

Physical and Mystical Dimensions of Human Transformation in Philo and Paul

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Philo of Alexandria has enjoyed great popularity in recent discussions of New Testament theology, cosmology, and pneumatology.¹ Particularly Philo and Paul share a long tradition of being read alongside each other in comparative studies of early Judaism, Greco-Roman literature, and early Christianity.² A recent example is Stanley Stowers's chapter "The Dilemma of Paul's Physics. Features Stoic-Platonist or Platonist-Stoic?" in Troels Engberg-Pedersen's new volume "From Stoicism to Platonism. The Development of Philosophy, 100 BCE–100 CE" (2017). The section entitled "Philo and Paul" discusses the pneumatology of

¹ See, e.g., G. HOLTZ, *Die Nichtigkeit des Menschen und die Übermacht Gottes. Studien zur Gottes- und Selbsterkenntnis bei Paulus, Philo und in der Stoa* (WUNT 377), Tübingen 2017; T. ENGBERG-PEDERSEN, *John and Philosophy. A New Reading of the Fourth Gospel*, Oxford 2017, and the review by Gitte Buch-Hansen in *Review of Biblical Literature* (2018.04.25). More generally on Philo and the New Testament, see, e.g., P.J. BEKKEN, *Philo's Relevance for the Study of the New Testament*, in: T. Seland (ed.), *Reading Philo. A Handbook to Philo of Alexandria*, Grand Rapids 2014, 226–267; R. DEINES/K.-W. NIEBUHR (eds.), *Philo und das Neue Testament. Wechselseitige Wahrnehmungen. I. Internationales Symposium zum Corpus Judaeo-Hellenisticum*, 1.–4. Mai 2003, Eisenach/Jena (WUNT 172), Tübingen 2004. – I am grateful for the invitation by Per Jarle Bekken and Gregory E. Sterling to present the material of this chapter in the "Philo and Early Christianity" Seminar at the 2018 Society of New Testament Studies general meeting in Athens. I also thank Nelida N. Cordova, Deborah Forger, Michael Cover, Tyson Putthoff, and Matthew Thiessen for their careful reading of and helpful comments on my paper.

² E.g., H. CHADWICK, *St. Paul and Philo of Alexandria*, *BJRL* 48 (1966), 286–307; P. BORGAN, *Philo, John and Paul. New Perspectives on Judaism and Early Christianity* (BJS 131), Atlanta 1987; G.J. WARNE, *Hebrew Perspectives on the Human Person in the Hellenistic Era. Philo and Paul* (Mellen Biblical Press Series 35), New York 1995; G.H. VAN KOOTEN, *Paul's Anthropology in Context. The Image of God, Assimilation to God, and Tripartite Man in Ancient Judaism, Ancient Philosophy and Early Christianity* (WUNT 232), Tübingen 2008; J.D. WORTHINGTON, *Creation in Paul and Philo. The Beginning and Before* (WUNT 2/317), Tübingen 2011; G.A. KEDDIE, *Paul's Freedom and Moses' Veil. Moral Freedom and the Mosaic Law in 2 Corinthians 3.1–4.6 in Light of Philo*, *JSNT* 37 (2015), 267–289; G. BUCH-HANSEN, *Early Conceptions of Original Sin. Reading Galatians through Philo's *De Opificio Mundi**, in: J.R. Dodson/A.W. Pitts (eds.), *Paul and the Greco-Roman Philosophical Tradition* (LNTS 527), London 2017, 221–243; J.-P. HARPER, *Paul and Philo on the Politics of the Land, Jerusalem, and Temple* (WUNT 2/562), Tübingen 2021; P.J. BEKKEN, *Paul's Negotiation of Abraham in Galatians 3 in the Jewish Context* (BZNW 248), Berlin 2021.

both authors. Stowers deals particularly with the potentially physical nature of πνεῦμα in the Philonic and Pauline corpus – a topic that will concern us in the first part of this chapter. Stowers is part of a popular reading of Paul (and Philo) that builds on the materiality of the divine Spirit.³ Significantly, a particular type of the Spirit's working is deduced from this nature. According to Troels Engberg-Pedersen, Friedrich W. Horn, and many others,⁴ the religious-ethical life of human beings derives from an ontic change achieved by the infusion of divine πνεῦμα-*Stoff*. For example, Wrede, for whom salvation “is an *ontic transformation of humanity* that produces ethical transformation as its result,” explains that Paul “appears to understand him [the Spirit] as a *heavenly substance* that transforms the human being substantially.”⁵ This view of the religious-ethical work of

³ For works since 2010, see, inter alia, T. ENGBERG-PEDERSEN, *Cosmology and Self in the Apostle Paul. The Material Spirit*, Oxford 2010; M.D. LITWA, *Becoming Divine. An Introduction to Deification in Western Culture*, Eugene 2013, 58–68; J.W. BARRIER, *Jesus' Breath. A Physiological Analysis of πνεῦμα within Paul's Letter to the Galatians*, JSNT 37 (2014), 115–138; L.B. DINGELDEIN, *Gaining Virtue, Gaining Christ. Moral Development in the Letters of Paul*, PhD diss., Brown University, 2014, chs. 2–3; P. ROBERTSON, *De-spiritualizing Pneuma. Modernity, Religion, and Anachronism in the Study of Paul*, MTSR 26 (2014), 365–383; F.S. TAPPENDEN, *Embodiment, Folk Dualism, and the Convergence of Cosmology and Anthropology in Paul's Resurrection Ideals*, Bibl.Interpr. 23 (2015), 428–455; M. THIESSEN, *Paul and the Gentile Problem*, Oxford 2016 (2018), building on C.E.J. HODGE, *If Sons, Then Heirs. A Study of Kinship and Ethnicity in the Letters of Paul*, Oxford 2007, and S.K. STOWERS, *What Is “Pauline Participation in Christ”?*, in: F.E. Udoh et al. (eds.), *Redefining First-Century Jewish and Christian Identities. Essays in Honor of Ed Parish Sanders (Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity 16)*, Notre Dame 2008, 352–371; M. THIESSEN, *Paul, Essentialism, and the Jewish Law*. In *Conversation with Christine Hayes*, *Journal for the Study of Paul and His Letters* 7 (2017), 80–85; J. ΦΟΤΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ, *The Holy Spirit and the Church in Paul from an Orthodox Perspective*, in: P. Dragutinović/K.-W. Niebuhr/J.B. Wallace (eds.), *The Holy Spirit and the Church according to the New Testament. Sixth International East-West Symposium of New Testament Scholars, Belgrade, August 25 to 31, 2013 (WUNT 354)*, Tübingen 2016, 173–186, at 180–183; J.W. BARRIER, *Recreating the Cosmos. A Holistic Reading of Paul's Letter to the Galatians*, Eugene 2017; S.K. STOWERS, *The Dilemma of Paul's Physics. Features Stoic-Platonist or Platonist-Stoic?*, in: T. Engberg-Pedersen (ed.), *From Stoicism to Platonism. The Development of Philosophy, 100 BCE–100 CE*, Cambridge 2017, 231–253; S.L. YOUNG, “Let's Take the Text Seriously.” *The Protectionist Doxa of Mainstream New Testament Studies*, MTSR 32 (2020), 328–363 (on the latter, cf. the discussion in K.C. ROWE, *What If It Were True? Why Study the New Testament*, NTS 68 [2022], 144–155). See also the more nuanced treatment in N.N. CÓRDOVA, *To Live in the Spirit. Paul and the Spirit of God*, Lanham 2018, and particularly the sophisticated and well-researched study of M. KOWALSKI, *The Spirit in Romans 8. Paul, the Stoics, and Jewish Authors in Dialogue (LTS 3)*, Göttingen 2023, which appeared after the completion of this chapter.

⁴ ENGBERG-PEDERSEN, *Cosmology and Self*; F.W. HORN, *Das Angeld des Geistes. Studien zur paulinischen Pneumatologie (FRLANT 154)*, Göttingen 1992. See the definition of “infusion-transformation” and the history of research in V. RABENS, *The Holy Spirit and Ethics in Paul. Transformation and Empowering for Religious-Ethical Life (WUNT 2/283)*, Tübingen 2013, 2–20, cf. 253–306, and the works published since 2010 mentioned in n. 3 above.

⁵ W. WREDE, *Paulus*, in: K.H. Rengstorf (ed.), *Das Paulusbild in der neueren deutschen*

the Spirit can be called “material infusion-transformation” because it suggests that a physical πνεῦμα-substance⁶ is like a “*fluidum*” poured into the believer that transforms the human soul (which is presupposed to be physical too) and makes it divine. Such an interpretation of the work of the Spirit in Paul usually locates the apostle in a Stoic or medical context.⁷ Nevertheless, Philo as well is

Forschung (WdF 24), Darmstadt 1969, 1–97, at 61, 58–59 (my emphasis). Cf. O. PFLEIDERER, Paulinism. A Contribution to the History of Primitive Christian Theology, vol. 1: Exposition of Paul’s Doctrine, London 1877, 201; H. GUNDEL, The Influence of the Holy Spirit. The Popular View of the Apostolic Age and the Teaching of the Apostle Paul, Philadelphia 1979, 124–126.

⁶ As the term “substance” is ambiguous, one should rather use “*material or physical substance*” in order to indicate that one operates with a concept of the Spirit as *Stoff* or (fine) matter.

⁷ According to the Stoics, πνεῦμα is a physical principle that permeates the entire cosmos and holds it together. In contrast to Paul (“it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit [...]” Rom 8:16; πνεῦμα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου/πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ, 1 Cor 2:10–12), no distinction is made between divine and human Spirit/spirit (cf. Seneca, *ep.* 41.8–9). In Stoicism, the human spirit is a fragment of the all-pervading world-pneuma, which can also be referred to as “divine” (e.g., Cicero, *n.d.* 2.19). Moreover, even in Stoicism the concept of transformation through the infusion with πνεῦμα is not readily available in the form in which it is presupposed by the proponents of the infusion-transformation approach regarding Paul and his context. Despite some claims to the contrary, one hardly finds a Stoic text in which the ethical effect of πνεῦμα is explicitly treated (the closest perhaps being Diogenes Laertius’s description of Stoic physics: “consider that the passions are caused by the variations of the vital breath,” 7.158). As there is a lack of more explicit data, we can agree with Büchsel, Keener and Annas that for the Stoics, the physical concept of πνεῦμα did not play a central role in their *ethics* but in their *physics* (F. BÜCHSEL, *Der Geist Gottes im Neuen Testament*, Gütersloh 1926, 47; C.S. KEENER, *The Spirit in the Gospels and Acts. Divine Purity and Power*, Peabody 1997, 7; J. ANNAS, *Ethics in Stoic Philosophy*, *Phron.* 52 [2007], 58–87, esp. 67; however, it is of course not possible to divorce ethics from physics in Stoic philosophy; cf. M. BOERI, *Does Cosmic Nature Matter? Some Remarks on the Cosmological Aspects of Stoic Ethics*, in: R. Salles [ed.], *God and Cosmos in Stoicism*, Oxford 2009, 173–200; KOWALSKI, *Spirit in Romans* 8). The Stoics thus had a materialistic pneumatology but not an ethic of substantive transformation with ethical results that is built upon it. After birth, a supplementary increase or “compression” of one’s individual πνεῦμα through external intervention by the divine (as the reception of the Spirit, cf. Gal 3:1–5; 1 Thess 1:4–6, etc.) is not intended in Stoic philosophy. Rather, *cognitive* transformation through philosophy and active reasoning played a central role in Stoic ethics (cf., e.g., Seneca, *ep.* 6.1–2; 73.15–16; 110.1, 10; Marcus Aurelius, *med.* 8.14; cf. A.A. LONG/D.N. SEDLEY, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, vol. 1: Translation of the Principal Sources, with Philosophical Commentary, Cambridge 2001, 346–354, 359–368, 381–386; M. FORSCHNER, *Die stoische Ethik. Über den Zusammenhang von Natur-, Sprach- und Moralphilosophie im altstoischen System*, Stuttgart 1981, 151; M. NUSSBAUM, *The Therapy of Desire. Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics*, Princeton 1994, esp. ch. 9). However, the intellectual and social changes that a developing Stoic undergoes as she progresses toward virtue are accompanied (as a consequence) by physical changes – some more temporary and others more permanent – to the condition of her soul’s πνεῦμα, as DINGELDEIN, *Gaining Virtue*, 100, contends (though without referring to the Stoics but to the unpublished thesis of L.L. HABER, *Prokope. Stoic Views on Moral Progress in the Context of Psychological Development from Conception to Maturity*, PhD diss., University of California, 1972, 86). Generally on πνεῦμα in Stoicism, see T. TIELEMANN, *The Spirit of Stoicism*, in: J. Frey/J.R. Levison (eds.), *The Holy Spirit, Inspiration, and the Cultures*

invoked by some scholars in support of this approach to early Jewish(-Christian) pneumatology.

In the first part of this chapter, I will discuss selected texts that have been used to support this approach to Philo and Paul.⁸ It should be clear from the start that my critical analysis does not set out to question that the Spirit is “infused” into people. After all, this is what Philo and Paul explicitly say about God’s generous extension of the Spirit (e.g., *opif.* 144; 1 Thess 4:8). Nor do I intend to deny that this infusion effects an (ontological) transformation of the person or that salvation has a physical dimension.⁹ However, I maintain that in both Philo and Paul it is less than clear that *physical mechanics* are at the root of moral transformation (*πνεῦμα-Staff* transforming the substance of the human soul for the better). After offering some discussion of the pneumatological presuppositions of this approach in the first part, the second part will turn to its anthropological presuppositions and point to an alternative approach to the role of *πνεῦμα* in the “spiritual transformation” of believers in Philonic and Pauline literature.

1. Physics and *πνεῦμα* in Philo and Paul: A Discussion of the “Dilemma”

Interpreters of Philo and Paul are in a dilemma because they typically try to read the physics of both against a Stoic-Platonist or a Platonist-Stoic framework. This seems to be the dilemma that Stowers is discussing in the article mentioned in the introduction. While he does not say explicitly what he identifies as the dilemma of Paul’s physics, he confidently claims that Paul’s physics provides an answer to the puzzle of why Paul would found a “salvation” movement of Judeans for non-Judeans based on ideas about a Jew who became a god. According to Stowers, “central to this puzzle is Paul’s conviction that when God brought Jesus Christ back to life he had been remade of a particular substance, a very special kind or quality of *πνεῦμα* [...]. Thus, at the very genesis of a movement that would involve making a local Judean figure into a god who was forcefully marketed throughout the Roman Empire lies a particular physical doctrine.”¹⁰ What is this particular physical doctrine? Stowers provides an explanation by

of Antiquity. *Multidisciplinary Perspectives* (Ekstasis 5), Berlin 2014, 39–62. – For the medical context, see most recently and comprehensively ROBERTSON, *De-spiritualizing Pneuma*. See also the discussion of some previous work from the perspective of ancient medicines in RABENS, *Holy Spirit*, 99–101.

