2) as that which

corresponds to his eternal obedience to the Father in the unity of the Spirit (IV/1). In the first two part-volumes of his doctrine of reconciliation Barth really seems to shift into a higher gear in his theology of the correspondence between the economic and immanent Trinity and returns explicitly in IV/1 to his II/2 doctrine of election as the ground work to his explicit declaration of obedience in God in section 59 and the much cited and misunderstood reference to the Son's humiliation to human estate being the 'strangely logical final continuation' of the 'history in which He is God' (IV/1, 203). In IV/2 Barth weaves his asymmetrically structured I/1 doctrine of the Trinity into his discussion of the obedience of Christ as the triune act of the *communicatio gratiarum* and refers explicitly to the *filioque* clause in his articulation of the Holy Spirit as the power of God's uniting love whose mediating action is the 'eternal rise and renewal' of the 'history in partnership' (IV/2, 345) that is the loving rule of the Father and faithful obedience of the Son turned outwards and made effective for mankind in the economy of salvation.

V

THE OBEDIENCE OF CHRIST AS A REFLECTION OF THE ETERNAL OBEDIENCE OF THE SON IN CHURCH DOGMATICS IV/1 AND IV/2

i) Introduction²⁰²

Chapter XIV of the *Dogmatics* takes up the theme of volume III/2 whereby the incarnate Son is ‘real man’ in unalienated relationship to God, the image of God and the secret of creation. As ‘real man’ Jesus is obedient to the Father because he is the eternal Son who assumes human existence and, in unity to the Father through the Spirit, maintains it in perfect obedience as a reflection of his eternal divine obedience. The eternal Son actualises his human existence, for of itself nature (existence) does not do anything whether divine or human. The obedience of Christ corresponds to the obedience of the Son of God as obedience to the will of the Father in the peace of the uniting Spirit. For the purposes of this thesis we follow Barth’s introductory comments linking the doctrines of reconciliation and election before turning to section 59; ‘The Obedience of the Son of God’.

The second part of the chapter is concerned with the exaltation of Christ’s human existence to obedience, the second moment of the event of reconciliation as covered in IV/2. Barth re-molds the traditional *communicatio gratiarum* and defines it as the event of the determination of the human soul and body of the Son by the triune Subject such that the obedience of Christ to the Father in the unity of the Spirit reflects the obedience of the eternal Son to the Father in the unity of the Spirit.

²⁰² All page references, in parenthesis in the text, will be to CD IV/1 until section iv of this chapter unless otherwise stated.

ii) Election

Barth starts his doctrine of reconciliation with a reminder of his concept of election as event ('an act of God'); God sharing his history with us so that our history is 'by Him and from Him and to Him' so that God's history and our history are a 'common history' (7f.).

The whole being and life of God is an activity, both in eternity and in worldly time, both in Himself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and in His relation to man and all creation. (7)

The 'outer circle' of creation has an 'inner circle' (a reference to the secret core of creation who is Christ) in which God 'wills and works a particular thing . . . for the sake of which He wills and works all others' and which is the '*telos* of all the acts of God; of the eternal activity in which He is both in Himself and in the history of His acts in the world created by Him'. The outer circle of our history, directed by God, corresponds to the inner circle directed by God; to the act of this 'singular and particular event' as that to which God directs himself. This event is the event of salvation to which we move towards as our *eschaton* (goal) and in which we are given 'a part in the being of God' not as a divinisation but as 'hidden in God' and so 'distinct from God and secondary' but nevertheless 'eternal being' (eternal existence, i.e., life). The 'grace of God' is, 'using the word in its narrower and most proper sense', the 'coming of this salvation' as 'the redemptive grace of God' which 'constitutes' the 'singularity of the event' (9). The 'inner and special circle of [God's] will and work' is 'this, one, particular, redemptive act of God'. This act of redemption, of grace as the graceful God making this event happen, is 'prior' and 'precedes' the act of creation as the 'most primitive relationship between God and man' and was 'freely determined in eternity by God Himself'. God determined himself to be 'the One who fulfils His redemptive will' as a 'free over-ruling of God' intervening himself as the man Jesus; 'man in quite a different way from all other men' who 'because He is God . . . has and exercises the power as this man to be His own partner in our place' (12). 'God Himself in this man has made [peace] between Himself and us', lifting us up to participate in God's own life such that our life is

given its true goal; activated to magnify God's prevenient grace. Our exaltation to this peace is 'enclosed in' the event of redemptive grace that is Jesus Christ.

What then of this redemptive act (event) as the act (event) of election? Before Barth pins this down he continues to elucidate his motif of mankind being in Christ in (by/through) the Spirit; the Christian community as a community of faith ('in Him'), love ('by Him') and hope ('upon Him . . . in Him') 'under the impelling power of [Jesus'] Spirit' (17). Barth picks up his III/2 motif of the Spirit as Christ himself present as the Lord of his community: 'He Himself is present as actuality . . . He Himself by His Spirit' giving the community confidence as a 'controlling work exercised by His Spirit' (17-18, see also 20). The resurrected Jesus is united to his community in his Spirit and so unites the community as held 'in Him' to the Father before whom he stands representing us. Barth's articulation of the Spirit as the presence of the Lordship of Christ seems to be functioning, despite what at times seems to come across as a conflation of the Son and Spirit, as a way of articulating Barth's vision of mankind being enclosed in the humanity of Christ. We are united to Christ by the Spirit he breathes; the divine mode of existence in which the Son is united to the Father.

Following this section Barth discusses in greater detail 'the covenant as the presupposition of reconciliation' as 'two partners together accept[ing] a mutual obligation'; it is an 'event of divine and human choice' (22-23) but 'does not denote a two-sided contract between two equal partners, but a more or less one-sided decree' which God has 'taken upon Himself' and which he executes in free grace (24-25, emphasis mine). The 'real purpose and nature' of the first covenant of God with Israel is revealed in Christ in whom God completes his covenant towards us in forgiving sin (33) and summoning to obedience (35). God made himself the 'covenant partner of man and man the covenant partner of God' (35). This act of atonement is the 'fulfilment of a decision which underlies and therefore precedes that actualisation, an "earlier" divine decision, as the successful continuation of an act which God had already begun, from the very beginning' (36). Jesus Christ 'fulfils and reveals the original and basic will of God, the first act of God, His original covenant with man' (37). God who is 'completely self-sufficient' 'in all the fulness of His divine being' as 'Father, Son and Holy Spirit' wills the 'overflowing

[*Ueberstroemen*] of His love’ as the ‘covenant of grace’ which ‘evokes gratitude’; ‘gratitude correspond[s] to grace, and this correspondence cannot fail’ (39ff). The covenant is ‘willed and instituted and controlled by God’ as an act of grace ‘executed and accomplished in Jesus Christ’ who is ‘the original relationship between God and man’ (44). The will of God that took place ‘in time’ in Jesus ‘was and is and will be the will of God at the beginning of all time, and in relation to the whole content of time’.

With explicit reference to volume two’s doctrine of election Barth asserts; ‘[f]rom all eternity God elected and determined that He Himself would become man for us men . . . [i]n willing this, in willing Jesus Christ . . . the human form and human content which God willed to give His Word from all eternity’ (45). This event, the election of Christ, is ‘the great act of God’s faithfulness to Himself and therefore to us’ in which ‘God maintains and fulfils His Word as it was spoken at the very first’ (47). Barth is not saying that the Word spoken in this election event is the moment of the begetting of the Son, but that the Word ‘as it was spoken at the very first’ in the decision, “‘I will be your God’”, that is the beginning of God’s work *ad extra*, is ‘maintain[ed] and fulfil[ed]’ as an event in which God is faithful to himself as the God who will fulfill his decision of election; once made the decision is irreversible and God wills to bring it to completion/fulfillment. God’s life is the faithfulness of unbroken ordered relationship in freedom and love with an intrinsic *telos* of one who commands (begets and breathes the Spirit) one who obeys (is begotten and breathes the Spirit) united by/through/in their breathed Spirit. This triune event of ordered faithfulness in love and freedom, God’s inner *telos*, overflows in the event of election. The event of election expresses this inner event of ordered determination of existence from the Father to the Son and the Son to the Father in the unity/peace/harmony of the Spirit. The triune God reflects himself in the event of election; election expresses who he is as these three in unbroken ordered relationship directed to one another in love and freedom; the triune *telos*. Election is the moment of reflection; the triune God elects to reflect in making in himself, in the mode of the Son, a human shaped space named Jesus (in which we are hid) as the central core of a creation shaped space. The Father wills to give to the Son this ‘human form and human content’ and the Son wills to receive this from the Father in the unity of their mutual love and freedom in the Spirit. Barth is on his way to section 59 part one where this point is

elucidated in his articulation of the obedience of the Son (God's faithfulness to himself in the obedience of the Son to the Father in the unity of the Spirit) *ad intra* being reflected *ad extra* in the event of election.

Barth seeks to press his point that the Jesus-shaped space assumed by the Son reflects, 'in an overflowing [*Ueberfluss*] of the divine goodness' who the Son eternally is as begotten of the Father (52f.). As 'an overflowing' of who God is, election is an event of reflection but the Son himself does not reflect God but is God; it is the human shape/existence assumed by the Son that is a reflection of, 'indirectly identical' to, God the Son as that which is posited in the Son. The pact, or decree, God posits in eternity is a pact or a decree with himself in himself by himself in which he reflects himself (as the event of electing himself in himself by himself) in positing in himself in his second mode of existence a human shaped space. This is the event of God 'not rest[ing] content with Himself', 'not restrict[ing] Himself to the wealth of His perfections and His own inner life as Father, Son and Holy Spirit'. In electing to reflect himself in himself by himself in the uniting of himself, in the Son, to a particular and singular human existence, God is true to himself as the triune God of love and freedom. The event of election as the event of God's self-reflection actualises the human shaped space who is the human partner of God in the Son; 'the eternal covenant between God and man' is actualised. This is not an 'inter-trinitarian pact as a contract between the persons of the Father and the Son' as a 'relationship of God with Himself' but the event of the one Subject God, in the hypostasis the Son, assuming to himself a particular and singular human existence with whom to be in relationship and in which 'the Son of the Father is no longer just the eternal Logos, but as such, as very God from all eternity He is also the very God and very man He will become in time' (66).

It has to be said that this point is where Barth draws the veil of mystery and behind which we cannot go for we cannot talk about any other Logos except that revealed by Christ. In this respect Barth sees the traditional *logos asarkos* as abstract speculation and the fact that Molnar refers to this passage as one in which Barth

maintains the concept of the *logos asarkos* as ‘logical and necessary’ is startling.²⁰³ Barth’s point is simply this: that we know God only from his self-revelation and this shows him to be God for us in Jesus Christ; the eternal Son in human existence as a reflection of his divine existence. In that this Son is sent by the Father in the power of the Spirit and acts in obedience to his Father in the Spirit who rests upon him tells us that who this man is and what he does has everything to do with who the triune God is. That Christ is obedient ‘corresponds outwardly to and reveals the inward divine being and event’.

iii) The Condescension of God to Human Estate as the Event of the Reflection of the Obedience of the Son of God

That Jesus Christ is very God is shown in His way into the far Country in which He the Lord became a servant. For in the majesty of the true God it happened that the eternal Son of the eternal Father became obedient by offering and humbling Himself to be the brother of man, to take His place with the transgressors, to judge him by judging Himself and dying in his place. (157).

The eternal Son offers and humbles himself to be our brother as ‘the condescension in which God interests Himself in the man Jesus Christ’ as an action of humility which is proper to God: ‘God is not proud. In His high majesty He is humble’ (159). Jesus remains God incognito; his form as man conceals his true being as the Son of God, for what seems to us to be a contradiction that God is humble is shown to be true. This man, God the Son in person, ‘wills only to be obedient, obedient to the will of the Father,’ (164). The ‘concrete will of God’ to which Jesus is obedient reveals him allowing himself to be baptised by John (Mk.1.11) rather than proclaiming himself as a miracle worker (he resists the temptation (Mt.4f) to be self-proclaimed Son of God when others were doing exactly this); praying in Mt 26. 39 ‘not as I will, but as you will’; being the servant of all men other than being served (Mk.10.45); taking the lowest place at a wedding (Lk.14.10); serving his disciples food (Lk.22.37) and washing their feet (Jn.13. 1-11), (164). Further in John’s Gospel

²⁰³ Thus Barth: ‘Under the title of a [*logos asarkos*] we pay homage to a *Deus absconditus*’ (52). Molnar, *DFDIT*, 71.

where the divine Sonship is most expressly explicit, we also find Jesus saying ‘the Father is greater than I’ (Jn.14.28) and the assertion that Jesus does not seek his own glory (8.50) but does that which he is given to do:

The true God – if the man Jesus is the true God – is obedient. (164)

There are two moments of obedience to be reckoned with in Barth’s portrayal, an obedience which is freely given (the Son elects to go in obedience) and an obedience which is freely received (the Son of Man is elected to receive obedience). As the object of the ‘electing will of the Creator’ in ‘merciful divine faithfulness’ Jesus is the ‘Son of the Father with the same singularity and exclusiveness’ and what takes place between the Son and the Father is ‘the self-humiliation of God’ in which ‘the Son of God who is one with God the Father and is Himself God’ is ‘not only the electing Creator, but the elect creature . . . not only the giver, but also the recipient of grace’ (170). God himself, in the Son, has become a ‘stranger’ in himself in an act of ‘self-limitation’ and a ‘self-humiliation on the part of God’. The Son of God humiliates himself to become the judge judged in our place breaking the vicious circle of the human condition: ‘the electing eternal God willed Himself to become rejected and therefore perishing man’ (175).