⁸ In the first part I will thus take the opportunity of returning to and refining my analysis of some of the controversial texts treated in RABENS, *Holy Spirit*, chs. 2–3, and will provide some new material for the discussion.

⁹ On the latter, see, e.g., the brief discussion in V. RABENS, *Reframing Paul’s Anthropology in the Light of the Dichotomies of Pauline Research*, *JSNT* 40 (2018), 503–515, at 507–508.

¹⁰ STOWERS, *Paul’s Physics*, 232.

drawing on parallels with Philo: “Both Philo and Paul, I believe, have lower and divine forms of *pneuma*. Both writers seem to say that divine *pneuma* is a substance that belongs in the heavenly realms (1 Cor 15:40–9). Philo emphasizes that it is light, aethereal, and naturally ‘wants’ to rise to its home in the heavens (*aet.* 28, 33). Both also at least imply that its nature is to be unmixed.”¹¹ This physical nature of *πνεῦμα* will be the focus of our attention in the first part of the chapter as it is a major presupposition of the “doctrine” of the religious-ethical reconstitution of the human soul by *πνεῦμα-Stoff*.

1.1 The “Dilemma” of Philo’s Physics

The writings of the Jewish-Hellenistic philosopher Philo of Alexandria have been understood by some scholars to give indication of the existence in Hellenistic Judaism of a conception of *πνεῦμα* as a material substance and of the idea of infusion-transformation. At least the first part of this contention is not necessarily surprising, because Philo’s writings represent a philosophical defense and presentation of Judaism, in the course of which he employs concepts from various religious and philosophical strands. Some writers believe that Philo was predominantly influenced by Stoicism.¹² Other scholars (particularly John R. Levison), while not denying that Philo was influenced by Stoicism (and by other popular Greco-Roman conceptions),¹³ demonstrate that Philo was reluctant to adopt Stoicism uncritically and that he sometimes actually distances his pneumatology from Stoic ideas.¹⁴ Levison and others give more weight instead to the influence of Platonism on Philo’s pneumatology and argue that ultimately Philo agrees with the key tenets of his Jewish heritage.¹⁵

¹¹ STOWERS, *Paul’s Physics*, 244.

¹² So, e.g., E. TUROWSKI, *Die Widerspiegelung des stoischen Systems bei Philon von Alexandria*, Borna/Leipzig 1927, *passim*. This influence may be observed, e.g., in *gig.* 27 and *Deus* 35 where the idea of an all-permeating *πνεῦμα* is expressed (E.D. BURTON, *Spirit, Soul, Flesh* [Historical and Linguistic Studies in Literature Related to the New Testament 2/3], Chicago 1918, 160; W. BIEDER, *πνεῦμα, πνευματικός*, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* 6 [1995], 368–375, at 372; cf. J.M.G. BARCLAY, *Πνευματικός* in the Social Context of Pauline Christianity, in: G. Stanton/B.W. Longenecker/S.C. Barton [eds.], *The Holy Spirit and Christian Origins. Essays in Honor of James D.G. Dunn*, Grand Rapids/Cambridge 2004, 157–167, at 164).

¹³ J.R. LEVISON, *The Spirit in First Century Judaism* (AGJU 29), Leiden 1997, 20, supporting H. LEISEGANG, *Der Heilige Geist. Das Wesen und Werden der mystisch-intuitiven Erkenntnis in der Philosophie und Religion der Griechen*, vol. 1/1: *Die vorchristlichen Anschauungen und Lehren vom ΠΝΕΥΜΑ und der mystisch-intuitiven Erkenntnis*, Leipzig 1919, 34; cf. H. LEWY, *Sobria Ebrietas. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der antiken Mystik* (BZNW 9), Gießen 1929, 66.

¹⁴ LEVISON, *Spirit*, 137, 148–151, 159.

¹⁵ On the former, see LEVISON, *Spirit*, 151, 159; G. VERBEKE, *L’évolution de la doctrine du pneuma du stoïcisme à S. Augustin*, Paris 1945, 259; R. RADICE, *Observations on the Theory of the Ideas as Thoughts of God in Philo*, *Studia Philonica Annual* 3 (1991), 126–134, at

Partly as a result of the mixture of at least these three different *Weltanschauungen* in Philo, “the details of his doctrine of Spirit are complicated, difficult, and not always clearly consistent.”¹⁶ This is particularly obvious with respect to Philo’s views on the (im/material) nature of πνεῦμα, which seem to be wavering between Platonism and Stoicism,¹⁷ so that Erwin R. Goodenough calls this aspect of his pneumatology “one of the most baffling problems of late Greek and early Christian terminology.”¹⁸ Moreover, our understanding of the philosophical and cosmological dimensions of Philo’s pneumatology is further complicated by the fact that Philo – although he *does* formulate abstract statements about the Spirit – is not attempting to give a systematic treatment of πνεῦμα.¹⁹ These com-

133–134; G. SELLIN, Die religionsgeschichtlichen Hintergründe der paulinischen “Christusmystik,” *Theologische Quartalsschrift* 176 (1996), 7–27, at 20, 27; D. WINSTON, Judaism and Hellenism. Hidden Tensions in Philo’s Thought, in: id., *The Ancestral Philosophy. Hellenistic Philosophy in Second Temple Judaism*, ed. G. E. Sterling (BJS 331), Providence 2001, 181–198, at 198; T. ENGBERG-PEDERSEN, A Stoic Understanding of *Pneuma* in Paul, in: T. Engberg-Pedersen/H. Tronier (eds.), *Philosophy at the Roots of Christianity (Working Papers 2)*, Copenhagen 2006, 101–123, at 106–108. On the latter, see LEVISON, Spirit, 160; BURTON, Spirit, 157; BIEDER, πνεῦμα, 373–375; M. E. ISAACS, *The Concept of Spirit. A Study of Pneuma in Hellenistic Judaism and Its Bearing on the New Testament* (HeyM 1), London 1976, 29, 50–51; WINSTON, Judaism and Hellenism, 198; cf. VERBEKE, *L’évolution de la doctrine du pneuma*, 255, 238; BÜCHSEL, *Geist Gottes*, 85–86; F. PHILIP, *The Origins of Pauline Pneumatology. The Eschatological Bestowal of the Spirit upon Gentiles in Judaism and in the Early Development of Paul’s Theology* (WUNT 2/194), Tübingen 2005, 101 n. 106. However, one needs to bear in mind that the key tenets of the Jewish heritage do not provide explicit verdicts regarding the nature of the Spirit.

¹⁶ K. LAKE, *The Holy Spirit*, in: F. J. Jackson/H. J. Cadbury (eds.), *The Beginnings of Christianity*, pt. 1: *The Acts of the Apostles*, vol. 5, Grand Rapids 1979, 96–111, at 101; cf. BURTON, Spirit, 160. See also Holladay’s recent judgment that “one of the most intriguing features of Philonic thought is the fluidity of the term πνεῦμα, and the way in which it functions in different parts of Philo’s thought, including his theology, cosmology, anthropology, and prophetic experience” (C. R. HOLLADAY, *Spirit in Philo of Alexandria*, in: P. Dragutinović/K.-W. Niebuhr/J. B. Wallace [eds.], *The Holy Spirit and the Church according to the New Testament. Sixth International East-West Symposium of New Testament Scholars*, Belgrade, August 25 to 31, 2013 [WUNT 354], Tübingen 2016, 341–362, at 358).

¹⁷ Cf. H. SIEBECK, *Die Entwicklung der Lehre vom Geist (Pneuma) in der Wissenschaft des Altertums*, *Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie und Sprachwissenschaft* 12 (1880), 361–407, at 392; F. RÜSCHE, *Das Seelenpneuma. Seine Entwicklung von der Hauchseele zur Geistseele. Ein Beitrag zur Entwicklung der antiken Pneumalehre* (SGKA 18/3), Paderborn 1933, 31–32; M. PULVER, *Das Erlebnis des Pneuma bei Philon*, *ErJb* 13 (1945), 111–132, at 123, 126–127; ENGBERG-PEDERSEN, *Cosmology and Self*, 25.

¹⁸ E. R. GOODENOUGH, *By Light, Light. The Mystic Gospel of Hellenistic Judaism*, Oxford/New Haven 1935, 271.

¹⁹ Cf. VERBEKE, *L’évolution de la doctrine du pneuma*, 247; ISAACS, *Concept of Spirit*, 55; LEVISON, Spirit, 151. Pulver even thinks that Philo’s pneumatology is full of contradictions (PULVER, *Erlebnis des Pneuma*, 123), and with regard to Philo’s teaching on matter, Baeumker remarks that it is “a muddled picture” (C. BAEUMKER, *Das Problem der Materie in der griechischen Philosophie. Eine historisch-kritische Untersuchung*, Münster 1890, 388).

plexities of studying the notion of πνεῦμα come to the fore, right away, in one of the first and foremost publications on Philo's pneumatology, namely, Hans Leisegang's "Der Heilige Geist. Das Wesen und Werden der mystisch-intuitiven Erkenntnis in der Philosophie und Religion der Griechen" (1919). A brief look at his work may serve to introduce us to the issues of contention.

Leisegang divides Philo's usage of πνεῦμα into two categories with two subcategories each: (1) πνεῦμα as a *cosmological principle*: (a) as air, (b) as knowledge and wisdom; (2) πνεῦμα as a *psychological principle*: (a) as power of life that resides continually within humankind, (b) as a heavenly power that is suddenly infused by God into the human soul.²⁰ Leisegang sets out his treatment of the first category by explaining that when Philo uses πνεῦμα θεοῦ in the sense of "air" (ἀήρ) as the third of the four created elements in *gig.* 22, it is to be understood as matter.²¹ Leisegang may be right with this judgment, because ἀήρ in this passage is praised as being "light" (κοῦφος).²² And he is certainly right when he continues that Philo briefly mentions this meaning of πνεῦμα θεοῦ only in order to then elaborate its other meaning, namely, "pure knowledge" (cf. *gig.* 23; *Deus* 46; *QG* 2.59). This is indeed significant, because Philo explains that this unmixed knowledge (ἀκλήρατος ἐπιστήμη) is shared by the wise,²³ and Philo continues his discussion of the Spirit of God with this sense in the following paragraphs. Apart from that, Leisegang maintains that this short mention of πνεῦμα as air at the creation of the world (*gig.* 22a) is certainly not an exhaustive explanation, but that it is rather intended to show that he is not contradicting what he has elsewhere developed more fully, particularly in *opif.* 29. There, Philo tries to harmonize the Mosaic creation account with Plato's *Timaeus*. Everything that happened on the first day of creation (including the creation of πνεῦμα) refers to the creation of an incorporeal ideal world that serves as an archetype for the corporeal world that is created on the five consecutive days. Hence, πνεῦμα is an "immaterial substance" that belongs

²⁰ LEISEGANG, *Geist*, 19–136. Similar classifications have been made, e.g., by VERBEKE, *L'évolution de la doctrine du pneuma*, 236–260; A. LAURENTIN, *Le pneuma dans la doctrine de Philon*, *ETHL* 27 (1951), 390–437, at 391–424; R.P. MENZIES, *The Development of Early Christian Pneumatology. With Special Reference to Luke-Acts* (JSNT.S 54), Sheffield 1991, 63–67. It is important to keep these distinctions in mind when trying to fathom Philo's concept of πνεῦμα θεοῦ. However, it is likewise necessary to be aware of the fact that Philo is not always consistent in distinguishing the different lexemes of πνεῦμα – our discussion below of *gig.* 22 serves as an example par excellence.

²¹ LEISEGANG, *Geist*, 23; cf. H. SAAKE, *Pneuma*, *PRE.S* 14 (1974), 387–412, at 396.

²² Büchsel notes, however, that Philo usually distinguishes expressly between πνεῦμα as air and πνεῦμα as God's Spirit (e.g., *det.* 83), *gig.* 22 being an exception to this rule (BÜCHSEL, *Geist Gottes*, 86). In *QG* 1.90 Philo even seems to contradict *gig.* 22a by stating, "the divine spirit is not a movement of air but intelligence and wisdom" (cf. *gig.* 22c: ἡ ἀκλήρατος ἐπιστήμη). Wedderburn suggests that "presumably what Philo means here is that the sense of 'spirit' in question is not air in motion but the other" (A.J.M. WEDDERBURN, *Baptism and Resurrection. Studies in Pauline Theology against Its Graeco-Roman Background* [WUNT 44], Tübingen 1987, 273 n. 18).

²³ Leisegang maintains that even in this spiritualized meaning of πνεῦμα one can sense the Stoic overtones of the "Attribute der materialistisch aufgefaßten Weltvernunft," namely, ἄτητος and ἀδιαίρετος (LEISEGANG, *Geist*, 23). However, it is doubtful whether one can establish the materiality of an object on the basis of the adjectives "undivided" and "indivisible" (cf. VERBEKE, *L'évolution de la doctrine du pneuma*, 259). They rather point in the very opposite direction. On the notion of "blending," cf. 2.1 below.

to the seven incorporeal ideas of the κόσμος νοητός.²⁴ However, this second line of reasoning seems to lack the same force, because Philo's explicit designation of πνεῦμα as ἀσώματος οὐσία (in *opif.* 29) extends to all of the seven incorporeal ideas of the κόσμος νοητός, and one would need to show that their quality of immateriality continues outside the κόσμος νοητός (in contrast to, for example, the human being who is incorporeal only in the first act of creation but not in the second, *opif.* 134). Perhaps Leisegang intends to show this when he subsequently argues that for Philo, air belongs no longer to the "irdische Körperwelt," but that he understands it as an incorporeal, spiritual substance. "In this way also πνεῦμα in the sense of air, and particularly πνεῦμα as πνεῦμα θεοῦ, is removed from the physical world. It is to be understood as an 'immaterial substance.'²⁵

Leisegang thus seems to waver between attributing a material and an immaterial concept of the divine Spirit to Philo (perhaps contradicting himself).²⁶ The solution to this tension may lie in Leisegang's opinion that the Jewish philosopher Philo, who is deeply convinced of the immateriality of YHWH, finds it difficult to distance himself completely from the hylozoistic Greek philosophy of his time. "The Spirit needs to have a body to which it is bound, indeed it has to be body itself, even though the lightest and finest and unearthly one."²⁷ This potential solution may indicate that Leisegang is working with a presupposition to which we will return below, namely, that the ancient mind perceived an ἀσώματος οὐσία to be somewhat material.²⁸ First, however, we will briefly turn to some scholarly voices that ascribe a Stoic pneumatology to Philo, and then to those that affirm that Philo believed the divine Spirit to be immaterial.

²⁴ LEISEGANG, Geist, 23–25.

²⁵ LEISEGANG, Geist, 29. Leisegang is aware of the different nuances of Philo's employment of πνεῦμα in *gig.* 22 (where Philo says that the Spirit of God is used in the sense of *air*) and *opif.* 29 (where the emphasis appears to be on πνεῦμα as *life-breath* or power of life) (*ibid.*, 25). However, he explains that Philo rarely upholds this distinction because air is *Lebenssubstanz* per se (*ibid.*, 26, 24).

²⁶ This seems to be true at least for Pulver's work on this matter (PULVER, Erlebnis, 111–132). Leisegang himself explains that Philo is forced to use Greek language as that is the only one available for him. Nevertheless, according to Leisegang, Philo is not interested in the natural sciences as such or in presenting a consistent system of physics. Rather, he eclectically employs different theories that serve his purpose, which is beyond the world of physics. Only against this background it is possible to comprehend the inconsistencies and contradictions within Philo's pneumatology (LEISEGANG, Geist, 58–59). Cf. RÜSCHE, Seelenpneuma, 20–23, 28, 33–35, who argues that Philo's aim is to view πνεῦμα as immaterial, though he does not always succeed doing so. For a critique of Leisegang's general method, see T. PAIGE, Who Believes in "Spirit"? Πνεῦμα in Pagan Usage and Implications for the Gentile Christian Mission, HThR 95 (2002), 417–436, at 418–420.

²⁷ LEISEGANG, Geist, 30, 58.

²⁸ Cf. LEISEGANG, Geist, 29 n. 1, 30 n. 1. See further the discussions by VERBEKE, L'évolution de la doctrine du pneuma, 246–247; H.A. WOLFSON, Philo. Foundations of Religious Philosophy in Judaism, Christianity and Islam, vol. 2: Structure and Growth of Philosophic Systems from Plato to Spinoza, London 1982, 106–107; R.M. BERCHMAN, From Philo to Origen. Middle Platonism in Transition (BJS 69), Chico 1984, 32, 38.

Several scholars have pointed to further passages in Philo that might be interpreted as evidence for a materialistic pneumatology. For example, C.H. Dodd says that Philo gives πνεῦμα “its usual place among the material elements (e.g. *ebr.* 106 οὐρανός, γῆ, ὕδωρ, πνεῦμα ...).”²⁹ However, it is not clear that the possible materiality is the intended *tertium comparationis* of these elements. Rather, it seems that Philo’s definition preceding this list gives a clue to their common denominator: they are all part of the creation (τὸ γεγονὸς πᾶν).³⁰ And, in any case, πνεῦμα here is used in the sense of air and not as a reference to the Spirit of God.³¹

A similar argument has more recently been put forward by Engberg-Pedersen. While he is generally of the opinion that Philo’s pneumatology is Platonic,³² he submits that Philo displays a Stoic concept of πνεῦμα when he attributes the Stoic terms “strength,” “vigor,” and “power” to πνεῦμα (πνεῦμα νενόηται κατὰ τὴν ἰσχὺν καὶ εὐτονίαν καὶ δύναμιν, *LA* 1.42).³³ However, while Engberg-Pedersen is right that these characteristics are Stoic virtues, one needs clearer evidence in order to ascertain that Philo implied that the object described is therefore material. We have such clear evidence in Stoicism (e.g., the πνεῦμα ὑλικόν in Galen, *De placitis Hippocratis et Platonis* 2.8.39; cf. Alexander of Aphrodisias, *De mixtione* 11 [I. Bruns, *Alexandri Aphrodisiensis praeter commentaria scripta minora. Quaestiones, De fato, De mixtione*, Berlin 1892, 225.1–10], etc.), and we have seen above that Philo likewise is willing to provide explicit discussions of the nature of πνεῦμα (thus, e.g., his designation of πνεῦμα as ἀσώματος οὐσία in *opif.* 29). Moreover, in *LA* 1.42 Philo compares in a Platonic manner ὁ [...] κατὰ [...] τὴν ιδέαν νοῦς (rendered as “immaterial” by Engberg-Pedersen)³⁴ and the material mind (ὁ δὲ ἐκ τῆς ὕλης τῆς κούφης). Whereas the former partakes of πνεῦμα, the latter partakes of a πνοή that is like “a gentle and moderate kind of breeze and exhalation” or “a thin and very light air, being as it were a sort of exhalation.”³⁵ It seems rather unlikely that Philo intends to convey that in contrast to the light material of πνοή, which the material mind takes part of, the “immaterial” mind (κατὰ [...] τὴν ιδέαν νοῦς) would likewise partake in matter (i.e., in πνεῦμα). Rather, the point of contrast is the lack of strength (ῥώμη) of reasoning in the material mind due to its share in πνοή and lack of πνεῦμα (cf. *LA* 1.41).

²⁹ C.H. DODD, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, Cambridge 1953, 219.

³⁰ This fact *may* imply that they are physical, because the second creation is corporeal (*opif.* 16, 36, etc.). However, *De opificio mundi* does not mention πνεῦμα as being created as part of the corporeal world.

³¹ Cf. the translation of F.H. Colson and G.H. Whitaker (LCL 247.375): “the air we breathe.”

³² ENGBERG-PEDERSEN, *Cosmology and Self*, 24–25.

³³ T. ENGBERG-PEDERSEN, *The Material Spirit. Cosmology and Ethics in Paul*, NTS 55 (2009), 179–197, at 186 n. 32.

³⁴ ENGBERG-PEDERSEN, *Material Spirit*, 186 n. 32.

³⁵ *LA* 1.42, trans. C.D. YONGE, *The Works of Philo Judaeus, the Contemporary of Josephus*, vol. 1, London 1890, 62.

Other passages that have been appealed to as evidence for Philo's supposed material concept of the Spirit either concern his view of the anthropological spirit³⁶ or do not contain references to πνεῦμα at all (such as the passages mentioned by Stowers in the introductory quotation)³⁷ and hence do not deserve close attention in this chapter. Rather, we will now turn to those scholars who provide arguments in favor of the view that Philo did *not* think of πνεῦμα θεοῦ as being explicitly physical (or at least that if he did, that this was not central to his pneumatology).³⁸

The most convincing arguments for the *immateriality* of πνεῦμα in Philo are presented by Marie Isaacs. She thinks that in contrast to Stoic materialism, Philo's belief in the gulf between humans and God meant his insistence upon the immaterial nature of the divine.³⁹ For Philo, πνεῦμα is that which is of God – both in that God is its author (*LA* 1.37) and in that πνεῦμα is the essence of the divinity. Hence, God and πνεῦμα can be described in the same terms (e.g., invisibility, *plant.* 18; simple nature, *LA* 2.2; *mut.* 184; *Deus* 56; *gig.* 26–27).⁴⁰ This argument finds support in Gérard Verbeke's detailed comparison of Philo's conception of the divine Spirit and the οὐράνιος ἄνθρωπος, which leads him to the conclusion that both are of the same (immaterial) nature. Verbeke therefore

³⁶ So, e.g., the references by D.B. MARTIN, *The Corinthian Body*, New Haven/London 1995, 13; see also the discussion in BURTON, *Spirit*, 158–160.

³⁷ So, e.g., *aet.* 28, 33, cited by STOWERS, *Paul's Physics*, 244, and *fug.* 202; *migr.* 39, mentioned by HORN, *Angeld des Geistes*, 44–45 n. 11, building on D. SÄNGER, *Antikes Judentum und die Mysterien. Religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zu Joseph und Aseneth* (WUNT 2/5), Tübingen 1980, 193–196.

³⁸ Scholars who put forward that for Philo the Spirit was immaterial but who do not provide textual evidence for this claim include BIEDER, πνεῦμα, 372; P. SCHÄFER, *Geist/Heiliger Geist/Geistesgaben II. Judentum*, TRE 12 (1984), 173–178, at 174; WOLFSON, *Philo*, 2.31–32. Those who deny that Philo's pneumatology was influenced by Stoic materialism include VERBEKE, *L'évolution de la doctrine du pneuma*, 247; C.H. PINNOCK, *The Concept of the Spirit in the Epistles of Paul*, PhD diss., Manchester University, 1963, 76; BIEDER, πνεῦμα, 373–375 (allowing for the language of Stoicism but not for its concepts); ISAACS, *Concept of Spirit*, 56.

³⁹ Cf. WOLFSON, *Philo*, 2.110–126; D. FORGER, *Divine Embodiment in Philo of Alexandria*, JSJ 49 (2018), 223–262, at 227–229. According to Dillon (building on *conf.* 176–177), also the angels and the heavenly bodies “are composed of *pneuma*, or *pur tekhnikon*; they are not, however, for that reason to be described as ‘corporeal’ or ‘material.’ Those terms have connotations of corruption and passibility which do not suit these entities” (J. DILLON, *Asômatos*. Nuances of Incorporeality in Philo, in: C. Lévy [ed.], *Philon d'Alexandrie et le langage de la philosophie. Actes du colloque international organisé par le Centre d'études sur la philosophie hellénistique et romaine de l'Université de Paris XII-Val de Marne* [Créteil, Fontenay, Paris, 26–28 Octobre 1995], Turnhout 1998, 99–110, at 108).

⁴⁰ ISAACS, *Concept of Spirit*, 19, 30, 44; cf. M. FATEHI, *The Spirit's Relation to the Risen Lord in Paul. An Examination of Its Christological Implications* (WUNT 2/128), Tübingen 2000, 116–117, 120; C. BENNEMA, *The Power of Saving Wisdom. An Investigation of Spirit and Wisdom in Relation to the Soteriology of the Fourth Gospel* (WUNT 2/148), Tübingen 2002, 83.

argues that Philo thought of God's Spirit as being divine.⁴¹ Most importantly, Isaacs highlights the fact that Philo asserts that it is because of the incorporeal and moral nature of πνεῦμα that it cannot remain a permanent possession of human beings who are corporeal and sinful (*gig.* 19, 28, 53; *Deus* 2; *QG* 1.90).⁴²

Philo thus seems to align the divine Spirit closer to the immaterial than to the material world. Nonetheless, we may want to raise the question how we are to solve the dilemma of two opposite interpretations of Philo's pneumatology – one material, the other immaterial. Fulco Timmers has recently suggested a solution that sees both views as two sides of the same coin. He thinks that the material–immaterial dichotomy is of little use for fathoming Philo's concept of πνεῦμα because Philo cannot be locked up constrained to only one of the categories.⁴³ Timmers's judgment that the distinction between immaterial and material is not helpful for understanding Philo brings us back to the conclusion of my discussion of Leisegang. There, I had indicated that a potential solution to Leisegang's seemingly contradictory interpretation of Philo's pneumatology may lie in the fact that Philo himself does not differentiate as sharply between matter and non-matter as modern interpreters might expect. The problem may thus exist only for modern scholarship because we draw the line between the corporeal and the incorporeal differently from how it was drawn by some of the ancient philosophers. Indeed, John Dillon draws attention to the first book of Aristotle's *De anima* (405a7), where he characterizes the Atomist definition of the soul: "And so some have thought the soul to be fire; for this is composed of the finest particles and is the *most incorporeal* of all the elements (καὶ γὰρ τοῦτο λεπτομερέστατόν τε καὶ μάλιστα τῶν στοιχείων ἀσώματον) [...]" (this is repeated later, in *an.* 409b21, where he describes it as ὥμα τὸ λεπτομερέστατον ἢ τὸ ἀσωματώτατον τῶν ἄλλων). For Aristotle, then, the adjective ἀσώματος can be used to describe a substance that is *material* but furthest removed – note the superlative – in its composition from body in its grosser connotation, in this case, the spherical atoms of which fire is also made up, and the finest form of

⁴¹ VERBEKE, *L'évolution de la doctrine du pneuma*, 245–247; cf. his additional arguments for the immateriality of πνεῦμα θεοῦ in Philo, *ibid.*, 256–259.

⁴² ISAACS, *Concept of Spirit*, 19.

⁴³ F. TIMMERS, *Philo of Alexandria's Understanding of πνεῦμα* in *Deus* 33–50, in: J. Frey/J.R. Levison (eds.), *The Holy Spirit, Inspiration, and the Cultures of Antiquity. Multidisciplinary Perspectives* (Ekstasis 5), Berlin 2014, 265–292, at 268–269: "In each successive manifestation of πνεῦμα, immaterial categories and tangible matter can be seen to interact with each other, as two sides of one coin. To ask how Philo views the nature of πνεῦμα is to ask how he views the nature of this one coin. Is Philo a Stoic, in that he regards πνεῦμα as a material phenomenon? We could choose to answer this question with yes, based on the evidence from *Deus* 33–50. However, we will also see that Philo ultimately reserves existential priority to the immaterial concepts. The concepts truly exist for Philo; they exist in an eternal, unchanging way. Does that make Philo a Platonist? We could choose to answer this question with yes as well. However, [...] such categories are of little help and can actually put us on the wrong foot."

them. For Dillon, this seems to reveal the origin, or at least an early manifestation, of a systematic ambiguity that descends into Hellenistic philosophy.⁴⁴

Dale Martin even goes further. He declares that antiquity knew no distinction between matter and non-matter at all. According to Martin, all ancients were monistic,⁴⁵ and the kind of dualism of which many think as Platonic was really developed only by Descartes. Moreover, Martin claims that Platonism had lost its influence from the first century BCE onwards, whereafter Stoicism became the dominant philosophy.⁴⁶

However, the fact that the Platonic Academy as such no longer existed after 88 BCE does not necessarily imply that Platonism had entirely lost its influence on the philosophy at the turn of the ages. Thomas Alexander Szlezák even argues that “[n]ach der vorübergehenden Abkehr der Akademie von P[laton] in der skeptischen Phase [...] erhob sich P[laton]s Œuvre ab dem 1. Jh. v.Chr. zur dominierenden (Mittelplatonismus), schließlich zur allein bestimmenden Kraft (Neuplatonismus).”⁴⁷ Moreover, one needs to judge the ancient philosophers and their texts individually,⁴⁸ rather than sweepingly accuse all modern scholars of projecting Cartesian dualism onto the ancient mind of monism.

Martin builds his thesis that Plato was no immaterial–material dualist mainly on what Plato says in the *Timaeus* (39e–40a). According to Martin, Plato teaches here that “the divinities are material (in our sense of the word) in so far as they are made of fire and are spherical.”⁴⁹ Martin’s argument presupposes that Plato understood both fire and what is spherical as material. Unfortunately, however, Martin never provides evidence for this supposition. As it is debatable how Plato and other Hellenists comprehended the nature of these elements,⁵⁰ it would be better not to rest an argument for the materiality of the divine on such evidence. What is more, both ancient (see, e.g., Plutarch, *mor.* 882D) and modern scholars

⁴⁴ DILLON, *Asômatos*, 100–101, 106.

⁴⁵ However, see MARTIN, *Corinthian Body*, 272 n. 10 (cf. p. 115), where he says that *dualism* “was simply ‘in the air’ in first-century popular philosophy.”

⁴⁶ MARTIN, *Corinthian Body*, 12, 15.

⁴⁷ T.A. SZLEZÁK, *Platon*, DNP 9 (2000), 1095–1109, at 1107. Cf. S. LANGE, *The Wisdom of Solomon and Plato*, JBL 55 (1936), 293–302, at 302. Martin admits that Platonism existed even after the decline of Academic Platonism and mentions Philo as an example. However, he emphasizes that this is a *Stoicized* Platonism (MARTIN, *Corinthian Body*, 13). For a balanced overview over the dominant philosophical schools in the Hellenistic period, see LONG/SEIDLEY, *Hellenistic Philosophers*, I.xi, 1–6.