That God as God is able and willing and ready to condescend, to humble Himself in this way is the mystery of the “deity of Christ”. (177)

Jesus Christ as the eternal Son in human existence is the ‘mirror [*der Spiegel*] in which it can be known’ ‘[w]ho the one true God is’ (177). That the Son freely humiliated himself (‘in his self-humiliation, His way into the far country, fulfilled in His death on the cross’) in becoming one with mankind as this singular and particular man under judgment ‘show[s]’ (emphasis mine) the ‘obedience of the Son to the Father’ on which this act is grounded. The self-humiliation of the Son to human estate is the event in which his obedience to the Father is reflected outwards²⁰⁴:

²⁰⁴ What is reflected is the inner life of God which does not happen in actualising this event but as that which is the basis of this event. Here we part company with Juengel who sees the event of election as the point from which there radiates two reflective events. Juengel makes a statement which he believes is a correct interpretation of Barth’s doctrine of the Trinity as derived from Barth’s doctrine of revelation. The statement is ‘God corresponds to himself’ (*GBIIB*, 36) and cited as a basis for this statement is II/1, 657, 660 where we find Barth on his way to articulating his understanding of the incarnation as a reflection of God’s perfect beauty; as ‘a supreme work towards that which is outside Him’ as ‘the reflection and image of His inner, eternal, divine being’. Jesus Christ as the ‘reflection

It is in these two moments [self-humiliation of the Son as the movement of the Son 'outwards' in obedience to the Father], and their combination, that there is enclosed the mystery that He is very God and of the divine nature . . . [f]rom the point of view of the obedience of Jesus Christ as such, fulfilled in that astonishing form, it is a matter of the mystery of the inner being of God as the being of the Son in relation to the Father . . . it is a matter of His deity in His work *ad extra*, . . . (177)

The door who reveals the mystery of the inner life of God as ordered humbleness is Christ. He is the mirror in which is reflected his oneness with God as the Son of the Father united in the Spirit:

the poor humanity of the divine being and activity, the strange form of the divine majesty, the humility in which God is God and the Son the Son, and to that extent the Father the Father, the alien life in which He is manifest only to Himself alone. (178)

God is triune rest and the rest of Jesus which is promised to his followers is 'His own rest': 'the rest of His own being in the unity of the obedient Son with the will of the Father and with the Father Himself' (179). The Son humbled himself in taking human existence but he did not cease to be who he is for in this act he simply reflected himself (the obedient Son united to the Father in the unity of the Spirit of this act of obedience, II/2 106) into unity with that which is ontologically distinct from himself; he reflected himself into the dimension that is dwelling in space and time. In dwelling in this space and time, in anticipation of creation and in fulfillment in creation, God's majesty is in a hidden 'form':

His divine majesty could be in this alien form. It could be a hidden majesty. He could therefore, humble Himself in this form. He could become obedient in the determination corresponding [*entsprechenden*] to the being of this form . . . (180)

and image' of God reveals 'God as He is in Himself' (II/2, 663). In 'differentiat[ing] Himself from Himself' in becoming this man there is an overflowing of the differentiation in which God is one God (662). Juengel interprets Barth as saying that election is an event of decision in which God determines himself outwards and inwards (83-84); a 'primal decision' in which God determines himself *ad intra*: '[w]e have therefore to understand this decision as God's 'primal decision' which irrevocably determines God's being-in-act, or rather, as God's primal decision in which God determines irrevocably his being-in-act. This self-determination of God is an act of his self-relatedness as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.' (85). In this account election is seen not as the event of the triune God reflecting himself *ad extra* as determined by himself with an irreversible *telos*, but as the event in which God (which God?) simultaneously determines himself *ad intra* and *ad extra*. Put crudely, election is the becoming of the triune God and with respect to the logic of this account it would imply, as McCormack has argued, that election has a logical priority over trinity.

That is, the obedience of Christ, of the Son incarnate, is determined in correspondence to (as a reflection of) the prevenient obedience of the Son to the Father in the unity of the Spirit. Barth's concept of *Entsprechung* continues to work hard within his programme to place the decision of election as the event of triune reflection, in which the Son makes within himself an ontologically distinct space, firmly at the centre of his theology. The determination of this space is the act of the triune God.

God, in second mode of his being, takes to himself the form of a servant as a reflection of who he is: 'He is not untrue to Himself but true to Himself in this condescension' (185f.). In becoming incarnate, the Son does not leave his deity behind as if it 'were outside of Him as He became ours' but he remains in unity with his divine existence as united to the Father in the Spirit. The obedience of Christ does not point to an antithesis or to a contradiction in God, but to '[w]ho God is and what it is to be divine'. 'It is in full unity with Himself that [God] . . . becomes a creature' who is wholly obedient. '[God] has therefore done and revealed that which corresponds to His divine nature' in being 'faithful': this act 'corresponds to and is grounded in His divine nature' (187). Christ's meekness and lowliness in the humility of servanthood and obedience reflects the 'emptying and humbling' of the Son of God: the 'freedom and the work in which God Himself is God' (191).²⁰⁵ Barth cites Gregory of Nyssa (*Or. Cat.* 24) as 'the only one of the Church fathers expressly to mention: that the descent to humility which took place in the incarnation of the Word is not only not excluded by the divine nature but signifies its greatest glory'; it is in conformity to the divine nature that Christ is exalted:

Jesus Christ is the Son of God and as such, in conformity [entsprechend] with the divine nature, the Most High who humbles Himself and in that way is exalted and very high. (192, emphasis mine)

The 'deity of the true God' is 'revealed in the humility of Christ', that is, the obedience of Christ reveals the obedience of the Son to be who the Son is. The 'first and inner moment of the mystery of the deity of Christ' is 'the way of obedience' of the 'Son of God into the far country' (192). That God comes to man in the 'form of a

²⁰⁵ Thus: 'New Testament ethics is an indirect and additional attestation of the true Godhead of Christ', 191.

servant' in 'His presence and action in Jesus Christ' is 'to do with God Himself in His true deity'. 'The humility in which He dwells and acts in Jesus Christ is not alien to Him, but proper to Him'. This is a mystery novel to us but not to God. '[I]n the most inward depths of His Godhead' God is one who gives himself in obedience, one who disregards any superiority but condescends and lives in humility: 'there is a humility grounded in the being of God' (193). The humility of Christ is an 'act of obedience' as a 'free choice made in recognition of an appointed order, in execution of a will which imposed itself authoritatively upon Him, which was intended to be obeyed'. The obedience of Christ is a given determination of freedom in love which reflects obedience in God. The 'self-emptying and self-humbling of Jesus Christ as an act of obedience cannot be alien to God'. The 'one true God' is 'able and free to render obedience'.

Christ's self-humiliation, Phillipians 2.8, and his suffering, Hebrews 5.8, is explained as 'a becoming obedient' which is a living 'to do his Father's will as an act of endurance to 'accomplish [the Father's] work and to seek [the Father's] glory'.²⁰⁶ Christ strives to do his Father's will as one who is not alone for 'the Father is on this way with Him (Jn. 16.32)' and so 'in going in this way He acts in the freedom of God, making use of a possibility grounded in the being of God' (194). The determination of Christ to do his Father's will is a determination from God by God as an immediate and direct act of God upon that in which God is reflected, the ontologically distinct human existence of the Son that is Jesus Christ. As the free choice of Christ in 'holy and righteous freedom' the path of obedience is the only path that reflects who he is as the Son; any other path would not be of who he is and so not even a possibility.

He does not make just any use of the possibilities of His divine nature, but He makes one definite use which is necessary on the basis of and in fulfillment of His own decision. (194)

The event of Christ's obedience is to do with 'divine order and divine obedience' as the event of the 'divine fulfillment of a divine decree' (195). At this point we are truly 'confronted with the mystery of the deity of Christ'.

²⁰⁶ The learning obedience is a becoming obedient (a becoming into perfect relationship of unity to the Father in the Spirit of every act of obedience) in the moment by moment ceaseless event that is the humiliation of the Son in obedience and the corresponding exaltation of the Son of man to obedience.

Let us grant that this insight is right, that what the New Testament says about the obedience of Christ, on His way of suffering, has its basis, even as a statement about the man Jesus, in His divine nature and therefore in God Himself. (195)

Barth acknowledges that 'it is a difficult and elusive thing to speak of obedience which takes place in God Himself' because obedience 'implies an above and a below, a *prius* and a *posterius*, a superior and a junior and subordinate'. The offence is that this seems to 'compromise the unity and then logically the equality of the divine being'. Barth argues that our discomfort with divine subordination is more to do with our sin of subordinationism than with acknowledging the harmony of peace in which it is of God. In opposition to subordinationism 'we have to speak of a divine obedience, in which, therefore, we have to reckon with an above and a below, a *prius* and a *posterius*, a superiority and a subordination in God' (196). Attempts 'to keep the true deity of the humiliated and lowly and obedient Christ, but to interpret the being of this Christ as a mere mode of appearance of revelation or activity of the one true Godhead, beside which there are the other modes of the ruling Father and also of the Holy Spirit' dissolves the deity of Christ because it is not identical with his divine existence in unity with the Father in the Spirit but merely a mode of appearance of his 'immanence and a purely economic' appearance improper to his true divine existence (197).

Here we pause. Paul Molnar, following T.F. Torrance and as outlined in the introductory chapter, takes just this line; that the obedience of the Son is only of the economy. This, however, is what Barth is resolutely opposing. Equally, if election is seen to ground the obedience of the Son such that it is said that the Son elects obedience, there is too in this account a covert assertion that the obedience of the Son is of the work of God *ad extra*, of the economy.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁷ Given that the trajectory of this stance is that election is logically prior to Trinity; the Trinity is also of the economy. The question, of course, which is haunting this discussion, is where to place election? Is election of the economy or is it intrinsic to God's existence and if it is intrinsic to God's existence is it not logically prior to Trinity? Is putting it thus not, however, to fall prey to static concepts of election and miss Barth's constant stress on the eventfulness of God with election being the decision of the triune God to turn outwards by enclosing ontological distinctness inwards by being reflected in the space the Son makes within himself? That is, election is the cusp, the hinge of the moment of reflection, the beginning of all Gods ways and works *ad extra*; the turning of the triune God towards that which he posits as ontologically other, the transition and transference of his decisive and determining action as a moment by moment upholding and enclosing. The doctrine of election is thus perched precariously between the doctrine of God and the doctrine of creation and expresses the

‘[T]he acting subject of the reconciliation of the world with God’ is Jesus Christ and ‘in Him’ the ‘true God [is] at work’ (197-8). ‘When we have to do with Jesus Christ we have to do with God . . . [w]hat He does is a work that can only be God’s own work, and not the work of another’. In Christ, God ‘enter[s] into the sphere’ of his creation, into ‘the reality which is distinct from Himself . . . in the power of His own presence and action’. The fact that ‘God was in Christ’ means that ‘the presence and action of God in Jesus Christ’ is ‘the most proper and direct and immediate presence and action of the one true God in the sphere of human and world history’. This event is the ‘economy’, the work of God, and is an event, ‘an economy in which God is truly Himself and Himself acts and intervenes in the world’. The presence and action of this God ‘coincide[s] [*koinzidiert*] and [is] indeed identical with the existence of the humiliated and lowly and obedient man Jesus of Nazareth’.²⁰⁸ In Christ God ‘humbles Himself and becomes lowly and obedient . . . He becomes and is this without being in contradiction to His divine nature’ (199). ‘God chooses condescension . . . He chooses humiliation, lowliness and obedience’.

The God of the New Testament witness is the God who makes this choice, who in agreement with Himself and His divine nature . . . humbles Himself and is lowly and obedient amongst us . . . in Jesus Christ the Crucified’. (199)

The Son of God chooses to be obedient as man. The ‘obedience of Christ’ is the ‘dominating moment in our conception of God’. The cross of Christ, his obedience to death, is the event of the ‘humiliation, the lowliness and the obedience of the one true God Himself’ and the offence and stumbling block to acknowledging God to be this God; who he has revealed himself to be. The obedient Christ is either seen as ‘some heavenly or earthly being distinct from God’ or a ‘mere mode of appearance’ of God but not the one whose human existence as the image of God, the *imago Dei* (III/2), (‘very man’) reflects God himself (‘very God’) in his second mode of existence and who is determined immediately and directly by this God.

decision of God to create a fragile world which he himself will maintain and bring to perfection. Barth is probably right, however, to place election in his doctrine of God for it is primarily an event of triune self-reflection.

²⁰⁸ Coincide does not mean ontological identity, but the determination of that which is ontologically distinct, indirectly identical, to God by God.

Barth presses his concept of ‘correspondence’ again. The triune God is one who commands and one who obeys in the unity and peace of the uniting Spirit. This ‘most offensive fact of all’ is the event of ‘the inner life of God’ in which there takes place obedience: ‘divine unity consists in the fact that in Himself [God] is both One who is obeyed and Another who obeys’ (201f.). With an oblique reference to obedience as a perfection of God, Barth reiterates that God’s inner life overflows:

In superfluity – we have to say this because we are in fact dealing with an overflowing [*ein Ueberstroemen*], not with a filling up of the perfection of God which needs no filling. (201)

God’s unity is ‘open and free and active in itself’ as a ‘dynamic and living unity’ of ‘One with Another, of a first and a second, an above with a below, an origin and its consequences’. There is an ‘inner order’ to God which must not be tarnished with our conceptions of inferiority. Jesus Christ reveals that there is a ‘divine obedience’ [*goettlichen Gehorsams*] which exists in:

perfect unity and equality because in the same perfect unity and equality [God] is also a Third, the One who affirms the one and equal Godhead through and by and in the two modes of being, the One who makes possible and maintains His fellowship with Himself as the one and the other. In virtue of this third mode of being He is in the other two without division or contradiction, the whole God in each . . . [t]he true and living God is the One God whose Godhead consists in this history, who is in these three modes of being the One God . . . who loves in His freedom and is free in His love. (202-203)

God is triune and is so in a particular ordered way. Barth is reaffirming his doctrine of the Trinity as found in I/1, 8-12 and expounding his brief discussion of the Son electing to become man in the Spirit of this act of obedience as found in II/2, 105-106.²⁰⁹ In becoming man as Jesus Christ, God ‘becomes what He had not previously been’ for ‘He takes into unity with His divine being a quite different . . . being’ (existence). In doing this ‘He empties Himself, He humbles Himself’ but ‘He does not do it apart from its basis in His own being, in His own inner life’ (emphasis mine):

²⁰⁹ As Iain Taylor notes ‘it is the same doctrine of the Trinity at work in both sections, with the discussion in volume four explicating part of the content of volume one’. Taylor, Iain, ‘In Defence of Karl Barth’s Doctrine of the Trinity’ in *International Journal of Systematic Theology*, 5, 1 (2003) 33-46, 42.