⁴⁸ For such a study, see, e.g., BAEUMKER, *Problem der Materie*. On Philo’s (ambivalent) view of the material world, see now also C.A. ANDERSON, *Philo of Alexandria’s Views of the Physical World* (WUNT 2/309), Tübingen 2011.

⁴⁹ MARTIN, *Corinthian Body*, 11.

⁵⁰ E.g., Leisegang believes that many Greek philosophers conceived aether, light, fire, and air as incorporeal and immaterial (LEISEGANG, *Geist*, 29 n. 1; followed by L. DÜRR, *Die Wertung des göttlichen Wortes im alten Testament und im antiken Orient. Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Vorgeschichte des neutestamentlichen Logosbegriffes* [Mitteilungen der Vorderasiatisch-Ägyptischen Gesellschaft 42/1], Leipzig 1938, 146 n. 3).

assert that Plato did have a notion of the immaterial and that he differentiated it from the material world.⁵¹ Plato's concept of the immateriality of the divine may even have influenced the late Stoic writer Posidonius who, according to Franz Rüsche and Walter Wili, comprehended πνεῦμα as being immaterial.⁵²

The statement that the ancient mind could not but conceive everything, including πνεῦμα, as either fine or heavy matter thus seems to be somewhat exaggerated.⁵³ Nonetheless, if one follows Dillon, a "systematic ambiguity which descends into Hellenistic philosophy" may have been introduced by Aristotle's "materialistic" comprehension of the immaterial.⁵⁴ While this interpretation of Aristotle may remain a matter of debate,⁵⁵ it seems clear that Philo did not blindly follow every trend of Hellenistic philosophy and that – at the same time – he also had an outstanding place within Judaism. By employing such abstract language like ἀσώματος οὐσία with reference to πνεῦμα (*opif.* 29, etc.) and by virtue of the fact that he attempts defining the Spirit at all, Philo stands out from the rest of the early Jewish sources that have been called upon in support of the thesis that ancient Judaism comprehended the Spirit as a material substance.⁵⁶ When Philo describes ἄηρ, which is set in relation with πνεῦμα, as "light" in *gig.* 22, his exegesis of Gen 1:2 seems to imply a concept of the Spirit as "light matter." Nevertheless, the explicit evidence in Philo's writings appears to point

⁵¹ M. POHLENZ, *Stoa und Semitismus*, *Neue Jahrbücher für Wissenschaft und Jugendbildung* 2 (1926), 257–269, at 261; F. RÜSCHE, *Pneuma, Seele, Geist. Ein Ausschnitt aus der antiken Pneumalehre*, *ThGl* 23 (1931), 606–624, at 611; id., *Seelenpneuma*, 10, 16; C. STEAD, *Divine Substance*, Oxford 1977, 146. On (the lack of) πνεῦμα in Plato, see, e.g., SIEBECK, *Lehre vom Geist*, 387–389; W. WILI, *Die Geschichte des Geistes in der Antike*, *ErJb* 13 (1945), 49–93, at 81, 86, followed by HORN, *Angeld des Geistes*, 57 n. 6; PAIGE, *Πνεῦμα in Pagan Usage*, 424; ENGBERG-PEDERSEN, *Cosmology and Self*, 210–211 n. 21.

⁵² RÜSCHE, *Seelenpneuma*, 7, 17 (but see p. 11); WILI, *Geschichte des Geistes*, 86, followed by HORN, *Angeld des Geistes*, 57 n. 6; however, see also BURTON, *Spirit*, 121. This return to the Platonic tradition gives further support to Szlezák's assessment of the influence of Platonism mentioned above (cf. also SIEBECK, *Lehre vom Geist*, 387; LEISEGANG, *Geist*, 30 n. 1; E. BRANDENBURGER, *Fleisch und Geist. Paulus und die dualistische Weisheit* [WMANT 29], *Neukirchen-Vluyn* 1968, 159).

⁵³ Cf. ENGBERG-PEDERSEN, *Material Spirit*, 182 n. 18.

⁵⁴ DILLON, *Asômatos*, 101.

⁵⁵ In contrast to Dillon and MARTIN, *Corinthian Body*, 8, Stead argues that Aristotle had a concept of immaterial being (STEAD, *Divine Substance*, 89–97; cf. RÜSCHE, *Seelenpneuma*, 10, 16). Also Aristotle's concept of πνεῦμα was most likely that of an immaterial and not of a material substance (see, e.g., M. HEINZE, *Die Lehre vom Logos in der griechischen Philosophie*, Oldenburg 1872, 73; RÜSCHE, *Seelenpneuma*, 7; HORN, *Angeld des Geistes*, 57 n. 6). However, this aspect of his view of πνεῦμα remains somewhat obscure (see, e.g., *gen. an.* 2.3 736b; 2.6 744a; and the discussions in F. SOLMSEN, *The Vital Heat, the Inborn Pneuma and the Aether*, in: id., *Kleine Schriften*, vol. 1 [Collectanea 4/1], Hildesheim 1968, 605–611; M.C. NUSSBAUM, *Aristotle's De Motu Animalium*, Princeton 1978, 158–164; G. FREUDENTHAL, *Aristotle's Theory of Material Substance. Heat and Pneuma, Form and Soul*, Oxford 1995, 106–148).

⁵⁶ See the discussion in RABENS, *Holy Spirit*, 35–67.

in a different direction,⁵⁷ and it is methodologically more sound to explain the ambiguous instances with the clearer ones (or else allow for some contradiction within Philo).⁵⁸ This explicit evidence, we may conclude, seems to indicate that Philo comprehended πνεῦμα θεοῦ as being immaterial.⁵⁹ Philo's notion of immateriality may have been that of "very fine matter," but we still need to inquire whether Philo adhered to the view that the divine Spirit changes the substance of the human soul by virtue of this refined materiality. We will do so in the second part of the chapter.

The fact that Philo did not more vigorously side with the "immaterial side of the coin" may be interpreted by some as Philo being in a dilemma between the Stoic and the Platonic elements of his physics, philosophy, and theology. However, while we would have liked Philo to be clearer on this issue, it seems that he did not want to (or could not) provide us with an absolute definition of the nature of (the Spirit of) God. Philo envisages God, in his transcendent aspect, as utterly beyond characterization, and therefore devoid of any attribute, material, or otherwise (e.g., *Deus* 83).⁶⁰ Human beings are not even able to fully fathom themselves, so how can they do so with God? This thought is vividly expressed in *LA* 1.91 (cf. *somn.* 1.30), and we conclude by quoting Philo in full:

The mind that is in each one of us [...] is incapable of knowing itself. [...] Can it say what it is and of what kind, breath or blood or fire or air or anything else (πνεῦμα ἢ αἷμα ἢ πῦρ ἢ ἀήρ ἢ ἕτερόν τι σῶμα)? Can it even say that it is a body or else that it is incorporeal (ἀσώματον)? *Are not they simpletons, then, who inquire about God's substance?* For how should those, who know not the substance of their own soul, have accurate ideas about the soul of the universe?

1.2 The "Dilemma" of Paul's Physics

In the introduction to the first part above, we saw that Stowers has identified a particularly strong parallel between Philo's and Paul's physics in Paul's discussion of the resurrection body in 1 Cor 15. There, Paul talks about transformation from the earthly to the heavenly reality, which is achieved through the

⁵⁷ As discussed above: *gig.* 19, 28, 53; *Deus* 2; *QG* 1.90; *LA* 1.42, etc.

⁵⁸ Cf. SIEBECK, *Lehre vom Geist*, 396, and n. 26 above.

⁵⁹ Cf. BÜCHSEL, *Geist Gottes*, 86, with a rather judgmental note that such a "geistig" notion of πνεῦμα is more advanced than the hylozoistic concept that needs to be overcome. See also DILLON, *Asōmatos*, 109–110, who concludes that "for Philo, as part of his heritage of Antiochian Platonism, the substance of not only the immanent Logos and the individual intellect, which are not perceptible to our senses, but also the heavenly bodies, which are, superficially at least, accessible to our vision, can be properly described as 'incorporeal', by contrast with the corporeality of sublunar beings, while also being composed of pure fire or *pneuma*. This can be seen as a piece of muddle-headedness, and as a compromise with Stoic materialism, but it can also – more profitably in my view – be seen as an indication that the boundary between the corporeal and the incorporeal was not drawn by many ancient thinkers where we might think it should be drawn."

⁶⁰ DILLON, *Asōmatos*, 106–108: for Philo God is not even the purest type of fire (*fug.* 133; *her.* 119, etc.). See also n. 39 above.

bodily resurrection of Christ, the head of a new humanity. According to Stowers, Jesus's resurrection is the consequence of his remodeling with πνεῦμα-*Stoff*. Stowers takes the liberty to interpret Paul's κατά [πνεῦμα] as ἐκ in Rom 1:4 (τοῦ ὀρισθέντος υἱοῦ θεοῦ ἐν δυνάμει κατὰ πνεῦμα ἀγιωσύνης ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν), reading it as referring to the stuff from which Jesus has been formed in his resurrection.⁶¹ Human transformation now and in the future happens on the same basis. "The future body in Paul is made only and fully of *pneuma*, as is the mind already in the present. Paul's idea seems to be that the natural human *pneuma* of the mind is mixed with (Stoic κρᾶσις?) and gradually replaced by the divine *pneuma*."⁶² Stowers thus maintains that *the current (religious-ethical) transformation of the human mind as well as the future transformation of the body is realized materially*.

Like many scholars before him, Stowers employs Paul's treatment of the resurrection body in 1 Cor 15, particularly his locution σῶμα πνευματικόν (v. 44), as a major argument for the thesis that Paul understood πνεῦμα to be a material entity. As early as 1872, Hermann Lüdemann proposed that Paul's notion of the σῶμα πνευματικόν and hence of πνεῦμα is one of a "heavenly light substance."⁶³ He has been followed by many scholars since then.⁶⁴ Although this view has been met not only with approval but also with criticism,⁶⁵ a broad strand of scholarship continues to defend this line of interpretation.⁶⁶ Particularly Dale

⁶¹ STOWERS, *Paul's Physics*, 235: "Jesus Christ in the resurrection was refashioned from *pneuma*."

⁶² STOWERS, *Paul's Physics*, 244–245.

⁶³ H. LÜDEMANN, *Die Anthropologie des Apostels Paulus und ihre Stellung innerhalb seiner Heilslehre*. Nach den vier Hauptbriefen, Kiel 1872, 149.

⁶⁴ E.g., PFLEIDERER, *Paulinism*, 201; GUNKEL, *Holy Spirit*, 124–126; M. DIBELIUS, *Die Geisterwelt im Glauben des Paulus*, Göttingen 1909, 85–88; J. WEISS, *Der erste Korintherbrief* (KEK 5), Göttingen 1970, 371–373; R. BULTMANN, *Theology of the New Testament*, vol. 1, London 1952, 198, 334; E. KÄSEMANN, *Leib und Leib Christi. Eine Untersuchung zur paulinischen Begrifflichkeit* (BHTh 9), Tübingen 1933, 135; cf. id., *Commentary on Romans*, London 1980, 212; W.D. DAVIES, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism. Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology*, Philadelphia 1980, 182–185; E.E. ELLIS, *Pauline Theology. Ministry and Society*, Grand Rapids 1989, 33; HORN, *Angeld des Geistes*, 60, 394; G. STRECKER, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, ed. F.W. Horn, Berlin 1996, 172–173; E. KAMLAH/W. KLAIBER, πνεῦμα, TBLNT 1 (1997), 698–708, at 706.

⁶⁵ The first critical engagement was provided by H.H. WENDT, *Die Begriffe Fleisch und Geist im biblischen Sprachgebrauch*, Gotha 1878, 144. For other authors, see below.

⁶⁶ For a recent example of the fierce debate over the nature of the spirit(ual body), see A.W. PITTS, *Paul's Concept of the Resurrection Body in 1 Corinthians 15:35–58*, in: S.E. Porter/D. Yoon (eds.), *Paul and Gnosis* (Pauline Studies 9), Leiden 2016, 44–58, and his critical engagement with R. CARRIER, *The Spiritual Body of Christ and the Legend of the Empty Tomb*, in: R.M. Price/J. Jay Lowder (eds.), *The Empty Tomb. Jesus beyond the Grave*, Amherst 2005, 105–219, who has published his reply in his personal blog: *Response to Pitts on the Resurrection Body*, Richard Carrier Blogs, 14 October 2016, <https://www.richardcarrier.info/archives/11327>. For further post-2010 scholarship taking πνεῦμα to be material in 1 Cor 15, see n. 3 above.

Martin has given new impetus to the debate in his landmark study “The Corinthian Body.” As his approach has been endorsed by various scholars,⁶⁷ I will briefly return to some of his arguments in the remainder of this section.⁶⁸

The scholars surrounding Martin, Engberg-Pedersen, and Stowers suggest that Paul introduces the cosmological observations in 1 Cor 15:36–57 in order to define the ontology of the resurrection body within the upper end of the scale of nature. However, no identification of a common substance of the resurrection body and the heavenly bodies (sun, moon, and stars) is explicitly made by Paul, so the claim can only be evaluated on the basis of how well it explains the details of the text and coheres with Paul’s thought generally. Nicholas Meyer has recently noted that on this score, the proposal runs into problems. It would have been easy to make such an identification in response to the Corinthians’ question, “in what sort of body will they [sc. the dead] come?” (v. 35).⁶⁹ However, the rhetoric and logic of Paul’s answer does not indicate such an interest on Paul’s part. Moreover, and this is my main point, *while it suggests itself that the σῶμα πνευματικόν was somatic in one way or another,*⁷⁰ *our passage provides no indications*

⁶⁷ E.g., A.G. PADGETT, *The Body in Resurrection. Science and Scripture on the “Spiritual Body”* (1 Cor 15:35–58), *Word & World* 22 (2002), 155–163; J.L. SUMNEY, *Post-mortem Existence and Resurrection of the Body in Paul*, *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 31 (2009), 12–26, at 14–19; T. ENGBERG-PEDERSEN, *Complete and Incomplete Transformation in Paul. A Philosophical Reading of Paul on Body and Spirit*, in: T.K. Seim/J. Økland (eds.), *Metamorphoses. Resurrection, Body and Transformative Practices in Early Christianity* (Ekstasis 1), Berlin 2009, 123–146, at 124–129; id., *Cosmology and Self*, ch. 1; M.D. LITWA, *We Are Being Transformed. Deification in Paul’s Soteriology* (BZNW 187), Berlin 2012, ch. 4.

⁶⁸ See my first engagement with Martin in RABENS, *Holy Spirit*, 86–96. As will become clear in what follows, I would not use again the word “supernatural” as I did in my initial conclusion (p. 96: “for Paul the resurrection body is ‘spiritual’ – *not in Martin’s sense of ‘material’*, or of ‘immaterial’, but ‘supernatural’ [as Paul explains with the help of Scripture in v. 45], because it will have been recreated by Christ, who himself through his resurrection came to be ‘a life-giving Spirit’”), mainly because it has been misunderstood by some readers to endorse the strand of scholarship that believes the spirit(ual) body to be immaterial (thus LITWA, *Being Transformed*, 133).