He does not do it without any correspondence to, but as the strangely logical final continuation of, the history in which He is God. (203)²¹⁰

The ‘inner life of God Himself’ is reflected ‘in His speaking and activity and work *ad extra*’ in ‘the mode of being . . . who is obedient in humility’. In ‘His mode of being as the One who is obedient in humility [God] wills to be not only the one God but this man, and this man as the one God’ (204). Note the trajectory of Barth’s logic: the second ‘being way’ (*Seinsweise*) of God is the ‘being way’ of obedience who is the hypostasis the Son and it is as this obedient one that the decision to elect himself in unity with the decision of the Father (directed from the Father) in the uniting Spirit happens as the event of election. That the ‘quite different . . . being [existence]’ the Son takes is obedient is simply due to the Son being in this human existence what he is in his divine existence. The human obedience of Christ reflects and is determined by the prevenient obedient Son, mirroring his life of unity with the Father in the Spirit. How then can it be argued that Barth is arguing that the Son elects obedience? It is one thing to say that the Son elects in obedience, it is quite another to say that the Son elects obedience. If there is to be any mileage in the statement ‘the Son elects obedience’ it has to be qualified with the further statement that the Son elects obedience in flesh as a reflection of his prevenient obedience to the Father in the unity of the Spirit. The Son elects obedience as man as a reflection of the life he lives with the Father in the Spirit. We only know of God’s ordered life of active love *ad intra* because it is reflected in the Son’s incarnation.

We recall Barth’s articulation of election as the triune event of the one will of the Father, Son and Spirit that the Son assume to himself a human existence; we reiterate: ‘in free obedience to His Father [the Son] elected to be man’ as a ‘free act of obedience on the part of the Son’ (II/2, 105, emphasis mine). Jesus Christ is ‘the concrete and manifest form of the divine decision – the decision of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit’ (II/2, 105). The obedient Son, in unity with the Father in the ‘Spirit of this act of obedience’ (II/2, 106), elects that he assume an obedient human existence (a continuing event of self-humiliation to human estate) reflecting his obedient divine existence in which there is a first to whom he is obedient in the unity

²¹⁰ ‘*nicht ohne Entsprechung zu der Geschichte – vielmehr in wunderbar konsequenter letzter Fortsetzung eben der Geschichte, in der er Gott ist*’, *KD*, 223.

of a third. How can the Son elect obedience if obedience is not predicated of him? What would ground this act of obedience and of whom would obedience be predicated? The Father? But Barth is insistent; God is within himself an ordered life of superior and subordinate united in love, this is 'His inner glory' which 'overflows and becomes outward' (II/2, 121); obedience is not predicated of the Father but of the Son. God reflects himself in himself as a movement from himself to within himself united by himself. This is, if you like, the vertical vector downwards and if we can put it crudely the moment in which movement from the Father to the Son and from the Son to the Father in the unity of the Spirit (imagined, on the whole, as a horizontal movement) is turned on its side becoming the movement towards us (the downward vector) as held in the space made within the Son (the event of election as reflection). The vertical vector upwards is the movement of the human existence assumed by the Son (in his descending) being exalted (ascending) to unity with the Father in the Spirit who continues to maintain the bond of peace between the Father and Son. This descending and ascending is the pulse of the triune God from the Father to the Son and the Son to the Father in the unity of the Spirit as the event of the overflowing of the triune life in the event of election.

The event of election as an overflowing of who God is, is 'simply' God 'activat[ing] and reveal[ing] Himself *ad extra*' (204).²¹¹ Jesus Christ is 'the Son of God who became man, who as such is One with God the Father, equal to Him in deity, by the Holy Spirit, in whom the Father affirms and loves Him and He the Father, in a mutual fellowship'. In another move which displays that Barth sees his I/1 doctrine of the Trinity as concomitant with his articulation of the obedience of the Son as that which grounds the event of election as explicated here in volume four, Barth refers the reader back to his doctrine of the Trinity in I/1, section 8-12 and reiterates his rejection of the use of the word 'person' to refer to the triune modes. God is 'one Subject', the 'one God in self-repetition' who 'does not exist . . . outside

²¹¹ What makes this whole picture more complex is that the traditional terms are in fact inverted by Barth. The expression '*ad extra*' gives a picture of God acting outside of himself towards that which is other and at some sort of distance, but Barth is constantly painting a picture of a God who is acting towards that which is held within himself in the Son so that the '*ad extra*' is in fact held within the '*ad intra*'. This is to say that God reflects himself in himself. The ontological other held within the Son is both the human existence of the Son and in this is held the human existence of all others. Barth is operating with a picture of concentric circles. That the human existence of the Son is determined by the Son as united to the Father in the Spirit is to say that which God reflects in himself is determined by himself. God reflects himself in himself by himself.

or behind or above these modes of being . . . [h]e does not exist otherwise than as Father, Son and Spirit' but 'exists in their mutual interconnexion and relationship' (205).²¹² God is God 'in the relationships to Himself thereby posited . . . His being as God is His being in His own history'. That Jesus Christ is referred to as 'the Son of God' is to talk of 'One who is obedient in humility' and fulfils 'the old Testament concept of a Son' (207-208). In this obedience he is 'quite different from all other men' because he is 'at the side of God' as one in whom 'the kingdom of God has come down from heaven to earth' and is 'incorporated and truly present and active in Him'. The obedience of this man as determined by the fact that in him the glory of God is present means that his obedience 'corresponds to the perfect lordship of God as its necessary complement'. The 'free but quite necessary decision' in a 'determination which is . . . utterly natural' to go the way of obedience is the incarnate Son of God 'activat[ing] and reveal[ing] the unconditional royal power of God by living it out unconditionally as man'. This obedient life is the 'image, the correspondence' of the 'lordship of God'; its reflection. Jesus shows himself to be the Son of God 'by the obedience He renders as man':

And His unconditional, self-evident, natural and wholly spontaneous being in obedience is just as little the affair of a man . . . as the unconditional lordship to which this being corresponds [*der dieses Sein entspricht*], and which He reflects in it [*die er darin abbildet*], can ever be the affair of a man or of any creature. In rendering obedience as He does, He does something which, as in the case of lordship, only God can do. The One who in this obedience is the perfect image of the ruling God is Himself [*Wer in solchem Gehorsam des herrschenden Gottes vollkommenes Ebenbild ist, der ist*] – as distinct from every human and creaturely kind – God by nature, God in His relationship to Himself, i.e., God in His mode of being as the Son in relation to God in His mode of being as the Father, One with the Father and of one essence. In His mode of being as the Son He fulfils the divine subordination, just as the Father in His mode of being as the Father fulfils the divine superiority. In humility as the Son who complies, He is the same as is the Father in majesty as the Father who disposes. He is the same in consequence (in obedience) as the Son as is the Father in origin. He is the same as the Son, i.e., as the self-positing God (the eternally begotten of the Father as the dogma has it) as is the Father as the self-positing God (the Father who eternally begets). Moreover in His humility and compliance as the Son He has a supreme part in the majesty and disposing of the Father. The Father as the origin is never apart from Him as the consequence, the obedient one. The self-positing God is

²¹² Note here that Barth talks of God's 'self-repetition' *ad intra*, not his self-reflection *ad intra*, that is, as triune God repeats himself not as a reflection of himself in himself (reflection is to do with what he does *ad extra*) but as a repetition of himself in himself, the *repetitio aeternitatis in aeternitate*, I/1, 353.

never apart from Him as the One who is posited as God by God. The One who eternally begets is never apart from the One who is begotten. (209)

and there immediately follows, lest this be a purely bintarian event, Barth's construal of the Spirit as the one in whom the dispensing Father and obedient Son are united in peace and love, the *filioque* clause:

The Father is not the Father and the Son not the Son without a mutual affirmation and love in the Holy Spirit. The Son is therefore the One who in His obedience, as a divine and not a human work, shows and affirms and activates and reveals Himself – shows Himself to be the One He is – not another, a second God, but the Son of God, the one God in His mode of being as the Son. (209)

The 'basis of' this relationship of the 'ceaseless unity of the One who disposes and the One who complies' (the 'history in which God is the living God') is the 'perfection in which this Father and Son are one, . . . the eternity of the fatherly begetting and of the being begotten of the Son . . . their free but also necessary fellowship and love in the activity of the Holy Spirit as the third mode of being of the same kind' (209, emphasis mine). Here we find a more overt reference to obedience as a divine perfection. The begetting of the Son by the Father is the begetting of the Son of obedience who is united to the Father in the Spirit of love and peace breathed from both; the moment by moment ceaseless event of the Father giving and the Son receiving existence and with the Father giving existence to the Spirit who unites their love. This triune God of ordered relationships in love is the one God who wills (the Father, Son and Spirit 'no less' one than the other) to reflect himself in himself (the Son) by himself in the event of election; the Son electing himself to become the Christ whose obedience to the Father in temporality reflects his obedience in eternity. Can it truly be said of Barth's account that the Son elects obedience? Barth ties the obedience of the Son to his being begotten of the Father; to the event of triune ordered origins as from the Father to the Son in the unity of the Spirit. If the Father begets the Son of obedience who together with him breathes the Spirit of their unity in love and is not God except as these united three and as these three who are of one will elect that their triune life be reflected, how can it be argued that Barth's account is one in which election is logically prior to the Trinity? How can it be argued that from Barth's account it can be said that the Son elects obedience? Is it not more accurate to say that the obedient Son elects to reflect his obedience towards the Father in the unity and love of the

Spirit (election in obedience rather than election of obedience) as obedience for us in the human existence he elects, along with the Father united by the Spirit, to assume and which, along with the Father united by Spirit, he determines? In Barth's account the begetting of the Son is an 'eternal' event without beginning and his electing as being elected is an 'eternal' event with a beginning. Much hangs on Barth's construal of 'eternal' but perhaps more to the point is that both events are seen to be to do with the doctrine of God. The fact that whilst engaging with his radical doctrine of election and placing it squarely within his doctrine of God Barth repeatedly asserts that election as the beginning of all God's works *ad extra* is not preceded by any except the triune life, which has no beginning, means that for Barth at least, the initiative is always with the triune God and this is irreversible.

Is not Barth's II/2 doctrine of election clarified in volume four in Barth's rigorous account of the obedience of the Son as obedience in God? For Barth it is just as true to say of God that he is within himself obedient as it is to say that he is humble. Barth ties the event of the obedience of the Son to the event of the decision of election; but in a very particular way. The eternal Son, along with the Father and Spirit, is the Subject of election. The triune Subject elects/decides to reflect himself in making an ontologically distinct space within himself, in the Son, into which the Son descends in humility. The Son himself, united to the Father in the Spirit as the one triune Subject, determines and rules his human existence. This is articulated in volume IV/2 as the event of the *communicatio gratiarum*. Leaving to one side for the moment the complication of this event being both one of anticipation in eternity to be fulfilled in time, that this space is created is to say that of the obedient Son there is now enclosed in him the space whose core he will fill in time and it is Jesus-shaped. That this core exists as a reflection (indirectly identical/*imago Dei*) of he who rules it means that the elected human existence of the Son is enabled to elect God as a human act of obedience. The obedience of Christ is a decision in obedience as the true correspondence to the decision of election grounded upon the obedience of the Son. To elect, as we have argued, is in Barth's account the triune decision to reflect. The obedience of Christ, as that which is determined by the Son in unity with the Father in the Spirit, is an act which reflects the obedient action of the Son in electing to be elected. The obedience of the Son grounds the event which sets in place the mirror in which he is to be reflected, his human existence, as that which is enclosed in him.

The obedience of Christ is a determination to obedience as a reflection of a prevenient obedience which overflows. Talk of the Son electing obedience can only be expressed as electing obedience as man as a reflection of the election of humiliation to human estate which is made in obedience.

The obedience of the Son overflows in the event of deciding/electing to reflect himself in his unity to the Father in the Spirit. Electing/deciding/reflecting is the overflowing of the Son's obedient love into the ontologically distinct dimension that is his human existence. The human obedience of the Son is determined by his divine obedience (as the act of the obedient Son united in love to the dispensing Father) as an act of the triune Subject determining the human existence (the human act) of the Son as a reflection of the Son. The obedience of Christ flows spontaneously from him because communicated to him by the triune Subject reflecting himself. To choose obedience as a free spontaneous choice/decision of the Son as man is to say that this choice/decision is given to him as a determination by God which is nevertheless a free and spontaneous determination.²¹³ What, then, of the Son's divine obedience which his human existence reflects? Is this not also a determination of freedom and love from the Father to the Son in the unity of the Spirit? Is this, then, not the event in which the Father begets the Son and the Son is begotten of the Father and united to the Father in the unity of the Spirit breathed by both? Is the moment of the begetting of the Son not the moment of the begetting of an obedient Son and therefore the moment of the Father electing that there be an obedient Son who is begotten with a space within himself? Does the Father not beget Jesus Christ; the Son plus his Jesus-shaped space within? Is this what Barth is saying in his doctrine of the obedience of the Son as that which grounds the obedience of his human existence? Does this account make sense of Barth's assertion that Jesus Christ is both the subject and object of election; the covenant partner of God present in the decision to 'go to the far country'? Or would this stance not suggest that it is the Father who is the subject of election and the God-man, Jesus Christ, the object? But in what sense is God the

²¹³ In a comparison of Luther and Barth, Webster notes: 'For Luther, even in action one is utterly passive, that upon which another acts; for Barth, even in receiving one is a spontaneous doer, acting in correspondence to the action of the one whose act is received'. Webster, J., "'The Grammar of doing': Luther and Barth on Human Agency' in *Barth's Moral theology: Human Action in Barth's Thought* (Edinburgh, T & T Clark, 1998) 159.

Father if he is not triune in the decision of election; if the electing decision is logically prior to his triunity?

What really challenges this stance is Barth's insistence that God's action *ad extra* corresponds to his action *ad intra*. The event of election is an event in which God reflects himself *ad extra* with an irreversible determination from God to that which he posits as ontologically other to him. If the event of election is the event of God positing himself as triune and *ad extra*; it is an event in which there is a two way direction of determination in which God determines himself both *ad intra* and *ad extra*. But to what then does this two-way event correspond; to which God? There is no evidence in Barth's corpus that he envisaged such a stance and it would not tally with the way in which Barth uses the concept of correspondence with its irreversible direction. The event of election cannot be understood without taking account of Barth's use of *Entsprechung* (as explored in volume III/2 and put to powerful use here in volume four) in his articulation of the obedience of the Son as that which is reflected in the obedience of Christ. Although we disagree with McCormack's interpretation of Barth, at least he follows through the logic of his stance and asserts that if his interpretation of Barth holds good then God's triunity corresponds to the decision of election, election having a logical priority over Trinity. In this respect McCormack's position reverses the direction of Barth's concept of correspondence.²¹⁴

The decision and act of election is the decision and act of reflection; God reflects himself as the dispensing and obedient God united in love. It is not about the Son electing (deciding for) obedience but rather the Son reflecting his obedience in the event of election as the decision of reflection. The Son elects to reflect who he is; the obedient Son united to the Father in the love of the Spirit. The obedient Son elects to reflect his obedience to the Father in the unity of the Spirit in the ontologically distinct dimension that is the assumption of human existence. Of course the decision to reflect in the event of electing happens in obedience, it is an obedient act, but the obedience is presupposed in the act. The Son determines, in unity with the Father in

²¹⁴ Unsatisfied with McCormack's stance of the logical priority of triunity and yet persuaded by McCormack's interpretation of Barth's doctrine of election, Jones attempts to get around his dilemma by his talk of the decision of election as 'coincident and coordinate with God's decision to exist as Father, Son and Spirit' as 'two moves basic for God' (*HCTKB*, 92 and footnote 53). This is loose logic for McCormack is correct to assert that in his interpretation of Barth election has logical priority.

the Spirit, his act of human obedience as a reflection of who he is in relation to the Father and Spirit. The event of the obedience of Christ cannot be directly equated with the event of election which it reflects; the human nature exists as that which is the *imago Dei*, as indirectly identical. The determination is ‘direct and immediate’ as the act of the triune Subject upon the human existence assumed by the Son. The act of election is the irreversible act of the triune God reflecting himself in himself by himself. The obedience of Christ, of the human existence, follows this. It does not determine or constitute God or even become the vehicle of God’s obedience, but is determined by God. God determines himself as man. The asymmetry of the triune event does not have a backward flow. In electing himself in himself by himself the triune God overflows in taking to himself, in the Son, human existence. In his human existence the Son remains united to the Father in the Spirit. The determination of the human existence assumed by the Son is a triune event. This triune determination, so important to Barth throughout his theological career, is not reversible. The suggestion that election determines or constitutes God as triune is a reversing of this principle. The triune God determines the event of election; election does not determine God as triune. The obedience of the Son to the Father in the unity of the Spirit determines the obedience of his human existence to the Father in the unity of the Spirit.

Barth’s use of the term ‘*Entsprechung*’, evident in II/2, explored further in volume III/2, elucidated, gathering force and put to use powerfully in his IV/1 account of the obedience of the Son as reflected in the obedience of Christ, gives to the doctrine of election a depth and clarity not achieved in II/2. The doctrine of the Trinity of I/1, as represented by his continued use of the *filioque* clause to express the Spirit as the one who unites the two moments of obedience, remains integral to Barth’s mature theology. To attempt to critically correct Barth’s doctrine of the Trinity due to an understanding of election as God *simpliciter* deciding to be triune in a particular way rather than the triune God electing/deciding to reflect himself, that is, reflect his triune (self-repeated) existence in relationship is to miss the way in which Barth integrates his doctrine of the Trinity into his revised doctrine of election and carries it through into his later volumes as is made clear in his increased use of the concept of correspondence.

iv) The *Communicatio Gratiarum* as the Triune Event of the Determination of the Obedience of the Human Existence of the Incarnate Son²¹⁵

The true humanity of Jesus Christ, as the humanity of the Son, was and is and will be the primary content of God's eternal election of grace, i.e., of the divine decision and action which are not preceded by any higher apart from the trinitarian happening of the life of God, but which all other divine decisions and actions follow, and to which they are subordinated. (31)

Reiterating his II/2 stance that election is the act of the triune God, Barth's statement, contrary to McCormack's view that such statements are 'metaphysical moment[s]', is integral to his programme to assert that the living God whose inner life is ordered love elects to reflect himself and in so doing create and determine to fellowship with him that which is ontologically not him. The 'decision and action in which God in His Son elected and determined Himself for man, and . . . man for Himself' is the decision and action in which God in the Son 'elects man and therefore His own humiliation' and who '[a]s the Son of Man . . . is the One who is elected by God and therefore His own exaltation' (32). The Son does not elect obedience but in obedience elects humiliation to human estate and in this way is exalted to obedient human action. The 'election of grace' [*Gnadenwahl*] is the event of the 'eternal resolve and will of God' to direct grace from God to God in flesh; the event of 'the one Son of God as electing and the one Son of Man as elected'. The 'fellowship of man with God' in the act of this man towards God in the 'human movement from below to above' is 'established by the same free grace' in which God wills to be in fellowship with man, this man. With reference to Colossians 1.15f., Barth emphasises that Jesus Christ is the "'image of the invisible God'" by whom all things were created and is not a reference 'only to the Son of God, to a *logos asarkos*', a term Barth continues to see as 'abstract' (33). The only logos we know is 'the eternal Son of God and therefore also . . . the Son of Man existing in time' (34). 'In the divine election of grace we have to do with the Son of Man elected by the eternal Son of God

²¹⁵ All page references in parenthesis in the text are henceforth from IV/2 unless otherwise stated.

and therefore with the election of the one, whole Jesus Christ' (34, emphasis mine). In electing this particular human existence to fellowship with God, the Son's human existence is determined 'to a wonderful exaltation to be the faithful covenant-partner of God', that is, exalted to 'participation in [God's] eternal life, in the perfect service of His Word and work'. The human existence assumed by the Son is an existence exalted to, determined to, freedom in obedience as that which truly corresponds to the prevenient free obedience of the Son which grounds this event. The humility of the Son to become this man in a free obedience to humiliation and so ground the free obedience of his human existence as an exaltation which is determined by him is not an act of 'surrender but the affirmation of His divine majesty' (42). There is no abstract *logos asarkos*, but the revelation of the eternally obedient Son of God.

But it is not the case that in this grace God does violence or is unfaithful to Himself because as God He properly cannot and ought not to do this. He exists even in Himself as God, not only in the majesty of the Father, but also in the same reality and Godhead as the Son begotten of the Father and following Him and ordered in accordance with him. In itself and as such, then humility is not alien to the nature of the true God, but supremely proper to Him in His mode of being as the Son'. (42)

In his work *ad extra*, God 'appl[ies] and exercise[s] and reve[als] . . . the divine humility' which is the 'inter-trinitarian background' to 'the content of this free divine decree' (42). We think that Barth is quite clear that the triune God determines the event of election in which his ordered teleological life becomes manifest as the event in which God wills not only to be, in the Son, the human partner in his covenant of grace but 'the keeper of the covenant on this side too' as a reflection of his ordered triune life (43). The assumption of flesh to the Son by the Son 'corresponds to the humility of the eternal Son as it takes place in supreme reality in the intra-trinitarian life of God Himself' (43). In his descent to human existence, the act of humiliation in obedience on the part of the Son, the Son does not do it alone but with the Father and the Spirit. The human existence of the incarnate Son is his unique mode of human existence as determined by himself in his unity with the Father in the Spirit. Barth articulates this event as the *communicatio gratiarum*, the communion of grace to the human existence assumed by the Son as an event that happens in the unity of his

immediate and direct existence to the Father in the unity of the Spirit.²¹⁶ What is communicated to the Son's human existence? As a human existence which corresponds to the existence of the Son it can only be freedom in obedience.

In the incarnation the 'Son of God . . . becomes the Son of man' in 'accept[ing] and assum[ing] . . . human being – into unity with His own divine being' as an act 'He does not do . . . without the Father, but, . . . He does it as the One who is sent by the Father, with whom He is one' (43). 'He does it as the One who is eternally loved by the Father, and loves Him eternally in return'.

Again, He does not do it without the Holy Spirit, but in fulfillment of the divine act of majesty which (as we are reminded by the birth-story and in another way by the story of His baptism in Jordan) is the characteristic work of the Holy Spirit.²¹⁷ For as the eternal love between the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit is also the eternal love in which God is the one God outwards as well as inwards,²¹⁸ the divine principle of creation, reconciliation and redemption, the principle of the decree in which all these works of God were and are His eternal resolve. The older dogmatics was quite right when it described the incarnation as the work of the whole Trinity. None of the three modes of being of God either is or works without the other two: *opera trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisia*. But if the essence of God existing in these three modes of being is one, it is that of the one personal God . . . This God as such is the subject of the incarnation . . . But He is this in His mode of being as the Son, and not as the Father or the Holy Spirit. For – as we first had to show – it is in His mode of being as the Son, as the eternally Begotten of the Father, and to that extent, although of the same essence, first loved by Him and then loving Him in return, as the One who is in order secondary and therefore obedient [*Nachgeordnete und Gehorsame*] to Him, that He is the one God in His humility. It is to Him, therefore, to God in this mode of being, that the act of humility of the incarnation corresponds [*Ihm also, Gott in dieser Seinsweise, entspricht das Demutswerk der Inkarnation*]. (43-44, emphasis mine)

The act of humility of the incarnation (the obedient human action of the Son incarnate) corresponds to the obedient act (decision/will) of the Son united to the Father in the eternal love of the Spirit. 'He became and is [man] – according to the will of God the Father, in the humility of His own freely rendered obedience as the

²¹⁶ Barth takes the traditional '*communicatio gratiarum*' and redefines it as the communication of the grace of determination (electing grace).

²¹⁷ The Spirit as the divine mode of existence that completes/fulfils the actions of the Father and Son? Is this not quite a Basilian way of putting it?

²¹⁸ That is, the Spirit is the mode of divine existence who unites the love of Father and Son *ad intra*. The 'inwards' refers to *ad intra* and not to the act *ad extra* determining or constituting God's *ad intra*. The act *ad intra* 'overflows' or turns outwards with a definite and irreversible *telos*.

Son, in the act of majesty of the Holy Spirit' (45). 'God the Son is the acting Subject in this event . . . He takes human being into unity with His own' (46). The 'eternal Son' did not will to be without this human existence but 'with the Father and the Holy Ghost took human essence to Himself' (47). That human existence was and is assumed by the Son is 'a fact . . . in virtue of the initiative and act of the divine humility'. The 'response of gratitude to [this] grace of God', the obedience of Christ, happens as a result of this prevenient and determining grace. The 'Son of God willed to realise and has in fact realised in this one concrete possibility of human existence determined and prepared and elected by Him . . . the basic alteration and determination of what we all are as men' (48-49). The human existence of the Son is determined by the Son:

in Himself [the Son] raises up to actuality, and maintains in actuality, the possibility of a form of human being and existence present in the existence of the one elect Israel and the one elect Mary. He does this by causing His own divine existence to be the existence of the man Jesus. (51)²¹⁹

The person of the Son, as the hypostasis who unites his divine and human existence in himself, is the basis and power of this event but the Son is one with the Father in the Spirit and so this event is a triune event albeit only the Son assuming human existence. The assumption of human existence is 'one-sidedly . . . the act of God' (53). Neither divine nor human existence actualise anything, but only the triune Subject. The act of the Son of God in assuming to himself human existence 'has its basis and power in His being, in His eternal unity with the Father and the Holy Spirit' (62). The 'unity achieved by the Son of God' is achieved 'in the act of God' (63).

For Godhead, divine nature, divine essence does not exist and is not actual in and for itself. Even Godhead exists only in and with the existence of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, only as the common predicate of this triune Subject in its modes of existence. . . . He the divine Subject carries and determines the divine essence, and not conversely. It is not really an accident, then, that we are not told that the Godhead . . . became flesh (Jn. 1.14). The Godhead as such has no existence. It is not real. It has no being or activity. (65)

²¹⁹ If 'obedience' is substituted for 'existence' in the final sentence of this citation we can see something of Barth's concern.

Rather, the triune Subject ‘in and with His divine essence’ as the ‘One who exists and is and is actual, God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and therefore *in specie* God the Son’ is the one who actualises his human existence; ‘the Word became flesh’ (65).

Neither of the two natures [existences] counts as such, because neither exists and is actual as such. Only the Son of God counts, He who adds human essence, thus giving it existence and uniting both in Himself. In Him, and in Him alone, they were and are united. (66)

The emphasis is with the ‘divine Subject of the incarnation’ and Barth admits that he leans, in principle, to the ‘Christology of the Reformed tradition’ emphasising the ‘*unio hypostatica* over that of the *communio naturarum*’. In exalting the human existence of the Son to free obedience, God ‘len[ds] it His own existence [*Existenz*] in His Son thus uniting it with His own divine essence’ (69).