⁶⁹ N.A. MEYER, *Adam’s Dust and Adam’s Glory in the Hodayot and the Letters of Paul. Rethinking Anthropogony and Theology* (NTS 168), Leiden 2016, 119, 121–122. It has to remain open whether Paul’s reacting so critically (“You fool!”) to this (second) question implies that the apostle had understood the question of the Corinthians as a dismissive put-down like the Sadducees’ question in the Gospels in the sense of “I can’t imagine any sort of body that would do that!” As Wright argues, the word “how” itself can carry this overtone: “How can you say that the dead are raised?” (N.T. WRIGHT, *Christian Origins and the Questions of God*, vol. 3: *The Resurrection of the Son of God*, London 2003, 342, endorsed by RABENS, *Holy Spirit*, 90; see the critique in MEYER, *Adam’s Dust*, 119 n. 86). Alternatively, Paul’s reply may have been intended to convey to the Corinthians that they could have answered their question themselves (E.J. SCHNABEL, *Der erste Brief des Paulus an die Korinther* [Historisch-theologische Auslegung], Witten 2018, 958) or are asking an “impossible” question if they wanted a scientific analysis of the eschatological body.

that this was necessarily true for πνεῦμα as well. Rather, our text leaves open how the apostle would have defined the ontology of the Spirit.

Paul starts his answer with two analogies, one from the plant-world (vv. 36–38) and one from the animated and the celestial worlds (vv. 39–41). It should be noted, contrary to Martin, that Paul does not set up a hierarchy of bodies in these verses; rather, his list of the different bodies is determined by the (reverse) order of the first creation account (Gen 1:16, 20–26).⁷¹ Then, in vv. 42–50, Paul explicitly addresses the Corinthian questions regarding the resurrection body (in vv. 51–57 he continues more generally about the time and significance of the resurrection). His discussion consists of a series of contrasts as displayed in the chart below (see Table 1).⁷²

Martin, too, charts the contrasts in Paul's discourse. However, he starts his table with the opposition of σώματα ἐπίγεια and σώματα ἐπουράνια in v. 40.⁷³ This is significant because it supports his thesis that for Paul, the σῶμα πνευματικόν is analogous to the substance of the σώματα ἐπουράνια. However, at least on discourse-analytical grounds, this parallelism appears forced. As is clear from the chart below, Paul's mentioning of σῶμα πνευματικόν in v. 44 is part of a textual unit (vv. 42–44) that works on the contrast between what is sown and what is reaped. Verse 40, however, is part of the previous section and operates on the differentiation of earthly and heavenly bodies, introduced by v. 39 ("Not all flesh is alike, but there is one kind for [...]"). Verses 39–41 (cf. vv. 36–38) describe different bodies within the present creation. Verses 42–44 (cf. vv. 45–50), *per contra*, discuss not only a present, created body but also a transformed (future) body that will be available only after death.⁷⁴ Moreover, it seems problematic

⁷⁰ The NRSV translation of v. 44 is thus misleading ("It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body").

⁷¹ Cf. R.F. COLLINS, *First Corinthians* (Sacra pagina 7), Collegeville 1999, 566–567; C. BURCHARD, *1 Korinther 15,39–41*, in: id., *Studien zur Theologie, Sprache und Umwelt des Neuen Testaments* (WUNT 107), Tübingen 1998, 203–228, at 207–208. On the potential influence of Deuteronomy, see D.A. BURNETT, *A Neglected Deuteronomistic Scriptural Matrix for the Nature of the Resurrection Body in 1 Corinthians 15:39–42*, in: L.L. Belleville/B.J. Oropeza (eds.), *Scripture, Texts, and Tracings in 1 Corinthians*, London 2019, 187–211.

⁷² The discourse may be structured by an ABBA chiasm. The pair φθορά and ἀφθαρσία is mentioned at the beginning of v. 42 and at the end of v. 50 (and again in vv. 52–54). Verses 42–44 (A) are general statements about the natural body (which is sown) and the spiritual body (which is reaped). In vv. 45–47 (B), this is then specifically applied to the first natural body in time (Adam) and the first spiritual body in time (Christ). What is said here is applied to the Christian community in vv. 48–49 (B'). Verse 50 (A') comes back to the initial contrast and concludes the section.

⁷³ MARTIN, *Corinthian Body*, 127.

⁷⁴ One might add that Paul uses two different words for the oppositions: in vv. 39–41 the opposition is between ἐπίγειος and ἐπουράνιος, whereas in vv. 42–50 (vv. 48–49) the opposition is between χοϊκός and ἐπουράνιος (with the exception of v. 47: ἐκ γῆς χοϊκός; nevertheless, the difference may be in this particular case that Paul is talking about origin [ἐκ/ἐξ] and that he does not use an adjectival description).

Table 1: The Rhetorical Structure of 1 Cor 15:42–50

A vv. 42–44	ἡ ἀνάστασις τῶν νεκρῶν: general statements about the resurrection	
vv. 42–44	σπείρεται (<i>it is sown</i>)	ἐγείρεται (<i>it is reaped</i>)
v. 42	ἐν φθορᾷ (in corruption)	ἐν ἀφθαρσίᾳ (in incorruption)
v. 43	ἐν ἀτιμίᾳ (in dishonor)	ἐν δόξῃ (in glory)
v. 43	ἐν ἀσθενείᾳ (in weakness)	ἐν δυνάμει (in power)
v. 44	σῶμα ψυχικόν (a natural body)	σῶμα πνευματικόν (a spiritual body)
B vv. 45–47	οὕτως καὶ γέγραπται [...]: application to first and last Adam	
v. 45	ψυχὴν ζῶσαν (living being)	πνεῦμα ζωοποιῶν (life-giving Spirit)
v. 46	ψυχικόν (natural)	πνευματικόν (spiritual)
v. 47	ἐκ γῆς χοϊκός (from the earth)	ἐξ οὐρανοῦ (from heaven)
B' vv. 48–49	οἷος [...] τοιοῦτοι [...]: application to the Christian community	
v. 48	ὁ χοϊκός/οἱ χοϊκοί (the one/those of dust)	ὁ ἐπουράνιος/οἱ ἐπουράνιοι (the one/those of heaven)
v. 49	φορεῖν τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ χοϊκοῦ (bearing the image of the one of dust)	φορεῖν τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ ἐπουρανόου (bearing the image of the one of heaven)
A' v. 50	Τοῦτο δέ φημι [...]: general statements about the resurrection	
v. 50	σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα (flesh and blood)	βασιλεία θεοῦ (kingdom of God)
v. 50	ἡ φθορά (the perishable)	ἡ ἀφθαρσία (the imperishable)

to apply the meaning of the descriptive dative-constructions in vv. 42–44 to the σώματα ἐπουράνια of v. 40, as this application would mean, for example, that Paul views the created stars as incorruptible. Such a cosmology, however, stands in tension with what Paul elsewhere says about creation (see, e.g., Rom 8:19–23, esp. v. 22: *πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις συστενάξει*).⁷⁵

Two additional claims of parallelism between the heavenly bodies and the resurrection body need to be questioned. Firstly, when Martin states that the resurrection body will have its own substance and glory analogous to the heavenly bodies, he ignores the fact that Paul says of the resurrection only that “it” is *raised* (ἐγείρεται) *in glory* (ἐν δόξῃ, v. 43). He neither speaks about substance nor does he name “glory” as an attribute of the resurrection body.⁷⁶ Moreover,

⁷⁵ One could challenge this line of argumentation on the basis that in both sections the dominant categories are “earthly” and “heavenly” (vv. 40–41; vv. 47–49). Indeed, Meyer reasons that the heavenly bodies (vv. 40–41), by a matter of degree, proximity, or loose association, stand on the side of the incorruptible, glorious, powerful, and *σῶμα πνευματικόν* (cf. v. 47). “Inasmuch as the dominant contrast throughout the text is that of corruptibility vs. incorruptibility, it appears that the *durability* of the heavens is the most significant way in which they anticipate the resurrection body, followed closely by their radiance (cf. Deut 11:17; Ps 89:3, 29 [E: 2, 28]; Job 14:12; Sir 45:15; 2 Cor 5:1–4 with 12:2–4)” (MEYER, *Adam’s Dust*, 126).

⁷⁶ I need to repeat that it is not problematic for my argument if Paul did explicitly attribute physical (glory-)substance to the resurrection body, because my point is merely that Paul leaves open from a physical perspective with what kind of concept of πνεῦμα he operates.

when Paul uses “glory” as an attribute in vv. 40–41, it is in reference to *both* earthly *and* heavenly bodies. This shows, once again, that it is precarious to place vv. 39–41 in parallel with vv. 42–44 where “in glory” refers to the raising of the *σῶμα πνευματικόν*, but not to the *σῶμα ψυχικόν*. Secondly, Martin explains that Paul speaks of “the pneuma as the entity held in common by human beings and stars.”⁷⁷ However, when Paul speaks about the stars (v. 41) he does not mention *πνεῦμα* at all (and, in fact, *πνεῦμα* is not mentioned in the context of the *σῶμα ψυχικόν* [v. 44] either).⁷⁸

The fact that Paul employs *πνεῦμα* in the present passage only in connection with the resurrection body is a significant drawback for Martin’s “anthropological” interpretation of the text. Martin believes that “for Paul, the current human body is made up of *sarx*, *psyche*, and *pneuma*. The resurrected body will shed the first two of these entities – like so much detritus – and retain the third, a stuff of a thinner, higher nature.”⁷⁹ However, Paul does not indulge in anthropological speculation like Martin. Otherwise, Paul would have had to arrange his various terms, understood according to Martin as individual anthropological components, by placing *σῶμα*, *σάρξ*, *ψυχή*, *and πνεῦμα* on the left (“corruptible”) side of the chart above, and *σῶμα* and *πνεῦμα* on the right (“incorruptible”) side. Paul rather uses his terms here in a *pars pro toto* and broader theological fashion. This is obvious when he says that “flesh and blood” cannot inherit “the kingdom of God” (v. 50) or employs *πνεῦμα ζωοποιούν* for Christ (v. 45). Therefore, when Martin claims that “the resurrected body is stripped of flesh, blood, and

⁷⁷ MARTIN, *Corinthian Body*, 126.

⁷⁸ Martin’s support for his assertion that after death human souls will become (physical) heavenly bodies, which he sees *inter alia* in Plato, *Tim.* 32c, is questionable. Contrary to Martin’s interpretation of this passage, Plato does not speak of a “body of heaven” as opposed to the body of the earth. Rather, he simply says that the body of the cosmos (*κόσμου σῶμα*) is made up of the four elements. He does not mention the stars in particular, nor does he suggest that the fire that they are made of (*Tim.* 40a) is material or that human souls will become like them. Apart from that, explicit evidence that the heavenly bodies, including the stars, were made up of *πνεῦμα* seems to be lacking in Stoicism, as ENGBERG-PEDERSEN, *Cosmology and Self*, 217 n. 76, admits. Moreover, also Dan 12:3 does not provide grounds for Martin’s central claim. One is dealing here with a simile and not with an equation, which is indicated by the preposition *ὡς* – the wise will shine as brightly *as* or *like* stars. The “shining” is the point of comparison, and there is no mention that those who are wise will be located among the stars or will even become stars themselves (cf. J.E. GOLDINGAY, *Daniel* [WBC 30], Dallas 1989, 308). Star imagery was deployed to indicate royal position, so that one should hardly imagine that Daniel’s expectation centers on an actual celestial transformation (J.B. GREEN, *Body, Soul, and Human Life. The Nature of Humanity in the Bible*, Grand Rapids 2008, 174). This reasoning has recently been confirmed by Meyer who explains that “Paul points to the starry skies not because they consist of immortal substance and are themselves incorruptible, but because they anticipate the future life of believers (cf. Dan 12:2–3; 1 En. 104:2, 6; Wis 3:7; 4 Macc 17:5; Matt 13:43; Col 1:5, 12)” (MEYER, *Adam’s Dust*, 125; however, see his p. 126, where he seems to suggest that the stars are incorruptible; cf. n. 75 above).

⁷⁹ MARTIN, *Corinthian Body*, 128.

soul (*psyche*); it has nothing of the earth in it at all, being composed entirely of the celestial substance of *pneuma*,” it seems that he underestimates the somatic emphasis of Paul’s eschatology.⁸⁰ According to Paul’s discourse, it is *σῶμα* that stands for the continuity of the believer before and after the resurrection, and not *πνεῦμα* (which is not mentioned on the left side).⁸¹

I conclude that the notion of *σῶμα πνευματικόν* does not provide sufficient evidence for asserting that Paul had a material concept of the Spirit. Rather, by calling the resurrection body *πνευματικός*, Paul conveys that the natural body will be transformed, animated, and enlivened by God’s Spirit.⁸² This is an elegant way for Paul to say both that the new body is the *result* of the Spirit’s work (answering “how does it come to be?”)⁸³ and that it bears the imperishable *characteristics* of the heavenly world as it is raised in incorruption, in glory, and

⁸⁰ In fact, Martin’s view seems to come close to that of the Corinthians; see the reconstruction of the Corinthian position in B.A. PEARSON, *The Pneumatikos-Psychikos Terminology in 1 Corinthians. A Study in the Theology of the Corinthian Opponents of Paul and Its Relation to Gnosticism* (SBL.DS 12), Missoula 1973, 25.

⁸¹ “Continuity” is not meant to suggest that the body is the same before and after the resurrection. Contrary to Martin, Paul does not say that the immortal and incorruptible part of the human body will be resurrected, but he envisages the transformation of the whole person in his or her embodiment (J.D.G. DUNN, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, Edinburgh 1998, 60 n. 44).

⁸² Cf. H. BERTRAMS, *Das Wesen des Geistes nach der Anschauung des Apostels Paulus. Eine biblisch-theologische Untersuchung* (NTA 4/4), Münster 1913, 121–143, esp. 132; A.T. LINCOLN, *Paradise Now and Not Yet. Studies in the Role of the Heavenly Dimension in Paul’s Thought with Special Reference to His Eschatology* (MSSNTS 43), Cambridge 1981, 42; F. LANG, *Die Briefe an die Korinther* (NTD 7), Göttingen 1994, 234–235; S. BRODEUR, *The Holy Spirit’s Agency in the Resurrection of the Dead. An Exegetico-Theological Study of 1 Corinthians 15.44b–49 and Romans 8.9–13* (TG.T 14), Rome 1996, 103, 263; R.B. GAFFIN, “Life-Giving Spirit.” Probing the Centre of Paul’s Pneumatology, *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 41 (1998), 573–589, at 577; J.D.G. DUNN, *How Are the Dead Raised? With What Body Do They Come? Reflections on 1 Corinthians 15*, *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 45 (2002), 4–18, at 17–18; WRIGHT, *Resurrection*, 351, 353; TAPPENDEN, *Embodiment*, 448–449; J. MASTON, *Anthropological Crisis and Solution in the Hodayot and 1 Corinthians 15*, *NTS* 62 (2016), 533–548, at 541.