The Son of God is the acting Subject who takes the initiative in this event, and not either His divine or His human essence. Of both of these it is true that they are real and can only act as He exists in them: in Himself with the Father and the Holy Ghost in His divine essence; and *per assumptionem* in His human. He Himself grasps and has and maintains the leadership in what His divine essence is and means for His human, and His human for His divine, in their mutual participation. (70)

There is therefore a ‘twofold differentiation’ [*zweifacher Differenzierung*] to the ‘mutual participation of the divine and human essence’ as determined by the Son of God who united to the Father in the Spirit is the ‘acting Subject who takes the initiative in this event’; there is an asymmetry to this ‘mutual participation’ with an irreversible *telos*. The act of the triune Subject *in specie* the Son adding human existence to his own divine existence is the act whereby ‘[t]he determination of his divine essence is *to* his human, and the determination of His human essence is *from* His divine’ (emphasis in text). The ‘self-humiliated Son of God’ is ‘always the Subject of this history’ (71). The ‘Son of God took human essence and gave it existence and actuality in and by Himself’. These two moments ‘are not in simple correspondence’ but there is an irreversible *telos*, an asymmetry to their actuality in which the human existence of the Son never becomes divine.²²⁰ Exaltation does not mean divinisation but being ‘set at the side of the Father, brought into perfect

²²⁰ Barth never goes back on this most basic insight that humanity never conditions or determines divinity; the irreversible direction of determination is always from God.

fellowship with him, filled and directed by the Holy Spirit, and in full harmony with the divine essence common to Father, Son and Holy Spirit'. That is to say, '[i]t will be the humanity of *God*'; that is, humanity carried and determined by God (72, emphasis in text).²²¹ The humanity of God is the exalted, divinely determined human existence of the Son to whom is communicated the grace of election as exaltation to free obedience corresponding to divine obedience. The divinely determined human existence of the Son is 'wholly that which receives' from the 'essence of the Son of God' who is 'wholly that which gives'. These 'two elements' in this event 'maintain their own distinctiveness' and are event only 'in the existence and act of the Son of God'.

Following a discussion of the various uses of '*communicatio*' in the doctrines of the Lutherans and Reformed, which Barth uses in the sense of 'the mutual participation of divine and human essence in Jesus Christ' (73), Barth takes the title of the *communicatio gratiarum* and gives it his own definition: 'the total and exclusive determination of the human nature of Jesus Christ by the grace of God' (88f.). This event of determination is tied to the doctrine of election. The 'electing grace of God' is the event of the determination of the human existence assumed by the Son as an event of 'confrontation':

This confrontation with divine essence takes place in the fact that it pleased God in His grace to condescend to it, Himself to become man in His Son, to become this particular man, and therefore to unite His divine with human essence, to give this *telos* and form to His divine essence for the sake of man. This is the electing grace of God. (88)

²²¹ In his 1956 essay, 'The Humanity of God', Barth talks of 'God's humanity' as 'His free affirmation of man, His free concern for him, his free substitution for him' in which 'deity encloses humanity in itself' (50f.). The 'humanity of Jesus Christ' is the 'mirror' in which 'the humanity of God enclosed in His deity reveals itself'. Again, Barth stresses the direction of determination is from God to man, to the humanity of the man Jesus: 'God Himself in Him is the *subject* who speaks and acts with sovereignty'; 'He it is through whose faithfulness the corresponding faithfulness of His partner is awakened and takes place' (48f., emphasis in text). Barth is explicit that the direction of this determination is irreversibly asymmetrical: '[a]s the Son of God and not otherwise, Jesus Christ is the Son of Man. This sequence is irreversible. . . . superiority preceding subordination'. Barth also stresses God's enclosing of humanity in his deity as 'His freedom to be in and for Himself but also with and for us': '[i]t is not as though God stands in need of another as His partner, and in particular of man, in order to be truly God' for '[i]n His life as Father, Son and Holy Spirit He would in truth be no lonesome, no egotistical God even without man' but 'wants in His freedom . . . to be man's partner' (50). Following Luther Barth sees Jesus as 'the "mirror of the fatherly heart of God"' (51). *The Humanity of God*, trans., Thomas, John and Wieser, Thomas (Richmond, John Knox Press, 1960).

The Son determines and characterises his human existence as that which is confronted and determined by himself, reflecting his divine existence. The human existence of the Son is an existence which ‘exists in and with God, and is adopted and controlled and sanctified and ruled by Him’.

Can we really understand this in any other way than did Calvin did (*Instit.* II, 14,1): *e virginis utero templum sibi delegit in quo habitaret?* Is temple or dwelling – a dwelling which is certainly filled with Godhead and totally and exclusively claimed and sanctified, but still a dwelling – not really enough to describe what we have to say of human essence in relation to Jesus Christ and the history which took place in Him? (89)

It is in ‘the power of His identity with the Son of God’ that ‘Jesus Christ lives as the Son of Man’ because ‘from the very outset’ he is ‘the recipient, the only and exclusive recipient, of the electing grace of God’. The event of the determination of the human existence of the Son is not the infusion of grace as some sort of *habitus* (possession) but the history (event) of ‘divine giving and human receiving’ (90). ‘The existence of the man Jesus Christ is an event by and in the existence of the Son of God’ as an act in which the will of the Father who sends, the will of the Son who obeys and the will of the Holy Spirit uniting the Father and the Son is done. The ‘divine act of reconciliation’ (the event of the determination of the human existence of the Son in which all humanity is enclosed) is the ‘act which executes this will’, that is, the act which executes the electing will of the triune God. The triune God wills that mankind be reconciled in the human existence assumed by the Son. This is the ‘electing grace of God’ which ‘alone is [Jesus of Nazareth’s] origin and determination’ (91). Barth reminds the reader that integral to understanding this event is the human existence of Jesus as *anhypostatos/enhypostatos*, that is, held in and actualised by the hypostasis the Son. The human existence of the Son is ‘that of a man like ourselves, the individual soul of an individual body, knowing and willing and feeling as a man, active and passive in the time allotted, responsible to God and tied to its fellows’ (91).

What the grace of His origin does involve and effect, with supreme necessity and power, is the exaltation of His human essence. Exaltation to what? To that harmony with the divine will, that service of the divine act, that correspondence to the divine grace [*in diejenige Entsprechung zu Gottes Gnade*], that state of thankfulness, which is only possible in view of the fact that this man is determined by this divine will and act and grace alone, and by them brought in His existence into not merely indirect but direct and indestructible confrontation with the divine essence. We may indeed say that

the grace of the origin of Jesus Christ means the basic exaltation of His human freedom to its truth, i.e., to the obedience in whose exercise it is not super-human but true human freedom. (91-92, emphasis mine)

The determination of the human existence of the Son is ‘effective determination’ to ‘freedom for obedience’ because ‘He was man only as the Son of God’ and did not know or have any other freedom than the freedom to be obedient.

And again it is only another form of the one grace addressed to human essence in Jesus Christ that His humanity as that of the Son of God is determined by the fact that as the Son of Man He is fully and completely participant not only in the good-pleasure of God the Father but also in the presence and effective working of the Holy Spirit . . . As the Son, therefore, He is sustained outwardly by the inflexible Yes of the Father and His inexhaustible blessing, and enlightened and impelled inwardly by the comfort and power of the Holy Spirit. For where the Son is, of the same divine essence there is also the Father, and again of the same essence the Holy Ghost. (93-94)

The event of the ‘determination of His human essence’ is ‘all a history against the background and in the light of this inward life of God’: ‘Godhead surrounds this man like a garment, and fills Him as the train of Yahweh filled the temple in Is. 6’. This man is ‘always the same elect man confronted and surrounded and filled by the same electing grace of God’.²²²

The human existence of the Son is that which is held by and enclosed in the Son united as he is to the Father in the Holy Spirit. The Son actualises and determines/exalts his human existence to freedom in obedience by the ‘grace of the Father’s Yes and the Spirit’s power’; in his participation in the ‘unconditional affirmation of the Father and the Holy Ghost (Jn. 3.34)’ with whom he is one. This is the event, the *communicatio gratiarum*, of the ‘full grace of God’ being ‘addressed to human essence in Jesus Christ’ (95). The ‘human essence of the Son of God is empowered’ to freedom in obedience ‘by the electing grace of God’ (96, emphasis mine). Electing grace as the communication of grace to that which is ontologically distinct has a definite and irreversible *telos* as from God to that which is not God. The exaltation of the human existence is the second moment in the one event in which the Son of God assumes human existence, the second pulse of the one heartbeat in which

²²² There is an asymmetry too to the event of Jesus Christ being the subject and object of election, the subject of election is the triune subject *in specie* the Son who is the determining subject; the object of election is the elected human existence of the Son who is that which is determined.

the first pulse is the ‘movement from above to below’ (103). In this event is enclosed the exaltation of our humanity as:

an event which is both wonderful and simple, infinitely disturbing and infinitely comforting, the *communicatio gratiarum* which comes to all flesh in His flesh, the exaltation of human essence to fellowship with the [divine nature] (2 Pet. 1.4). (103)

Human existence is exalted to fellowship with God as determined by God. It is difficult to see how it can be argued that Barth holds to the human existence of the Son constituting/determining God. Barth’s next task is to establish the moment by moment continuing history of the two moments of humiliation and exaltation of Jesus Christ as ‘two opposed but strictly related moments’ (106). There are not ‘two different and successive “states”’ but a moment by moment history in which ‘the event of the co-ordination of the two predicates’ (divinity and humanity) happens. Barth expresses this event as the co-ordination of two ‘special actualisations’; ‘the unity of the great *novum* in its twofold form’ (115). There is a ‘special actualisation’ of the divine existence in which the ‘eternal will and decree in which God elected man for Himself and Himself for man’ is ‘executed’ (113-114). There is a ‘new actualisation of divine essence’ which is the ‘address and direction’ of the divine existence to the human existence, the ‘act of condescension’ on the part of the Son. There is also, in response to this, the ‘special actualisation’ of the ‘address and direction of the human to the divine existence’. The asymmetry of the co-ordinated event in which ‘[t]he divine and the human work together’ remains: ‘the divine rules and reveals and gives . . . the human serves and attests and mediates’ (116). Again, Barth never goes back on this asymmetry of determination; it is integral to his theology.

The *communicatio gratiarum* expresses the communication of the grace of election, that is, the determination of the triune God to be God for us in and by himself, determining that which is ontologically other to him to become free in relationship to him. The *communicatio gratiarum* is first and foremost the triune determination of the human existence of the Son to obedient freedom as that which mirrors who he is in ontological continuity with the Father in the unity of the Spirit. In taking this human existence to himself and determining it in his unity to the Father

in the Spirit, the Son determines the true human existence of all mankind which is enclosed in his singular and particular human existence. The act of the Son is one with the act of the Father to whom he is united in the Spirit; the *communicatio gratiarum* is the one act of the triune Subject.

v) The Direction of the Son in the Power of the Spirit

Section 64 part 4, entitled 'The Direction of the Son', starts with an extended discussion of what it means to talk of mankind being in Christ, '[o]ur concern must be with Jesus Christ, and with ourselves, in Him' (283), and follows Barth's portrayal of Jesus as 'Royal Man' (156-264). The 'majesty' of this man 'derives from the omnipotent mercy of God' in which God, in the Son, expresses his 'clear and complete and consistent lowliness' (292). The 'majesty of the Son of Man' in the exaltation to free obedient humiliation of suffering (vindicated in his resurrection) corresponds to the 'humility and obedience of the Son of God' as they 'coincide' in the 'event of Gethsemane and Golgotha'. The 'freedom' of Jesus Christ, obedient to death', is the power in which our liberation is accomplished for he is 'obedient in our place' (311-312). God's 'eternal will' is 'fulfilled in time at Calvary' (314). Corresponding to the 'humiliation of the Son of God' in obedience is the 'exalted and royal man who lives eternally in virtue of His unity with God' (316). His Holy Spirit is the one who 'directs and controls' the community gathered in his name (319). The Holy Spirit unites Christians to Christ and is 'no other than the presence and action of Jesus Christ Himself: His stretched out arm; He Himself in the power of His resurrection' (323). This is quite a different metaphor to Irenaeus' one of the Spirit as one of the hands of the Father, the Son being the other. Barth tends to make the Son and Spirit into one hand which for some thinkers undervalues the Spirit's particular

concrete identity and action.²²³ For Barth, however, the Spirit is the power of the divine love:

He is the power of the Son of God and Son of Man: the power in which He humbled Himself in order that in His humiliation as God He might be exalted and true man . . . it was in the power of the Spirit that He went to His death; and it was in the power of the Spirit that He was raised from the dead. (323)

Here we pause. Barth sees the Spirit as the ‘power in which’ the Son humbled himself. This is a similar statement to that of II/2, 106 in which Barth sees the Spirit as the ‘Spirit of [the] act of obedience’ of the Son; the third mode of being in which the Father who rules and the Son who obeys are united in love and peace. The humiliation of the Son which is his going to the ‘far country’ in obedience to the Father who sends him happens in the love, peace and harmony of the Spirit, in the power of divine love. God elects to reflect himself in the power of his love; God elects to reflect himself in himself by himself, i.e., by the power of his love who is the Holy Spirit. It is at this juncture that Barth gives more overt attention to the Holy Spirit as he unpacks the role of the Spirit in the enabling of Jesus human obedience as reflecting or corresponding (*Entsprechung*) to his divine obedience and is on his way to expressing this explicitly in terms of the *filioque* clause.

vi) The Holy Spirit as the Power of God’s Uniting Love

Barth starts his discussion of the Spirit with a reminder of the Spirit being the one who makes Christ present to his community because he is Christ’s Spirit. The Holy Spirit is Christ’s Spirit, Phil.1.19 and Rom.8.9. ‘As we receive [the Sprit] we receive Him from Jesus Christ, as His Spirit’.