⁸³ It has often been pointed out that in the same way as *σῶμα ψυχικόν* does not designate a body that consists of *ψυχή*, soul-substance, so also *σῶμα πνευματικόν* cannot mean a body that is formed out of *πνεῦμα*, Spirit-stuff (cf. RABENS, *Holy Spirit*, 95, and the authors mentioned there; more recently, e.g., J.G. COOK, *Philo’s Quaestiones in Genesis* and Paul’s *σῶμα πνευματικόν*, in: B. Schliesser et al. [eds.], *Alexandria. Hub of the Hellenistic World* [WUNT 460], Tübingen 2021, 303–322, at 321). However, Meyer makes the point that even a body animated by (rather than composed of) spirit will be a body of transformed substance. A body animated by such (*ψυχή/πνεῦμα*) is a body partly composed of such. He also insists that the linguistic argument that adjectives formed with the ending *-ικός* generally have ethical or functional meanings (cf. 1 Cor 2; 3:1; Rom 7:14, etc.) rather than referring to the material or substance of which something is composed (for which the ending *-ινός* is characteristically used; thus, e.g., WRIGHT, *Resurrection*, 351–352; A.C. THISELTON, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians. A Commentary on the Greek Text* [NIGTC], Cambridge 2000, 1276–1277) is

in power (answering “what sort of a thing is it?,” v. 35).⁸⁴ Apart from that, it is important to note that it is the *resurrection body* that is the focus of this passage and not the nature of πνεῦμα. It is thus methodologically misleading to make the phrase σῶμα πνευματικόν the starting point of one’s understanding of πνεῦμα in Paul as well as his theology in general, as Engberg-Pedersen sets out to do.⁸⁵

1.3 Conclusion

Interpreters of Philo and Paul are faced with a dilemma if they set out to discern whether the two theologians understand the divine Spirit to be an im/material entity and whether the mechanics of its work are determined by this nature. Philo provides some answers on the former issue: he considers the nature of the divine πνεῦμα and employs analytical categories and physical terminology such as ἀσώματος οὐσία. However, we have seen that his conception of the im-material nature of πνεῦμα is somewhat elusive. Moreover, it seems that he does not provide details on how the im/material aspect of πνεῦμα would affect the human soul physically on the basis of this tendentious texture – a point to which we will return in the next section. Paul, *per contra*, discusses neither of these issues. Upon the question of the Corinthians (1 Cor 15:35), he talks about the resurrection body and, in this context, he moves into the fields of cosmology, protology, and eschatology. It is possible that both Philo and Paul had a concept of “light matter” or “fine stuff.” Against the background of our discussion, the most obvious applications of this concept may have been πνεῦμα for Philo and the σῶμα πνευματικόν for Paul. However, this inference remains in the realm of the speculative, particularly with regard to Paul. Significantly, Paul does not talk about the nature of πνεῦμα in his discussion, which makes it more than precarious to force all the (potential) characteristics of the heavenly σῶμα onto πνεῦμα.⁸⁶ It is equally precarious to presuppose that Paul operated with an im-

not decisive, not least because πνευματικὸς is nowhere extant. Meyer rather thinks that Paul’s terminology is to designate “an orientation to that which is incorruptible, heavenly, a participation, that is, in the very nature of God” (MEYER, *Adam’s Dust*, 122–123, 129).

⁸⁴ As indicated above, I do not intend to contest that σῶμα is in some way physical in this context (perhaps in the sense of “light matter”). Rather, my point is that the resurrection body is a σῶμα transformed by the Spirit of Christ (v. 45) and therefore suited to heavenly immortality (cf. the discussion in R.H. GUNDRY, *Sōma in Biblical Theology. With Emphasis on Pauline Anthropology* [MSSNTS 29], Cambridge 1976, 165–166). This does not imply, however, that when Paul said “that the last ‘Adam’ (Christ) became ‘life-producing pneuma,’ what he meant is that Christ became the kind of heavenly ‘stuff’ called pneuma” (ENGBERG-PEDERSEN, *Cosmology and Self*, 30), because it is precarious to force the (potential) characteristics of the heavenly σῶμα onto πνεῦμα. Moreover, the logic of Christ being a “life-producing pneuma” (v. 45) is explicitly built on Gen 2:7, not on Stoic cosmology.

⁸⁵ ENGBERG-PEDERSEN, *Cosmology and Self*, 14: “Our guiding question will be how we should understand the *sōma pneumatikon*, and hence the pneuma. The answer to this question will turn out to have huge consequences for everything else we should say about Paul.”

⁸⁶ Thus, however, Engberg-Pedersen, see nn. 84–85 above.

material concept of πνεῦμα.⁸⁷ Interpreters of Paul need to acknowledge that the apostle left these issues open.

For Philo, the spiritual comes first in the course of creation (the κόσμος νοητός). For Paul, the spiritual comes second – it is inaugurated in the course of the eschatological (re)creation (ἔπειτα τὸ πνευματικόν, 1 Cor 15:46). However, for both there is a limit to physical speculation: Philo and Paul call those stupid (εὐήθεις, LA 1.91; ἄφρων, 1 Cor 15:36) who try to fathom the unfathomable: the substance of God (Philo) and the substance of the resurrection body (Paul).⁸⁸ In order not to become guilty according to their charge, we will move from our discussion of the nature of πνεῦμα to the *work* of the Spirit in human transformation.

2. Physics and Mysticism in Philo and Paul

How do Philo and Paul envision religious empowering and transformation, and what is the role of the divine πνεῦμα in this context? In the first part of this chapter, we have investigated a major presupposition of a current approach to spiritual transformation: we have discussed fresh (as well as established) arguments for the material nature of the divine Spirit. We have seen that there is little explicit evidence that speaks for the materiality of the divine Spirit in Philo and Paul unless one takes Philo's concept of immateriality as being material nonetheless. In the conclusion to the first part, instead of arguing for the opposite – that is, for a purely immaterial concept of the Spirit (for which there is no explicit evidence in Paul), I have left room for ambiguity. It is therefore necessary to discuss the second element of infusion-transformation, namely, the physical transformation of the human soul as the basis for religious-ethical living. We will do so, moving from Philo to Paul (2.1). In the second section (2.2) we will then briefly turn to a relational model of spiritual empowering in the context of mystical transformation through contemplation, continuing with Paul and then moving back to Philo.

2.1 Transformation and Physics

One of the interpreters of Philo to reflect on what I have called material infusion-transformation is Egon Brandenburger. In the context of his exegesis of *Deus* 122–183, particularly of *Deus* 123 and 138, he writes that Philo thinks of conversion

auf substanzhafter Grundlage [...]. Auch nimmt nicht mehr der transzendente Gott im Menschen Wohnung, sondern der göttliche Logos, der als lichtgestaltige, pneumatisch-unsterbliche Wesenheit in die Seele einzieht und das sterbliche Wesen vernichtet. Die Wandlung des

⁸⁷ See the critical discussion in RABENS, Holy Spirit, 82–86.

⁸⁸ In the case of the latter, it is debatable what aspect of the Corinthians' question Paul actually calls foolish. See above n. 69.

Verhaltens basiert auf einem Austausch zugrundeliegenden Wesens. Unsterblich-pneumatisches Wesen schließt das sterblich-irdische grundsätzlich aus.⁸⁹

Brandenburger thus comprehends the exchange of substances as the basis of change. Πνεῦμα-substance replaces the corruptible human nature.

Brandenburger's interpretation of *Deus* 122–183 as portraying the exchange of the (base elements of the) human soul by πνεῦμα-substance indeed seems to provide support for the infusion-transformation approach to human transformation. However, as far as *Deus* 123 is concerned, it appears only at first sight as if Philo were thinking in these categories when he says that “when the incorruptible element takes its rise in the soul, the mortal is forthwith corrupted.” In the next sentence Philo seems to provide us with the interpretative key when he explains: “for [γάρ] the birth of noble practices is the death of the base.” Thus, it seems that the cause of change is the *noble practices* (ἐπιτηδεύματα) rather than a new substance.⁹⁰ This judgment is confirmed in *Deus* 125–126 where Philo explains that it is a *cognitive and mimetic process* that is responsible for the change, because it is in the light of “the healthy and the living” that a conviction of the soul's transgressions is being produced (cf. *Deus* 128–130). The same holds true for *Deus* 138. Apart from that, one also needs to note that Philo avoids πνεῦμα in this passage (and instead speaks about λόγος), as Brandenburger himself admits.⁹¹ Hence, *Deus* 122–183 resists a straightforward infusion-transformation approach to human transformation.⁹²

Brandenburger's concept of human change through the exchange of substances is further weakened when we look at recent interpretations of Philo's

⁸⁹ BRANDENBURGER, *Fleisch und Geist*, 182, 185. However, see pp. 227, 233, where Brandenburger allows for relational categories next to the substance-ontological concepts in Philo.

⁹⁰ This interpretation rests on rendering the “birth” (γένεσις) metaphorically as the point when a person starts acting nobly. A more literal interpretation may allow understanding “birth” in the sense of an infusion. However, as Philo continues with metaphorical speech (about light and darkness), a metaphorical interpretation of “birth” is more suggestive.

⁹¹ BRANDENBURGER, *Fleisch und Geist*, 186.

⁹² I do not deny that through the reception of the divine Spirit people are ontologically transformed and enabled to live virtuously. This is also affirmed by DINGELDEIN, *Gaining Virtue*, 145, who states that “becoming virtuous does not merely mean that a human follows God, according to Philo; it means that a human is ontologically transformed by the divine πνεῦμα into a God-like being.” However, by citing *LA* 1.37–38 in support, Dingeldein uses a text that refers to the first inbreathing of the divine Spirit at creation rather than to subsequent infilling. Her thesis regarding ontological transformation by the Spirit as assimilation to God may thus need more thorough argument. Cf. the interpretation of *LA* 1.38 by FORGER, *Divine Embodiment*, 237: “Because God, Philo claims, infuses God's very spirit into humans, humans stand as a part of the creation, but they also have the ability to transcend the limits of that creation as well. By engaging in specific ascetic practices, which put pressure on the body and thereby invariably affect the soul as well, they can rise up to the heights of God, perceiving the very nature of God precisely because God has previously infused a part of the divine within them (*Leg.* 1.38).” On the connection of the Spirit to ethical life more generally, see *Mos.* 2.265; *gig.* 23, 28, 47; *mut.* 123–124; *LA* 1.33–34; *QG* 4.140; etc.

anthropology. Particularly Tyson Putthoff and Deborah Forger have highlighted the fact that Philo comprehends the human interior primarily as the result of a mixture (along the Stoic notion of *κρᾶσις*) of divine and human substance.⁹³

Whereas Philo does not mention *πνεῦμα* explicitly in relation to the self's blended condition, he is clearly drawing on Stoic concepts. When Philo therefore speaks about the self in terms of a blending between mortal and divine, he probably thinks of it partly in material terms. The mortal aspect of the human self is no doubt material, but we are still not sure what the divine is. What we do know is that the two interact with one another in the same way as water and wine. Might it be that Philo does not feel the need to state outright that both parties are material, given that he has packaged his entire conception of the self in Stoic terms? Whatever the case may be, the two form such a close bond that by all visible appearances they are a singular entity, namely, the self, though each part always retains its original ontological state.⁹⁴

In the first part of this chapter, I cast some doubt on the assumption that Philo treats the divine Spirit as expressly material. Accordingly, I am inclined to leave the issue of *material* mingling with *πνεῦμα* at least as open as Putthoff does.⁹⁵ Putthoff is right in drawing attention to the blended nature of human beings. Next to his main text, *opif.* 144, he finds support in *mut.* 184–185, where Philo asserts that we humans “are mixtures, with human [lit., ‘mortal’] and divine blended in us” (*θείου καὶ θνητοῦ συγκερασθέντων*) and the mind being “the better and more godlike part” (*ἀμείνω καὶ θειοτέραν μοῖραν*).⁹⁶ Whereas God is not a “blending” (*κρᾶσις*) but a “single nature,” the virtues of humans must be mixed because humans are compounds with divine and human blended within them. God thus allocated a part of himself to human beings – breathing into them so that they became living souls, as Philo explains in *somn.* 1.34, drawing on Gen 2:7.

While Putthoff's observations regard Philo's anthropology, Forger takes these insights one step further by drawing out some potential soteriological implications. According to Forger, the

tension in Philo's thought between his insistence on the utter transcendence of Israel's supreme deity and a soteriology that necessitates that a part of this God become united with human

⁹³ Theoretically it would also be possible to combine this insight with Brandenburger's idea of substance-substitution, along the lines of Stowers's theory of Pauline transformation where the natural human *πνεῦμα* of the mind is mixed with and gradually replaced by the divine *πνεῦμα* (STOWERS, *Paul's Physics*, 244). However, once again we lack the textual support for such a theory.

⁹⁴ T.L. PUTTHOFF, *Ontological Aspects of Early Jewish Anthropology. The Malleable Self and the Presence of God* (The Brill Reference Library of Judaism 53), Leiden 2016, 85. Cf. FORGER, *Divine Embodiment*, 237: “without a spark of God's divine spirit intermingling with humanity's mortal, bodily existence at the creation, humans would have no hope of reconnecting with God.”

⁹⁵ Putthoff explicates that he is not talking about a divine-human fusion (PUTTHOFF, *Ontological Aspects*, 85). Philo uses different images for this process, for example, he speaks about the divine making an impression on the human soul as if it were wax (*LA* 1.100; *spec.* 1.47).

⁹⁶ PUTTHOFF, *Ontological Aspects*, 78.

materiality reveals that Philo's understanding of God's nature is more complicated than [sic] his officially sanctioned hermeneutics. His philosophical worldview holds in tension a vision of an utterly transcendent deity and a spark of that same God becoming deeply interwoven within human corporeality through the souls of created humans.⁹⁷

We have seen aspects of the tension formulated in Forger's analysis throughout our discussion of Philo thus far. With regard to what Forger identifies as a feature of Philo's soteriology, however, it would have been helpful if she had explicated God's descension into and unification with human materiality in greater detail as this would have had the potential of providing illumination for our investigation of the mechanics of human transformation. Her analysis is not in the vein of – and does not advance further details for – the doctrine of a material infusion-transformation. Instead, she implicitly provides arguments that cast additional doubts on this concept of human transformation by pointing to the mystical dimension of transformation (on which, see further below). In Philo's discussion of the patriarchs, he indicates that their engagement with philosophy enabled them to reconnect with that part of God previously embedded within them (cf. *sacr.* 8). As they move upward from the corporeal world to the incorporeal, they start taking on more divine-like attributes (though never achieving full synonymy with the sole uncreated One).⁹⁸ In this contemplative context, transformation is precisely not (explicitly) material. It involves a material dimension, but the dynamics move in the opposite direction. Moses is said to become immaterial (*ἀσώματος*) as he stays in God's presence. He transcends physical necessities and no longer needs food or drink because he is being fed by the contemplation of things divine.⁹⁹ Also Abraham leaves his body on his journey to meet with God, in the course of which he puts off mortal things and takes refuge from his body in the incorporeal soul (*det.* 159).¹⁰⁰

In sum, Philo's notion of a mixture between divine and human elements speaks against a complete exchange of the substance of the soul with *πνεῦμα*-substance as suggested by Brandenburger. However, Philo's "mixed" language leaves somewhat open whether the (im/material) soul is changed in its make-up by the intermingling with the (im/material) substance of (the Spirit of) God. Moreover, the texts where Philo discusses these issues concern the creation rather than a subsequent infusion with the Spirit (which could have been subsumed under Forger's category of "soteriology"). Apart from that, by drawing attention to Philo's praise for the escape from matter in the mystical ascent of the soul,

⁹⁷ FORGER, *Divine Embodiment*, 229.