But this means primarily that He is *His* Spirit, the Spirit in whose power and operation He is who He is and does what He does. . . . He is the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, i.e., because by Him and in the power which He gave Him the man Jesus was a servant who was also Lord, and therefore became and is and will be wholly by Him. He does not therefore need to receive Him. He came

²²³ See, for example, Gunton, Colin E., *Intellect and Action: Elucidations on Christian Theology and the Life of Faith* (Edinburgh, T & T Clark, 2000).

into being as He became the One who receives and bears and brings Him.
(323-24, emphasis in text)

Jesus does not receive the Spirit in the sense that mankind does. 'Jesus is not a man who was subsequently gifted and impelled by the Spirit like others ... He has the Spirit at first hand and from the very first' (324). Because Jesus was conceived of the Spirit 'He at once became spirit in the flesh'. Jesus not only lived by the Spirit but 'Himself creating and giving life by the Spirit'. As 'Jesus is the beloved Son of God' he is 'from the very outset and throughout His existence the spiritual man': 'the true and exalted and royal man who lives by the descent of the Spirit of God and therefore is wholly filled and directed by Him' (324). In assuming a human existence the Son remains united to the Father in the Spirit of the power of their love and this power of love is communicated to the human existence of the Son as loving determination. The 'fulness of the Spirit' is given 'without reserve or limit' to the flesh of the Son 'concealed and wrapped in an incognito as this man' who 'subject[s] Himself to the baptism of repentance in solidarity with the whole people'. His crucifixion is the 'even greater concealment' that 'actualise[s] and fulfill[s] this sign of baptism'. Jesus' 'being as flesh is directly His being as Spirit also':

It is as this man who is wholly sanctified, and therefore not in the form of an individual and sporadic inspiration but in accordance with the comprehensive necessity of His holy humanity, that the Spirit drives Him into the wilderness (Mk.1.12), ... it is again this wholly sanctified man that "through the eternal Spirit he offered himself without spot to God" in His death (Heb. 9.14) ... was "quickened by the Spirit" ... For as this man He is the Lord who is Himself Spirit. (324-25)

The Holy Spirit is radically the Spirit of Jesus because Jesus is 'spiritual man' (325). This unity of the Son with the Father in the Spirit, the one divine Subject, is the divine reality which determines the flesh or human nature of the Son. The Spirit is 'the power in which the man Jesus is present and alive' and 'in which He continually acts as the man He became and was and is'. Leaving to one side Barth discussion of the Spirit being poured out to the community creating obedience in correspondence to Christ's obedience, we pick up on Barth's comment that the Spirit 'is the power in which the love of God, electing and acting in Jesus Christ, is shed abroad' in the heart of Christians (330). The Spirit is the power of unity between Christ and Christians, coming from Christ and conducting to Christ as 'the Spirit of His revealing and revelation' (332). There is to all this, Barth stresses, a 'higher dimension' for the texts

witness to the Spirit not only being the Spirit of Christ but also to him being the Spirit of 'the Father' although the 'more narrowly christological description and derivation occur rather more frequently and with greater emphasis' and so 'constitute the basic schema' (333). That the New Testament portrays the 'fact that God or the Father is and acts as Spirit . . . shows us that this history which takes place on earth and in time, and the being and operation of the Spirit in it, have a background from which they come'. This background is 'the will of God' (334). It is the 'Yes of God . . . as it was spoken in the existence of the man Jesus' in which God wills 'the existence of a people which responds to this Yes . . . by the presence and action of the Holy Spirit'. In the occurrence of this history, 'God Himself is at work' (335). The 'origin' of this history is 'the man Jesus' and the 'goal' is 'Christendom' and the 'centre' is the Holy Spirit who is the 'living transition from one to the other' [*als der lebendige Uebergang von dort nach hier ist*] (336, emphasis mine). The Holy Spirit is the link between Christ and Christendom, that is, the power of the transition from the origin to the goal of God's will. In this history, with these 'three decisive factors', 'God Himself is always and everywhere the decisive factor, the true acting Subject'. In the 'beginning and end and centre' of this history 'God Himself acts and speaks'.

Barth seems to have three focuses when talking of the Spirit as the Spirit of Jesus. The Spirit is immediately and directly the unity of the Son and the Father. Secondly, in maintaining this unity *ad extra*, the Spirit is the one who empowers the human existence of the Son, resurrecting and revealing him to be the eternal Son united to the Father. Thirdly, the Spirit makes Christ present to us between the times of his ascension and his parousia. The unity of the Father and Son in the Spirit means that the event of the life-act of Jesus is the act of the one divine Subject. Barth sees the power of the Spirit as the power in which God overcomes the 'distance' between the one man Jesus and the many who are held in him. The distance is overcome in the Spirit who is God himself revealing himself as the one who is with us in Christ, or more accurately, in whom we are with God. The occurrence of this history reveals the triune God himself as 'the Lord of this occurrence' (338) for the Holy Spirit who links us to the Father in the Son incarnate, is also the one who links the Father and the Son. In this section Barth has been explicating the Spirit as uniting God and mankind in Christ and therefore elucidating his I/1 concern (480ff.) that the *filioque* clause is essential.

vii) The *Filioque* Clause: the Spirit who Unites the Father and Son *ad intra* is Reflected *ad extra* in his Uniting of God and Mankind in Christ as the Eternal Pulse of the Power of Uniting Love

Barth now moves more into his doctrine of God in his concern to outline the trinitarian life, 'the threefold mode of His being', and here reference to the theology of the *filioque* finally becomes explicit as Barth elucidates his understanding of the Spirit as the bond between God and the man Jesus and 'in Him' all mankind. The Father is the origin of the triune life, the Son the one 'who is eternally loved by the Father and who eternally loves the Father in return' and 'the Holy Spirit who is not only the divine power of mediating between Christ and Christendom but the mode of being of the one God which unites the Father and the Son' (339f.). The Spirit has a 'specific' work *ad intra* which is seen in the 'undivided *trinitatis ad extra*', in his 'function in this history'. *Ad extra* the Spirit's work is 'transition', 'communication', 'mediation' and 'mutual disclosure' in which people are united with Christ. This is his work of 'intervention' in which 'His being and work in our earthly history' is the event in which 'there is repeated and represented and expressed what God is in Himself' (341). The 'creating', 'establishing' and 'maintaining' of fellowship between Christ and mankind is 'God Himself . . . active and revealed', that is, the eternal 'unity', 'peace' and 'love' which 'is in God' is an event *ad extra*. '[T]he event of the transition, the communication, the mediation between Jesus and us' 'takes place first in God Himself' as 'an event in His essence and being and life'.

It falls straight down from above into the sphere of our essence and being and life, repeating and representing and expressing itself in the occurrence of that history . . . The divine intervention which creates fellowship reveals itself and takes place, not as something which is alien to God, but as a mediation which is most proper to Him, which takes place first in Himself, in His divine life from eternity to eternity, in His fellowship and inward peace, in the love which is primary and properly in Him. What is revealed and represented and active is the unity of the Father and the Son in the Spirit, who like the Father and the Son, is the one true God, *qui ex Patre Filioque procedit* (342, emphasis mine)

This inner trine event ‘becomes an event among us and for us’. The ‘love which is in God Himself’, in which God lives ‘His own most proper life’ as the living God becomes an event *ad extra*. ‘God Himself acts in His own most proper cause when in the Holy Spirit he mediates between the man Jesus and other men’ (343f.). This is because mediation happens in God: ‘distance and confrontation, encounter and partnership, are to be found in Himself’. ‘God is in Himself . . . Father and Son’: ‘[f]or He knew himself from all eternity, the Father and the Son, and the Son the Father’. The mediation of the Spirit is his uniting action.²²⁴

What is primarily in God is the transition which takes place in that distance, the mediation in that confrontation, the communication in that encounter, the history in that partnership. God is twice one and the same, in two modes of being, as the Father and the Son, with a distinction which is not just separation but positively a supreme and most inward connexion. The Father and Son are not merely alongside one another . . . [t]hey are with one another in love. (344)

‘God was never solitary’; ‘in God Himself . . . is history in partnership’ [*die Geschichte in jener Partnerschaft*]: ‘the closed circle’ of ‘the Father’s eternal begetting of the Son, and the Son’s eternal being begotten of the Father, with the common work which confirms this relationship, in which it takes place eternally that the one God is not merely the Father and the Son but also, eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son, the Holy Ghost’. Immediately following this Barth makes it clear that what he has in mind is not a ‘static thing’ but a dynamic history whose occurrence is the ‘eternal rise and renewal of the partnership’ [*erneuert sich da - ewig auch die Partnerschaft*] as the act of the living God (emphasis mine).

There is no rigid or static being which is also not act. There is only the being of God as the Father and the Son with the Holy Spirit who is the Spirit of both and in whose eternal procession they are both actively united. This history in partnership is the life of God before and above all creaturely life. (345)

The eternal act of the living triune God is the moment by moment ceaseless event of his history in partnership in which the Father gives existence to the Son, the Son receives his existence from the Father and both give existence to the Spirit who in

²²⁴ It seems that something of Gunton’s concern with mediation has been charted by Barth in his articulation of the Spirit as ‘mediation’, uniting action, between the Father and Son. Thus Gunton: ‘[i]n sum, the Spirit is the mediator of the Son’s relation to the Father in both time and eternity’, *Intellect and Action*, 80ff.

receiving his existence from them unites their active love. Barth's point is that this triune event did not happen at a particular moment and then cease but is an ever happening movement of giving and receiving life in love; it is an eternal pulsating event (never ending movement) and there was never a moment when it did not happen nor will there ever be a moment when it ceases to happen.²²⁵ The 'history in partnership' of the living God can also be expressed as a 'transition' [*die Geschichte*], 'mediation' [*der Uebergang*], 'encounter' [*die Vermittlung*] and 'communication' [*die Kommunikation*] between the Father and the Son in 'the third moment of the divine life', that is, 'in the Holy Spirit' in whom 'the history between the Father and Son culminates'.²²⁶ As the '*Dominus*', the giver of life, '*qui ex Patre Filioque procedit*', 'God is the free Lord of His inner union' (345, emphasis mine). That the triune God 'creates and gives life' in being God for us as event, 'He does . . . out of His own most proper being'. In himself God is freedom in love in the Spirit which is to say '[c]oncretely, He is Spirit'.

The triune life of God, which is free life in the fact that it is Spirit, is the basis of His whole will and action even *ad extra*, as the living act which He directs to us. It is the basis of His *decretum et opus ad extra*, of the relationship which He has determined and established with a reality which is distinct from Himself and endowed by Him with its own very different and creaturely being. It is the basis of the election of man to covenant with himself: of the determination of the Son to become man, and therefore to fulfil this covenant. (345, emphasis mine)

Can there be any clearer assertion from Barth that the living triune God is the basis of election? The triune God determines the event of election as the execution of his free will, as that which reflects his existence in relationship.

It is to be noted that God is not under any obligation to will and do all this. He does not lack in Himself either difference or unity, either movement or stillness, either antithesis or peace. (346)

That God elects to establish a covenant with man which he himself keeps on man's side 'takes place in an inconceivably free overflowing of His goodness' in which God 'determines to co-exist with a reality distinct from Himself'. This is the 'will and

²²⁵ In that election happens as the beginning of all God's works *ad extra* and is eternal is to say that 1) it had a beginning (unlike the Trinity which has 'no beginning') and 2) as an *eternal* event it is an event that will never end, the Son will never cease to be Jesus Christ and therefore mediate to us the Father in the Spirit of uniting love who mediates us to the Father in Christ.

²²⁶ Again, are there not similarities to Basil's concept of the Spirit 'perfecting the blessed Trinity'?

work of His free grace'. The God who is triune wills to elect himself in the Son to become man as a reflection of who he is. The triune God establishes and determines this event as a reflection of who he is. Barth is articulating and elucidating the event of election as consistent with his I/I doctrine of the Trinity as found in sections 8-12.

And because he is the God of triune life, He does not will and do anything strange by so doing. In it He lives in the repetition and confirmation of what He is in Himself. (346)

The 'distance', 'confrontation', 'encounter' and 'partnership' between God and man as established and determined by God is simply 'a representation [*Darstellung*], reflection [*Abbildung*] and correspondence [*Entsprechung*] of the distinction with which He is in Himself the Father and the Son'. Equally, 'the transition, the mediation, the communication and the history which [God] causes to take place in the covenant with man, in man's election, in the incarnation of the Son' is again the 'representation, reflection and correspondence of the union of the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit as His own eternal living act'. In acting towards mankind in the Son, God is 'true to Himself, revealing Himself as the One He is in Himself as Father, Son and Spirit, in expression and application and exercise of the love in which He is God'. The Holy Spirit, 'the Spirit of God', is 'the power of the transition [*die Kraft des Uebergangs*], mediation [*der Vermittlung*], communication [*der Kommunikation*] and history [*der Geschichte*] which take place in the life of God Himself and then consequently in our life, in the relationship of the man Jesus to us'. The Father and Son do not exist from the Spirit, but in bringing him forth together as that which is distinct from them they are united, as distinct from one another, in him in the power of their love. God's third mode of existence is loving mediation in which the togetherness of the Father and Son happen as that which proceeds from them. The Spirit is the Spirit of the Father and the Son; the power which proceeds from them as their union in love. This event is reflected *ad extra* in the Spirit uniting the Son in his human existence to the Father in which the Spirit maintains the union of love and peace between the Father and the Son in determining (as loving rule) the human existence of the Son.²²⁷ The Spirit's uniting act *ad intra* is reflected in his uniting acts

²²⁷ The Holy Spirit is the one 'who controls [*regierende*] this man, and proceeds from Him,' and is none other 'than the Spirit of God acting and revealing Himself in the created world'. Gunton comments upon the strong use of *regierende* as suppressing the character of Jesus' free human action, *Intellect and Action*, 78, but Barth sees it as loving determination.

ad extra. In what sense does the Spirit unite the Father and the incarnate Son? He maintains the Son incarnate in obedience to the Father as the ‘true and royal human life which corresponds to His divine Sonship’; the Son’s human life lived in the uniting power of the Father’s love (349).