⁹⁸ FORGER, *Divine Embodiment*, 243. Cf. n. 125 below.

⁹⁹ *Somn.* 1.36; *LA* 3.141; cf. *migr.* 53, 150; *her.* 246; generally, on the moral quality of immateriality: *Abr.* 90; *QE* 1.8. For this reason, the Spirit can only take temporary residence in human beings (*Deus* 2–3).

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Abraham's transformation in *virt.* 217, which I interpret as focusing on the furtherance of Abraham's powers of persuasion (RABENS, *Holy Spirit*, 75–78), *pace* HODGE, *Kinship and Ethnicity*, 75.

we have indicated that other factors feature in Philo's concept of moral progress. These factors point towards dynamics opposite to those of material infusion-transformation: as believers draw nearer to God, they get further removed from material concerns and are (temporarily) transformed into immateriality. In the next section we will return to these mystical dynamics (without again inquiring into the potentially physical aspects of these processes, even though these are not ruled out by the mystical dimensions).

We conclude this section by coming back to the scholarly discussion of transformation and physics in Paul's pneumatology. We have already seen some explanations of human transformation on the basis of material infusion-transformation in the general introduction as well as in the introduction to the section on the "dilemma" of Paul's physics (1.2). A quotation from Stowers's recent work shall serve to remind us of the constituents of the argumentation:

Paul's language about God's *pneuma* and the empowerment of the mind is part of an [...] important idea for Paul of assimilation to Christ. But the material in the letters for this Platonic motif only exacerbates the problem of Stoic-like material *pneuma* in a Platonic-like framework, or as Engberg-Pedersen has argued, Platonic-like language in a Stoic framework. A key text is 2 Cor 3:18. [...] That God, Christ, and certain humans will all participate in God's *pneuma* is the cause of all three having splendor. [...] The result is participation in Christ likened to the conformity of a copy to its original [...].¹⁰¹

We will briefly return to 2 Cor 3:18 in the next section. Here, it is enough to summarize the results of an extensive study of material infusion-transformation that I have provided elsewhere. There, I concluded that it seems impossible to identify an explicit inclusion or adaptation of, or a demarcation from, Stoic pneumatology in Paul's writings.¹⁰² From the perspective of the *reception* of Paul's letters, however, one should not rule out that Paul's Spirit-language, as for instance the image of being made to drink of the Spirit (1 Cor 12:13c), evoked associations of Stoic pneumatology among Paul's readers.¹⁰³ Nonetheless, the philosophic language of Stoicism and of the ancient medics fundamentally differs from that of Paul. The same holds true, of course, for the projection of an immaterial concept of πνεῦμα onto the apostle's mind. Apart from that, the proponents of material infusion-transformation need to provide more evidence that Stoic pneumatology was part of the general education of the members of Paul's churches (and not just of the educated elite), and that Paul's audiences would, over and above that, be able to fill the logical gaps between the role of πνεῦμα in Stoic physics and the infusion-transformation concept of religious-ethical empowerment.¹⁰⁴ Another presupposition that usually receives less attention is the assumption that the potential physicality of the divine Spirit matches that of the human being. Particularly those human parts that Paul understands to be responsible for

¹⁰¹ STOWERS, Paul's Physics, 240–242.

¹⁰² RABENS, Holy Spirit, 25–120.

¹⁰³ For an alternative reading of this passage, see RABENS, Holy Spirit, 98–119.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. n. 7 above.

ethical living need to be physically compatible with the consistency of πνεῦμα in order to provoke the desired ethical action. By raising this issue, I do not intend to deny the physical aspects of Paul's anthropology and soteriology. I just want to point out that this area needs further exploration.¹⁰⁵ In the final section of this chapter, therefore, I will sketch an approach to human transformation in Philo and Paul that builds on their descriptions of the *work* of the divine πνεῦμα rather than its supposed nature.

2.2 Transformation through Contemplation

Both Philo and Paul share “a form of religiosity that has the immediate experience of divine reality as its center. This experience, which transcends everyday consciousness and cognition based on reason, is [...] the *experience of an intimate closeness to the divine reality*.”¹⁰⁶ As a result of such experiences of closeness to and participation in the divine, human beings are *transformed*. These two key characteristics of mysticism will guide our exploration of human transformation in Paul and Philo in this final section.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ For recent studies treating the physical aspects of Paul's anthropology and soteriology, see, e.g., S.G. EASTMAN, *Paul and the Person. Reframing Paul's Anthropology*, Grand Rapids 2017, 166–185 (partly drawing on Dale Martin's concept of the “porous body”); F. PORTENHAUSER, *Personale Identität in der Theologie des Paulus* (HUTh 79), Tübingen 2020, 209–210, 398–399; T.L. PUTTHOFF, *Divine Embodiment in Paul's Anthropology. The Mimetic Self and the Chronotopic Christ*, London 2025 (forthcoming); see also the tentative remarks in V. RABENS, *Sein und Werden in Beziehungen. Grundzüge relationaler Theologie bei Paulus und Johannes*, in: W. Bührer/R. Meyer zu Hörste-Bührer (eds.), *Relationale Erkenntnishorizonte in Exegese und Systematischer Theologie* (MThSt 129), Leipzig 2018, 91–144, at 97–101, 138–139.

¹⁰⁶ Thus the definition of mysticism by H.-C. MEIER, *Mystik bei Paulus. Zur Phänomenologie religiöser Erfahrung im Neuen Testament* (TANZ 26), Tübingen 1998, 20 (my emphasis). Cf. the discussion in PUTTHOFF, *Ontological Aspects*, 14–15.

¹⁰⁷ This section focuses on the role of πνεῦμα in mystical transformation. This avenue of transformation is embedded in other aspects of Paul's and Philo's theology and ethics (see the overview on Paul in RABENS, *Holy Spirit*, 1), such as the practice of the virtues, elimination of the passions, study of the arts and philosophy, etc. On this broader picture in Philo, see, e.g., DINGELDEIN, *Gaining Virtue*, 141–165. She summarizes Philo's ethics of moral progress in its *religionsgeschichtlich* context thus: “Philo's thought aligns best with contemporary Middle Platonic theory. Like other Middle Platonists, he considers divine assimilation to represent the apogee of moral development, he associates the body with vice, he believes the soul to consist of rational and non-rational parts, he upholds the goal of μετριοπάθεια, and he suggests that progress in virtue depends upon natural abilities, instruction, and practice. Yet there are a great many aspects of Philo's schema of moral development that would have appealed to Stoics as well – including, but not limited to, Philo's comments about the soul as consisting of divine πνεῦμα, his assertions that the goal of life is to live in accordance with nature, and his high valuation of ἀπάθεια. Moreover, many Jews of Philo's day would have recognized Philo's use of Jewish scripture, his assertions about the importance of God's inbreathed πνεῦμα for humans' possession of virtue, and his interest in divine assimilation” (164–165).

We start with Paul, looking at one prime example. As we investigate mystical transformation by the Spirit in Paul, our attention should naturally be drawn to 2 Cor 3:18 because there the apostle explicitly says that believers are *transformed* “into the same image” as they behold the glory of the Lord. Two questions guide this short discussion (which summarizes an in-depth study provided elsewhere):¹⁰⁸ How is the transformation achieved? And what is the result of the transformation? As we have seen in the last section, Stowers interprets this transformation against a Platonic-Stoic framework. While the Platonic concept of transformation through contemplation is indeed ready at hand, I suggest that the Stoic reading has a harder time explaining the text than my model of mystical-relational transformation expounded below.¹⁰⁹

The transformation described in 2 Cor 3:18 happens first of all by means of an “unveiled face.” The “unveiled face” is connected with the “beholding of the glory of the Lord” via a dative that suggests that “beholding” is achieved by way or means of “unveiling.” A structural analysis of 2 Cor 3:7–4:6 indicates that the unveiling of the face has two aspects: one is the cognitive aspect of *unveiling* deeper understanding of the gospel (which is relational, as is indicated in 2 Cor 4:4), and the other aspect is one of personal closeness and immediacy that is suggested by the unveiling of the *face* (with the consequent personal encounter of Moses/the glory of the Lord).

Special attention needs to be paid to the second and major means of transformation, the “beholding as in a mirror.”¹¹⁰ It can be understood in three different ways. The first two are identical with the two aspects of the “unveiled face”: beholding as deeper understanding of the gospel (and hence of Christ) and as a personal encounter (with Christ). Both options can be endorsed, but a third one is preferable, namely, beholding as contemplation, because it encompasses the first two options (mental and visual beholding). Next to this advantage, it also lends itself to the ancient concept of “transformation through contemplation.” This idea has antecedents in Plato (e.g., *Tim.* 90c–d; *Tht.* 176b; *leg.* 715b–716e)

¹⁰⁸ RABENS, Holy Spirit, 174–203.

¹⁰⁹ For a broader introduction as well as further texts that support this model, see RABENS, Holy Spirit, 123–252; id., *Sein und Werden*, 91–117.

¹¹⁰ Philo is the only author in Paul’s religious environment who in a similar context uses the most enigmatic expression of our text, namely, the participle *κατοπτριζόμενοι* (“those beholding as in a mirror”). This biblical hapax legomenon is employed by Philo when he describes Moses’s desire to encounter God. Philo thus draws on the very textual tradition (Exod 33, etc.) and the very theme that Paul deals with in 2 Cor 3. In *LA* 3.101, Philo reports Moses as saying to God that he does not want to see him merely through the medium of heaven, earth, air, or any other created things, “nor would I *behold as in a mirror* (*κατοπτρισαίμην*) your form in anything else than in you who are God” (my trans.). Philo thus praises Moses’s desire to encounter God directly and not as “in a looking-glass” (YONGE, *Philo Judaeus*, 1.134) or “reflection” (Colson/Whitaker, LCL 226.369) (cf. 1 Cor 13:12: “now we see in a mirror, dimly [*δι’ ἑσόπτρου ἐν ἀνίγμᾳ*], but then we will see face-to-face”).

and other Hellenistic sources (as is usually argued, most recently by Stowers), and it is clearly inspired by the Sinai narrative and its reception in early Judaism. This is particularly true for Philo who draws on both traditions, as we will see below. The third factor describing how people are transformed is indicated by the phrase *καθ' ἅπερ ἀπὸ κυρίου πνεύματος*. In this way Paul makes clear that it is the *Spirit* who transforms believers relationally through beholding the glory of the Lord with an unveiled face.

Finally, in contrast to some Pauline exegetes, I argue that the result of transformation in 2 Cor 3:18 has an ethical aspect.¹¹¹ The aim of the transformation is indicated by the phrase “into the same image,” that is, the image of Christ (cf. 4:4). In 2 Corinthians as well as in the parallel texts Col 3:10; Eph 4:24; Rom 8:29; and Gal 4:19 (cf. Rom 12:2), being transformed into the image of Christ means taking on Christ’s character. Living like Christ, however, has an overt ethical dimension. Hence, believers are portrayed in 2 Cor 3:18 as being transformed by the relational work of the Spirit for religious-ethical life and mystical-mimetic assimilation to God. Based on this text and others (such as Rom 8:12–17) we may conclude that according to Paul, the Spirit transforms and empowers people for ethical living primarily through initiating and sustaining an intimate relationship with the divine and with the community of faith.

Philo, too, is a theologian for whom the intimate experience of the divine is of paramount importance. He engages in a theology of experience in which he searches for pathways to the transforming experience of the presence of the “One Who Is.” He considers this the “beginning and end of human happiness” (*QE* 2.51) and the “most precious of all possessions” (*legat.* 4). This focus can be clearly seen in Philo’s interaction with the Moses tradition. Interpreting Deut 30:20, Philo emphasizes the love of God and the effects of what one may call a mystical union¹¹² with God in the following way (*post.* 12–13):¹¹³

Moses [...] bids them [sc. the Israelites] “cleave to Him,” bringing out by the use of this word how constant and continuous and unbroken is the concord and union that comes through *making God our own*. [...] But so unceasingly does he [sc. Moses] himself yearn to *see God and to be seen by Him*, that he implores Him to reveal *clearly His own nature* (Exod 33:13), which

¹¹¹ Pace, e.g., F. BACK, *Verwandlung durch Offenbarung bei Paulus. Eine religionsgeschichtlich-exegetische Untersuchung zu 2 Kor 2,14–4,6* (WUNT 2/153), Tübingen 2002, 153–154.

¹¹² Philo’s notion of mystical union should not be confused with that of the mystery cults (which often amounts to “fusion” with the divine) that Pascher anachronistically ascribes to Philo (J. PASCHER, *Η ΒΑΣΙΛΙΚΗ ΟΔΟΣ. Der Königsweg zu Wiedergeburt und Vergottung bei Philon von Alexandria* [SGKA 17,3/4], Paderborn 1931, 164–167, 177, 183). Contrary to some popular opinions, mysticism does not necessarily imply a *unio mystica* in which the distinction between God and human is fully overcome. Cf. E.R. WOLFSON, *Varieties of Jewish Mysticism. A Typological Analysis*, in: D.H. Bishop (ed.), *Mysticism and the Mystical Experience East and West*, Selinsgrove/London 1995, 133–169, at 137.

¹¹³ The italicized words highlight particularly strong parallels to the mystical tradition in 2 Cor 3:18.

is so hard to divine, hoping thus to obtain at length a view free from all falsehood,¹¹⁴ and to exchange doubt and uncertainty for a most assured confidence.

Philo here explains that a firm faith will be the result of the intimate encounter of “seeing God and being seen by Him.” The theme of Moses seeing and encountering God, which is central to this and other passages in Philo (*post.* 16; *LA* 3.101; *spec.* 1.41; cf. *mut.* 8, etc.),¹¹⁵ of course also plays a key role in 2 Cor 3 where Paul speaks about seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror. Both Philo and Paul attest that this encounter makes a difference in the beholder: a “firm faith” is the result in Philo’s account of Moses, and “being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another” in Paul’s account of the apostles.