**viii) The Obedience of Christ to the Father in the Unity of the Spirit
Corresponds to the Obedience of the Eternal Son to the Father in the
Unity of the Spirit**

God’s life is ordered love as a ‘history in partnership’ in which there is ‘authority and obedience’ united in love. This eternal event is reflected in the event in which the Son incarnate is obedient to death. That the Father dispenses the Son to be the human partner who keeps the covenant between God and man is proper to his being the Father. That the Son freely accepts this commission is proper to his being the Son. That the Spirit is the power of love and peace in which the Father and Son remain united in this giving and receiving is proper to his being the Spirit:

the Father sends the Son and the Son is obedient to this sending. In this obedience He becomes man. Because in this obedience, He becomes that true and exalted and royal man. But again in this obedience, He becomes man in the place and situation of sinful, fallen man, in that deepest humiliation. It is to this depth that the Father causes Him, and He Himself wills, to condescend . . . and in His obedience genuinely to conclude our peace with God. (351, emphasis mine)

Does the Son then elect obedience as the ‘beginning of all the ways and works of God’ (II/2, 3) or is obedience his own most proper existence as the Son of the Father? Is obedience to do with the work *ad extra* or is there an obedience *ad intra* which is reflected in the work *ad extra*? Does the Son decide to be obedient or does he respond in obedience? What does Barth mean by his talk of the Son condescending in obedience? The Father wills the Son to become incarnate and the Son wills to become incarnate: ‘[i]n divine freedom [the Son] accepts and chooses and goes the way which in the same divine freedom the Father has appointed for Him’. ‘This is the twofold but single will of God’:

For all that it is so puzzling, it is a representation, reflection and correspondence of the life of God Himself. It is only a correspondence to the extent that it takes place in the human life of the Son of God, which as such can only attest the life of God. But it is a true and faithful correspondence to the extent that the human life of the Son of God, and therefore the man Jesus of Nazareth who as such goes this way of obedience, is the direct and perfect witness of the life of God Himself. His witness is that in the first instance there is height and depth, superiority and subordination, command and willingness, authority and obedience, in God Himself – not in identity, but in a real differentiation . . . (351)

Barth is explicit; there is obedience *ad intra*, in God. This is who God is as the God of ordered love. The eternal Son of God, begotten of the Father, is the obedient one. In electing with the Father in the unity of the Spirit to become incarnate this Son's obedience 'necessarily shines out in His existence as the royal man'; he could be no other man than this man of obedience for this is who he is as the Son. In Barth's account it is only the Son who could become incarnate, only the one who is the obedient one. The obedience of the Son, *ad intra*, as that which is necessarily reflected *ad extra* in the human life of the Son, is integral to Barth's doctrine of reconciliation. It is no coincidence that when Barth considers the obedience of the Son the doctrine of election and the Trinity are brought into play. That God, in the Son, keeps the covenant on man's side in Jesus Christ is the window through which the God of authority and obedience in the love of the Spirit can be seen. The existence of the 'royal man' witnesses to the peace and love in which authority and obedience are united: 'He attests a divine height and superiority and ruling authority which are not self-will or pride or severity, which do not cramp God, but in which He is free to stoop to the lowest depth in His whole sovereignty' (352). God did not have to choose to elect himself to be his own covenant partner in whom mankind would be redeemed but in that he did so in the presence of his Son in human existence, we have been given a window on eternity in which we can see the Fatherly heart of God, the Son of obedience and the Spirit of uniting love. The Son of God in his human life witnesses to 'the life of God Himself':

He attests that the height and the depth are both united, not merely in the love in which God wills to take man to Himself, and does take Him, but first in the eternal love in which the Father loves the Son and the Son the Father. (352, emphasis mine)

That God loves as a first to a second and a second to a first in the unity and peace of a third who proceeds from them is who the living God is. This is the God who loves in freedom and this is the history or event of his eternal life. This movement in love is eternal, never ceasing event. Barth attempts to conceptualise the event of election as the decision of the triune God who loves in this ordered way to will the overflowing of his love. The triune God decides/elects/wills to elect/reflect/overflow in love.

ix) The Spirit as the Triune Mode of Being Who Reveals the Eternal Love of God

Integral to Barth's doctrine of the obedience of Christ as the reflection of the prevenient obedience of the Son is his doctrine of the Holy Spirit as the bond of love in which the obedient Son is united to the Father as expressed by the *filioque* clause. *Ad extra* the Holy Spirit unites Christians to Christ revealing 'the life of the man Jesus as the life of the Son with the Father and the Father with the Son' (352). The work of the Spirit *ad extra* is to awaken, 'kindle', knowledge and confession in freedom:

He convinces us of the love of God for us which became an event in earthly history in the existence of Jesus Christ, and which is genuine and effective and immutable because it is an overflowing of the love which is in God Himself [*weil sie ein Ueberstroemen der Liebe ist, die in Gott selber ist*]. (352)

The Spirit 'stimulat[es] and empower[s]' the Christian community to 'faith and confession' in 'His freedom' (356). That is, the Spirit evokes the community to obedience as that which 'correspond[s]' to the 'Christ-occurrence'. Christ is 'obedient to *His* election' reflecting 'the dynamic and teleology of the divine life [*die Dynamik und Teleologie des gottlichen Lebens*]', the way of the divine will and resolve and work' (357). The living God acts. He acts 'inwards' and 'outwards' but in a 'sequence' in which the inner life is prevenient in all senses. The 'outward' life of God derives from the 'dynamic and teleology of its basis in God'; from the 'inward' life (359). It is the Spirit who makes this known:

He is the Spirit of truth because He lights up the life of man Jesus as the life of the Son with the Father and the Father with the Son; and He lights up the

antithesis which controls this life in its necessity but also in its unity, in the dynamic and teleology which are first in the living act of God Himself. (359).

What is the antithesis that controls the human life of the Son as a 'necessity'? Is it not the 'living act of God' which precedes this event and which this event reflects; the triune ordered life of love? The triune God determines that his inner life of ordered love be reflected 'outwards'. Crucial to understanding Barth's doctrine of election is recognising that Barth never relinquishes his stance that God is prevenient in all things with a direction of determination which is irreversible. The *telos* of God's acts *ad intra* towards his acts *ad extra* is never reversed. As God's life is ordered *telos* (from the Father to the Son and the Son to the Father and from both to the Spirit who unites) so his action *ad extra* is ordered *telos*; from God (the triune Subject) to his human existence in the Son and as enclosed in this, from him to us. Mankind is exalted in the human existence of the Son. The human existence of the Son is exalted in the Son as he is held in unity to the Father in the power of their uniting love, the Spirit. Taking up a point made by Paul Jones, whilst the triune God may choose to ontologically complicate his existence in the Son by the assumption of a human existence, this assumed existence does not constitute who the triune God is as God but is itself constituted by who God is as God. The direction of determination *ad extra* is always from God to that which is ontologically other, just as the direction of determination *ad intra* is always from the Father to the Son and the Son to the Father in the unity of the Spirit; the 'dynamic and teleology' of the 'the living God Himself'. Any conception of finitude determining/constituting infinitude would be seen by Barth to be a reversal of one of his most basic and entrenched principles; the total sovereignty of God and the irreversible asymmetry of his existence and action.

x) **Summary of Main Points of Chapter V**

As Barth progresses through IV/1 and IV/2 he elucidates his stance that the obedience of Christ is an event of determination by the Son united to the Father in the Holy Spirit; it is the triune event of the *communicatio gratiarum*, of the communication of the grace of election to the human existence assumed by the Son.

The *communicatio gratiarum* is the moment by moment event of the history of this determination; the beginning of all the ways and works of God *ad extra* in the event of election in which the sovereign triune God elects that his inner life of ordered, teleological relationship be reflected outwards in the gathering to himself of human existence as it is enclosed in the Son. In these part volumes Barth clarifies further his concept of correspondence, exposing its full importance. It is made clear that this concept is used with a strict and irreversible asymmetry. The economic Trinity corresponds to the immanent Trinity. That which happens *ad extra* corresponds to that which happens *ad intra*. The triune life of God is the basis of the beginning of all God's ways and works *ad extra* in the decision to reflect himself in himself by himself; to elect and enclose and determine the singular and particular human life assumed by the Son as that in which all human life is elected, enclosed and determined. The Son's human existence is exalted to obedience to the Father in the power of the Spirit's uniting love as the moment by moment determining event; the *communicatio gratiarum*. This event reflects the ordered existence of the triune life of God in which there is the ruling Father and obedient Son united in the love and peace of the Spirit. The 'eternal rise and renewal' of 'transition' and 'mediation' (IV/2, 344-346) that happens in the living God's life as the event of spirated love between the begetting Father and begotten Son is repeated and reflected *ad extra* in the moment by moment event of election in which the enclosing of time in eternity in the Son is the constant history of the exaltation of the Son's human life to obedience and by it the healing of all human life as hid in him. In IV/2 (342, 345) Barth refers explicitly to the *filioque* clause in his articulation of the Spirit as 'freedom in love' between the ruling Father and obedient Son; the triune mode who, breathed from the Father and Son, mediates between them uniting them in peace and harmony. The Spirit's action *ad intra* as the one who 'creates fellowship' between the Father and Son is reflected *ad extra* in his various uniting acts. As the power of God's uniting love the Holy Spirit maintains the unity of the incarnate Son, and all humanity enclosed in him, to the Father. The asymmetry of Barth's I/1 doctrine of the Trinity as explicated in Barth's argument for the *filioque* clause is integral to Barth's revised doctrine of election as it is here most clearly expressed in Barth's doctrine of reconciliation as the triune event of God's act of reflection in which the obedience of Christ corresponds to the eternal obedience of the Son.

It is in the first two part volumes of Barth's doctrine of Reconciliation that both Rowan Williams' and Bruce McCormack's concerns, regarding the continuity of Barth's doctrine of the Trinity in I/1 with proceeding volumes, are finally put to rest for it is here that the full weight of Barth's concept of the irreversible correspondence between the economic and immanent Trinity is felt in Barth's articulation of the obedience of Christ to the Father in the power of the uniting Spirit to be a reflection of the obedience of the Son to the Father in the unity of the Spirit *qui procedit ex Patre Filioque*.

xi) Concluding Comments to Chapter V

As Barth builds up his picture of the correspondence between the economic and immanent Trinity with regard to the obedience of Christ reflecting the obedience of the Son, there is a steady increase in pneumatological material until the point where, in IV/2, Barth refers explicitly to the *filioque* clause as that theological tool which, for him, succinctly expresses the action of the Spirit in the economy as corresponding to the action of the Spirit in the life of God. As the moment by moment pulse of the power of uniting love between the incarnate Son and the Father, the Holy Spirit simply does in time what he does in eternity and thereby unites the two. The Father and Son are 'actively united' in the Holy Spirit as the event of the triune God's 'history in partnership' (IV/2, 345). The triune life of God is never ceasing movement, never ceasing action and it seems clear to us that for Barth the Holy Spirit is as active in that event as is the Father and Son, albeit as a uniting and not an originating action. God's inner life is not undetermined but has a strict and irreversible direction of determination. There is, first, the Father who begets the Son and whose particular characteristic is loving rule. There is, second, the Son who is begotten of the Father and whose particular characteristic is faithful obedience. There is, third, the Holy Spirit who is breathed from the Father and the Son and whose particular characteristic is the enabler of unity. For Barth, each divine mode of being has a particular and unique determination in the life of the undivided Trinity.

Picking up at point made by Bruce McCormack, that Barth's doctrine of the Trinity prior to his revision of the doctrine of election operated with a concept of the Son as 'undetermined', an 'abstract metaphysical subject', because Barth was still struggling to free himself from a substantialistic ontology, we hold that as opposed to being 'undetermined' or metaphysically and abstractly defined, the Son in I/1's Trinity is determined (or defined) by the Father as the one who follows the Father and who with the Father breathes the Spirit. Barth's asymmetrical account of the Trinity in I/1, gleaned from his reading of the scriptural witness to the Son incarnate as the one sent by the Father as the revelation of God made known to us by the Spirit, suggests that Barth offered an account of the Son based upon his relationship to the Father and Spirit in the economy. As explicated here in volume IV, Barth's vision of the triune God as 'the history between the Father and Son' which 'culminates' in the Holy Spirit who, proceeding from them, is the 'eternal rise and renewal of [their] partnership', shows that Barth was still operating with a doctrine of the Trinity which was structurally the same as that offered in I/1 and that in both volumes Barth's doctrine of the Trinity has a concept of each divine mode as having a particular and unique determination. In McCormack's favour, however, it has to be acknowledged that Barth had not, in I/1, established his concept of divine obedience, that is, the particular determination of the Son as faithful obedience although in I/1, as Williams saw, Barth explores the title of 'Reconciler', appropriated to the second *Seinsweise* from his work in the economy, and states that a 'relation of subordination' between the Father and Son has to be acknowledged (I/1, 413). It seems to us that Barth was still feeling his way through his realisation that theology must not leave the 'soil of revelation' in speaking coherently and scientifically of God and that whilst Barth saw that the Son stands in an irreversible order 'following on' from the Father (I/1, 413), Barth was yet to take a more definite stance upon the distinctive characteristic of the Son being one of obedience. This makes its first appearance in volume II, after the impact of Maury and the consequent revision of the doctrine of election. So much hangs upon how one interprets Barth's doctrine of election and whether one sees this as a triune event with a one way direction of determination from the triune God reflecting who he is, which is what we argue, or the event in which God elects triunity, which is what McCormack argues, such that God's decision of election defines God's shape. That Barth uses the doctrine of the Trinity as asymmetrically articulated in I/1 in his argument for the obedience of Christ as corresponding to the

obedience of the Son as here developed in IV/1 and IV/2, shows, we believe, that Barth saw the I/1 doctrine of the Trinity to be compatible with what he was trying to do in volume IV. And one reason for their compatibility is this: Barth's use of his concept of correspondence, with its strict and irreversible direction of determination, had been gathering pace as the *Dogmatics* progressed and by volume IV Barth was in a much stronger position to state this clearly that he was in I/1 despite the outlines of the concept of correspondence being present in the first volume. The asymmetrical action of the triune God in the economy corresponds to who the triune God is as 'history in partnership'. The obedience of Christ to the Father in the power of uniting love who is the Spirit corresponds to who God is as the ruling Father and obedient Son in the unity of their breathed Spirit. If we look through the lens of Barth's doctrine of the Trinity in volume IV, in which the concepts of both correspondence and obedience in God have been fully developed, back towards the doctrine of the Trinity in I/1, through the various stages of III/2, II/2 and II/1, we are in fact able to see that there is no rupture in this doctrine but that, on the contrary, it has matured.

VI

CONCLUSION

Barth seeks to understand the Trinity *ad intra* through the lens of their *opus ad extra* and to this end Barth's *Dogmatics*, following the revisions to the doctrine of election in which God elects to reflect himself in himself by himself, is a quest to understand the correspondence between the economic and immanent Trinity. Barth's trinitarian theology in I/1 is structured asymmetrically as revealed through his arguments for adhering to the Western doctrine of the double procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and Son; the *filioque* clause. The importance of this theological construct for Barth's overall programme cannot be over emphasised for by it he articulates one thread of the correspondence between the Trinity *ad extra* and *ad intra* in the Spirit being the divine mode in whom the ruling Father and obedient Son are united in love and peace. The uniting action of the Spirit who is breathed from the Father and Son as that which unites their ordered existence in love and freedom is reflected *ad extra* in his work of maintaining the incarnate Son, and all humanity as it is enclosed in his human existence, in unity to the Father. To this end Barth's I/1 articulation of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of 'Revealedness', *ad extra*, corresponds to his being, *ad intra*, the divine mode in whom the Father and Son are united in their knowing one another but not only this; the Spirit is the one who unites all aspects of their ordered existence in love and freedom. As the divine mode of existence who completes the Trinity as breathed from the Father and Son uniting them in love and freedom, the Holy Spirit does not himself breathe divine existence for he is divine existence breathed. The Father and Son do not exist from the Spirit but in breathing the Spirit the Spirit unites them as the 'eternal rise and renewal' of the 'transition' and 'mediation' (IV/2, 344-346) of triune life and in this sense Barth does have a concept of the Spirit as constituting the life of the Trinity as long as the asymmetrical relationship of the three hypostases, based upon the doctrine of origins, is acknowledged. The Spirit breathed by the Father and Son is the uniting power of God which *ad extra* is reflected in his uniting work in the lives of Christians, which Barth

expresses in a myriad of ways, but first and foremost it is the event in which the Spirit maintains the unity between the Father and incarnate Son in his fragile human existence.

The fragility of the man Jesus is strongly acknowledged by Barth who sees the Son assuming a human constitution of body and soul in space and time which is vulnerable to alienation. In enclosing this existence within his divine existence the Son, in unity to the Father in the Spirit, brings to his human existence the full force of the determining power of God's love because the eternal Son does not cease to be the eternal Son when he takes the path of humiliation to human estate. There is no change in who he is as the eternal Son in his continuing relationship to the Father in the Spirit, his divine status as the Son, but his divine existence of obedience to the Father is mirrored in his human existence of obedience to the Father and so his human existence corresponds to his divine. There is a necessity to the human existence of the Son; he could live in no other way than the way he does, that is, in obedience. The triune God of love and freedom whose existence in relationship is the ordered movement and event of united otherness, of giving and receiving in love, elects to reflect who he is. In that what is revealed *ad extra* is a ruling Father, a *prius*, and an obedient Son, a *posterius*, united in love and harmony tells us, Barth argues, that there is obedience in God; it is not alien to who he is. That Barth can write in II/2 that the Son elects humiliation in obedience to the Father in the unity of the Spirit shows that he saw obedience *ad intra* as integral to his revised doctrine of election and continued to elucidate, particularly in III/2, the concept of correspondence essential to articulating this vision but it was not until the first two part volumes of his doctrine of reconciliation that the full force of what Barth perhaps only saw in outline in volume two is felt. In IV/1 and IV/2 Barth is explicit: the obedience of Christ is an exaltation of determination to obedience which reflects the obedience of the Son to humiliation. Christ could be no other man than the man of obedience because he is the Son of God in person and this is who the eternal Son is; 'the obedient one' (IV/1, 209). The Son is not constituted as obedient by election, he does not elect obedience; on the contrary his eternal obedience grounds the event of election and determines the exaltation of his human existence to obedience as that which corresponds to who he is. Election is the event of reflection and in making a space within himself in anticipation to be filled in time in his descent to human estate, election is the cusp of reflection; the beginning

of all God's ways and works *ad extra* with a determination from God to that which he posits as ontologically other with a direction that is irreversible. The irreversibility of the determination of the Son's human existence corresponds to God's ordered asymmetrical life; it reflects God himself. In that the ordered existence of the triune God is unassailable, the ruling Father does not become the obedient Son and so on, the irreversibility of God's determination is unassailable. Finitude never becomes capable of infinitude, man never determines God not even the human existence assumed by the Son. The Son is man under the determining power of the triune God and the recipient of the grace of election (*communicatio gratiarum*) as that which pours forth from him to all humanity as it is enclosed in him in the moment by moment event of encapsulating and healing. The ceaseless moment by moment event or history of God enclosing time in his eternity as the election event in which all is enclosed in the Son corresponds to the ceaseless moment by moment giving and receiving of love in freedom that is the existence of the living God. The condescension of God to human estate is the event of the reflection of the obedient Son of God.²²⁸ The heartbeat of the living God is reflected in time as time is enclosed in eternity; the human existence of the Son enclosed in his divine existence and our human existence enclosed in his. The pulse of triune love surrounds us and moment by moment upholds and propels us towards eschatological completion. Integral to Barth's concept of correspondence is his doctrine of time being held in eternity.

Whilst many contemporary treatments of Barth's revised doctrine of election have been caught up in the fashion to see this as a decisive moment to which volume one sits awkwardly, we have argued that there is a tremendous continuity between I/1's doctrine of the Trinity and the new direction taken by Barth in his revised doctrine of election. Barth revises his doctrine of election, of this there is no doubt, but I/1's asymmetrically structured doctrine of the Trinity is fully concomitant with the revision as is evidenced by the use to which it is put in Barth's articulation of the event of election as the event in which the triune God elects to reflect who he is in the beginning of all his ways and works *ad extra*. Whilst Barth's use of the concept of correspondence takes time to come to maturity its presence is felt in volume two, expanded in III/2 and most clearly expounded in IV/1 and IV/2 in which the

²²⁸ The Son himself does not reflect God; he is God. The Son's human life of obedience reflects who he is as God the Son, that is, reflects his divine life of obedience.

obedience of Christ as exaltation to obedience mirrors, corresponds to, the obedience of the Son to humiliation. The obedience of Christ to the Father in the unity of the Spirit corresponds to the obedience of the eternal Son to the Father in the unity of the Spirit. Barth's quest to understand the correspondence between the economic and immanent Trinity finds its goal in his adamant assertion that there is obedience in God and that this is reflected *ad extra* with a direction of determination that is irreversible. Volume four takes Barth full circle to his writings upon the Trinity some thirty years earlier in which he ventured to speak of the ordered *telos* of the Trinity in his adherence to the *filioque* clause. In many ways Barth's pneumatology is enriched as he unfolds his concept of correspondence; his concept of the Spirit as 'Revealedness' broadened, for the importance of the Spirit being the bond of unity between the Father and Son and so the basis of the bond between mankind and God in time is most clearly seen in Barth's impressive IV/2 account of the Spirit as the 'transition' and 'mediation' between the Father and Son in which the 'eternal rise and renewal' of the triune life happens as the dynamic giving and receiving of love and freedom. There has been much concern in some theological quarters that Barth undervalues the Holy Spirit's action in constituting the life of the Trinity and in enabling the human actions of Jesus in his life of obedience, but it seems that perhaps Barth's account of the Spirit as the power of God's uniting love as the mediator between the Father and Son offers more food for thought in this respect. Although Barth does not see the Spirit as communicating divine existence in terms of triune origins, for as the third and final divine mode of being he is the divine existence breathed forth, there are grounds to argue that he does see the Spirit as constitutive of the Trinity for the Father and Son are not the Father and Son without him. He is their peace and unity, the one in whom their distinctness is one and through whom their 'fellowship and inward peace' (IV/2, 342) happens as an event of mediation. In the 'eternal rise and renewal' of the uniting action of the Spirit, the ruling Father and obedient Son have 'freedom in love' as the event of their 'history in partnership' (IV/2, 345).

Whilst much has been written about the shift in Barth's thinking from 1936 onwards as a shift in what McCormack calls 'ontological frames of reference' whereby Barth began the transition from a substantialistic to an actualistic ontology, more attention has to be given to a concept which was introduced with Barth's election revision but whose articulation and use gathered force as the *Dogmatics*

progressed and that is the concept of correspondence or reflection. That Barth continued to assert throughout the *Dogmatics* that the eternal Son would be who he is whether or not he had become incarnate does not indicate moments of substantialist ontology but simply indicates that Barth understood the incarnation to reveal who the Son is as through a mirror. If the mirror was not put in place, the Son would still be the Son. The Son took to himself human existence, and thereby put a mirror in place, but never ceases to be the Son. If the Son is obedient as man, this tells us that the Son is obedient as God. This is an actualistic ontology; who the Son seems to be in his actions as man, that he is. His actions reveal who he is. The Father's actions reveal who he is and the Spirit's actions reveal who he is. In their action in the economy, the immanent Trinity is reflected. The economic Trinity corresponds to the immanent. There is no change in who the Trinity is, for in his obedient action to the Father in the unity of the Spirit the incarnate Son is revealed to be the obedient Son of the Father in the unity of the Spirit. God is the Father, Son and Spirit in ordered teleological relationships and the ordered teleological relationships of these three divine hypostases who are the living God do not change when the Son assumes a human existence. That this account raises many questions beyond the scope of this thesis, such as in what sense is an obedience that leads to suffering and death reflective of the immanent Trinity, is the nature of research and in the case of a theologian like Karl Barth many of these questions will no doubt be best explored in company with him.

In the light of our consideration of the work of Rowan Williams and Bruce McCormack in the introductory chapter, both of whom have raised serious questions regarding the coherence of Barth's theological programme, there has been offered in this thesis an interpretation of Barth's understanding of the obedience of Christ to the Father in the unity of the Spirit as the reflection of the eternal obedience of the Son to the Father in the unity of the Spirit to be that which clarifies and cements Barth's intention in volume two to offer a doctrine of election which is the moment of the triune God electing to reflect himself in himself by himself. We would therefore see in Barth's doctrine of the Trinity, in the doctrine of time enfolded in eternity, in the doctrine of election, in the christologically grounded anthropology of III/2 and in the doctrine of the obedience of Christ as that which corresponds to the eternal obedience of the Son a strong indication of a theological structural consistency. This consistency is missed if one does not grasp the importance of Barth's concern to

understand the acts of the Trinity in the economy as corresponding to their ordered life as the one God who is the Father, Son and Spirit. In many ways Paul Molnar gets closer to the nub than either Williams or McCormack in his insistence that to reverse the 'order between election and triunity' is to commit a 'critical error' but in seeking to defend Barth by way of insisting that Barth maintained the traditional *logos asarkos* and a sharp distinction between the economic and immanent Trinity occasioned by such an adherence, Molnar misses what Barth actually used to assert the sovereignty of the triune God and his freedom to elect. That this is oversight is without doubt is demonstrated by Molnar's inability to see the importance of Barth's doctrine of obedience in God to his overall theological scheme, something which also baffles Williams albeit for different reasons. Barth constructs what he considers to be essential conceptual boundaries around what can and cannot be said about God based upon what God has revealed of himself in the economy. One such conceptual boundary, and we do not attempt to suggest them all, is that of the concept of correspondence [*Entsprechung*] and tied to this the irreversible direction of determination that Barth gives to this concept. The economic Trinity corresponds [*entspricht*] to the immanent Trinity; the obedience of Christ corresponds to the obedience of the Son; the uniting action of the Spirit between the incarnate Son and the Father corresponds to the uniting action of the Spirit between the Father and the Son. In all these instances Barth is insisting upon the sovereignty and freedom of the triune God and yet he is also showing that this sovereign and free God lives in a particular ordered way; a way of loving rule and faithful obedience in the peace and harmony of the Spirit of their unity. That this God elects to reflect who he is as these three in ordered and unbroken relationship is, as Barth so succinctly puts it, 'grace, sovereign grace, a condescension inconceivably tender':

Be it noted that this determination of the will of God, this content of predestination, is already grace, for God did not stand in need of any particular ways or works *ad extra*. He had no need of a creation. He might well have been satisfied with the inner glory of His threefold being, His freedom and His love. The fact that He is not satisfied, but that His inner glory overflows and becomes outward, the fact that He wills creation, and the man Jesus as the first-born of all creation, is grace, sovereign grace, a condescension inconceivably tender. (II/2, 121)

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