Philo provides evidence that two focal aspects of the work of the divine Spirit – the creation of intimacy with God and the empowering for ethics – are interconnected in his thinking. For instance, *gig.* 54–55 suggests that it is in close proximity to God that the divine Spirit is active and experienced as a guide “in every journey of righteousness.” In this connection, it appears that the intimacy of worship not only leads (by means of the Spirit) to moral life in a narrow sense but also encompasses an empowering for ministry (teaching divine truths). The study of numerous further passages (e.g., *LA* 1.38–39; *opif.* 144; *QE* 2.29; *Mos.* 2.69) leads to the conclusion that Philo’s writings give strong confirmation that the connection of the divine Spirit with an intimate relationship to God¹¹⁶ and with ethical life had a clear place in Paul’s context.¹¹⁷ In some texts, it remains

¹¹⁴ Colson and Whitaker (LCL 227.335) translate ἴν’ ἤδη ποτὲ ἀψευδοῦς δόξης μεταλαβών (*post.* 13) as “hoping thus to obtain at length a view free from all falsehood.” This translation coheres both with the Moses tradition in Exod 33:13, which is referred to by Philo (cf. 33:18: “Moses said, ‘Show me your glory, I pray,’” LXX: καὶ λέγει δεῖξόν μοι τὴν σεαυτοῦ δόξαν) and 2 Cor 3:18. However, it is also possible to translate δόξα in *post.* 13 as “opinion” (thus Leisegang’s translation in L. COHN, *Die Werke Philos von Alexandria in deutscher Übersetzung*, vol. 4, Berlin ²1962, 8–9: “damit er, der sich schon vorher eine untrügliche Meinung gebildet hatte, für unsicheres Schwanken sichersten Glauben eintauchte”). On this rendering of δόξα, Philo could perhaps be alluding to Plato’s analogy of the divided line in which δόξα and πίστις feature as key terms (*rep.* 6 509d–513e).

¹¹⁵ On the human longing for an intimate relationship with God, see further *opif.* 70–71; *ebr.* 152, etc.

¹¹⁶ In Philo, knowing God has a cognitive-noetic and an existential-mystical aspect (e.g., in *LA* 1.38; *praem.* 43–46). As a person draws near to God, she will know God better *cognitively*, in that she will gain a deeper insight into who God is and what he wants, and *existentially*, in that she experiences a kind of “I-Thou” encounter with the divine (“knowing and being known,” cf. *post.* 12–13). While in Philo both aspects of knowing God appear to receive equal weight (perhaps with a slight leaning towards the mystical), the cognitive side comes more to the fore in the Dead Sea Scrolls. See RABENS, *Holy Spirit*, 156–163.

¹¹⁷ For these texts (and their potential relation to Paul), see the more detailed exposition in V. RABENS, *Pneuma and the Beholding of God. Reading Paul in the Context of Philonic Mystical Traditions*, in: J. Frey/J.R. Levison (eds.), *The Holy Spirit, Inspiration, and the Cultures of Antiquity. Multidisciplinary Perspectives* (Ekstasis 5), Berlin 2014, 293–330, at 299–304,

open whether Philo had a defined conviction of how these three aspects of my concept of relational transformation are related sequentially. Nevertheless, the better part of the Philonic material evinces unequivocal parallels to the ideas that we find in Paul, particularly in 2 Cor 3:18.

Of the texts listed above, *QE* 2.29 is of particular interest for our study. Philo, like Paul in 2 Cor 3:18, here explores the experience of Moses's encounter with God on Mount Horeb as it is described in the Pentateuch. In *QE* 2.29 Philo thus interprets Exod 24:2:

For when the prophetic mind becomes divinely inspired and filled with God (ἐνθουσιᾷ καὶ θεοφορεῖται), it becomes like the monad, not being at all mixed with any of those things associated with duality. But he who is resolved into the nature of unity, is said to come near God in a kind of family relation, "for having given up and left behind all mortal kinds," he is changed into the divine, so that such men become kin to God and truly divine.

That "divine inspiration and filling with God" (ἐνθουσιᾷ καὶ θεοφορεῖται) implies the presence and work of the Spirit is suggested by Philo's interpretation of the same experience of Moses in *Mos.* 1.175, where he explains that Moses "became possessed [...] and [...] filled with the spirit which was wont to visit him" (ἐνθους γίνεται καταπνευσθεὶς ὑπὸ τοῦ εἰωθότος ἐπιφοιτᾶν αὐτῷ πνεύματος; cf. *virt.* 217, etc.). Philo elucidates in *QE* 2.29 how such a possession leads to religious-ethical transformation (becoming like the monad),¹¹⁸ intimacy, and closeness to God (coming near God in a kind of family relation),¹¹⁹ and how this results in the person's further (religious-ethical) transformation (becoming kin to God and truly divine). Here we see further parallels to Paul's idea of spiritual empowering and transformation. For one thing, Paul calls the Spirit that Christ-believers receive the "Spirit of adoption as sons" (πνεῦμα υἰοθεσίας). Through this Spirit they cry, "Abba! Father!" (Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6). The Spirit thus creates and expresses filial intimacy with God – a theme that clearly qual-

325–329; cf. id., Philo's Attractive Ethics on the "Religious Market" of Ancient Alexandria, in: P. Wick/V. Rabens (eds.), *Religions and Trade. Religious Formation, Transformation and Cross-Cultural Exchange between East and West (Dynamics in the History of Religion 5)*, Leiden 2014, 333–355. Cf. the explicitly ethical language employed in *LA* 2.53 and 3.100 (particularly the theme of cultic purity that Philo understands in the sense of ethical perfection). On 2 Cor 3 and Philo, see M. COVER, *Lifting the Veil. 2 Corinthians 3:7–18 in Light of Jewish Homiletic and Commentary Traditions (BZNW 210)*, Berlin 2015, 273–277, 280–295. For an alternative reading of Rom 8:12–17 and Gal 4:1–7 against a Stoic concept of πνεῦμα, see HODGE, *Kinship and Ethnicity*, 74–76; THIESSEN, *Paul, Essentialism, and the Jewish Law*, 83–85, and the critical discussion in K. SONG, *One Spirit. Pneumatology and Unity in the Corinthian Letters*, Waco 2024, 170–187; J. T. HEWITT, *Πνεῦμα, Genealogical Descent and Things That Do Not Exist according to Paul*, *NTS* 68 (2022), 239–252.

¹¹⁸ On the term "monad" in Philo, see C. NOACK, *Gottesbewußtsein. Exegetische Studien zur Soteriologie und Mystik bei Philo von Alexandria (WUNT 2/116)*, Tübingen 2000, 132–141.

¹¹⁹ Cf. WEDDERBURN, *Baptism and Resurrection*, 283; NOACK, *Gottesbewußtsein*, 147.

ifies as belonging to Paul's "mystical" theology.¹²⁰ This intimacy aspect of the parent-child relationship is evidently drawn out by Philo when he describes this bond as being characterized by love and affection.¹²¹ Moreover, he applies these features to the divine-human relationship, which is the relationship that Paul deals with in Gal 4 and Rom 8. While the very term *υιοθεσία* is in general not used in Jewish literature, Philo is a precursor of Paul in employing the concept metaphorically in *sobr.* 55–56. There, he explicitly links the theme of divine sonship to the motif of adoption.¹²² Philo praises the closeness to God that is able to call God "savior and benefactor" rather than only "master or lord":

For wisdom is rather God's friend than His servant. And therefore He says plainly of Abraham, "shall I hide anything from Abraham My friend"? (Gen 18:17). But he who has this portion has passed beyond the bounds of human happiness. He alone is nobly born, for he has registered God as his father and become by adoption His only son, the possessor not of riches, but of all riches [...].

Being adopted (*εισποιητός*) is here seen as an equivalent to being a friend of God in whom he confides his thoughts and (secret) plans. God has become a father to Abraham, and Abraham enjoys the privileges of being his only son who shares in all God's riches and goods (*sobr.* 56). This state of being adopted as a son is presented as one of extreme happiness, and the human reaction is praise and worship of the heavenly Father (*sobr.* 58).

We can conclude, then, that Philo describes the effects of Spirit-inspired "coming near God in a kind of family relation" (*QE* 2.29) as a religious-ethical

¹²⁰ On the centrality of the motif of adoption for Paul's soteriology and eschatology, see T.J. BURKE, *Adopted into God's Family. Exploring a Pauline Metaphor* (New Studies in Biblical Theology 22), Downers Grove 2006; V. RABENS, "Schon jetzt" und "noch mehr." *Gegenwart und Zukunft des Heils bei Paulus und in seinen Gemeinden*, *JBTh* 28 (2013), 103–128, at 107–119; E.M. HEIM, *Adoption in Galatians and Romans. Contemporary Metaphor Theories and the Pauline Huiiothesia Metaphors* (Bibl.Interpr.S 153), Leiden 2017.

¹²¹ When reading his treatment of the parent-child relationship, one may initially get the impression that Philo is only concerned with duties. However, he provides his readers with a hermeneutical key when he explains that this is mainly due to the fact that most of the time, he is exegeting legal texts (see his reflections in *spec.* 2.239–40). There is, nonetheless, sufficient proof that affections played a pivotal role in Philo's understanding of the parent-child relationship (e.g., *spec.* 2.240: parents "are fast bound to them [sc. their children] by the magnetic forces of affection"; cf. *spec.* 1.137; 2.236, 239; *Abr.* 168–170; *Jos.* 4). Reinhartz hence summarizes her research by affirming that "it is clear that love and affection, particularly of parents towards children, was considered by Philo to be [...] a very powerful aspect of parenthood" (A. REINHARTZ, *Parents and Children. A Pilonic Perspective*, in: S.J.D. Cohen [ed.], *The Jewish Family in Antiquity* [BJS 289], Atlanta 1993, 61–88, at 81).

¹²² Significantly, Philo – like Paul in Rom 8:15 and Gal 4:8 – here contrasts sonship with a relation to God that is characterized by servanthood (*δοῦλος*). On the identification of the person adopted and the religious background of *Sobr.* 55–56, see the discussion in J.M. SCOTT, *Adoption as Sons of God. An Exegetical Investigation into the Background of ΥΙΟΘΕΣΙΑ in the Pauline Corpus* (WUNT 2/48), Tübingen 1992, 89–96. More generally on Philo's concept of relating to God as a father, see, e.g., *QE* 2.3; *conf.* 145.

transformation that results in further closeness to and likeness of God. We thus find in Philo key elements of Paul's argument in Rom 8:12–17: adoption and sonship of God, an intimate relationship to God, religious-ethical transformation, and the activity of the Spirit. Accordingly, Philo's presentation of mystical transformation provides a religious context for Paul's presentation of the work of πνεῦμα in believers – particularly when we look at the connection of filial intimacy, adoption, and the Spirit in both authors.¹²³ We also see overt parallels in their concepts of transformation through contemplation and imitation.¹²⁴ The result of this assimilation to God may be comprehended as near-divinization or attributive deification in both Philo¹²⁵ and Paul.¹²⁶

3. Conclusion

The online “Church Life Journal” has recently published an article by David B. Hart considering in semi-popular fashion some of the issues dealt with in this rather technical essay. Under the title “The Spiritual Was More Substantial Than the Material for the Ancients,” Hart argues in the vein of Dale Martin and Stanley Stowers that the authors of the New Testament understood every entity or substance as physical, that is, as light or heavy matter. He rightly warns that people in the church as well as in the academy need to take off their specta-

¹²³ In this case, Paul seems to advance the shared convictions of both authors by introducing the concept of πνεῦμα νόθεσίας (developed on the basis of the Christological character of his pneumatology; cf., e.g., πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ/πνεῦμα τοῦ υἱοῦ, Rom 8:9; Gal 4:6), thus linking adoption explicitly to the Spirit. On the argumentative structure of Rom 8:12–17, see further RABENS, Holy Spirit, 203–242.

¹²⁴ On contemplation (e.g., *fug.* 141; *Mos.* 2.216; *spec.* 1.269, 288) and mimesis in Philo, see *Mos.* 1.158–159; *legat.* 5; *decal.* 98, 110; *virt.* 51; *praem.* 114, etc. Cf. PUTTHOFF, Ontological Aspects, 90–91, 126; M.M. LEUNG, Ethics and *Imitatio Christi* in 1 John. A Jewish Perspective, *TynB* 69 (2018), 111–131, at 121–122; and more generally as well as on Paul: V.A. COPAN, Saint Paul as Spiritual Director. An Analysis of the Imitation of Paul with Implications and Applications to the Practice of Spiritual Direction (Paternoster Biblical Monographs), Milton Keynes 2007, 40–71.

¹²⁵ See the discussion in RABENS, Beholding of God, 304–305 (partly drawing on R. BAUCKHAM, Moses as “God” in Philo of Alexandria. A Precedent for Christology?, in: I.H. Marshall/V. Rabens/C. Bennema [eds.], *The Spirit and Christ in the New Testament and Christian Theology. Essays in Honor of Max Turner*, Grand Rapids 2012, 246–265), and more recently M.D. LITWA, The Deification of Moses in Philo of Alexandria, *Studia Philonica Annual* 26 (2014), 1–27; PUTTHOFF, Ontological Aspects, 93–102; T.A. PINO, An Essence-Energy Distinction in Philo as the Basis for the Language of Deification, *JThS* 68 (2017), 551–571 (including an extensive critique of Litwa's position); FORGER, Divine Embodiment, 244–255.

¹²⁶ See the discussion in V. RABENS, The Holy Spirit and Deification in Paul. A “Western” Perspective, in: P. Dragutinović/K.-W. Niebuhr/J.B. Wallace (eds.), *The Holy Spirit and the Church according to the New Testament. Sixth International East-West Symposium of New Testament Scholars*, Belgrade, August 25 to 31, 2013 (WUNT 354), Tübingen 2016, 187–220.

cles that tend to project a material–immaterial dichotomy on Scripture. The fact that his article belongs to the category of essays considered by the editors of the online journal to be “a resource for considering pastoral issues in the Church today” shows that questions of cosmology and ontology are not only considered relevant for discussions within the academic guild. Taking N.T. Wright as his (strawman) antagonist, Hart eloquently asserts that the biblical writers did not significantly differ from their Hellenistic-Jewish and Greco-Roman contemporaries in their views on physics and cosmology, including their physical concept of (God’s) *πνεῦμα*. Accordingly, Hart maintains that

If we could hear the language of *πνεῦμα* with late antique ears, our sense of the text’s meaning would not be that of two utterly distinct concepts – one “physical” and one “mystical” – only metaphorically entangled with one another by dint of a verbal equivocity; rather, we would almost surely hear only a single concept expressed univocally through a single word, a concept in which the physical and the mystical would remain undifferentiated. [...] it would all make perfectly simple, straightforward, “physical” sense to us.¹²⁷

However, our reading of Philo and Paul has shown that it is not straightforward for a Hellenistic Jew at the turn of the ages to explicitly express that the divine (Spirit) is a material substance or for a Christ-following Jew to plainly formulate that human transformation is the result of physical mechanics. Rather, my investigation leads to the following conclusions:

(1) The fact that we see Philo wrestle with the Stoic materiality of *πνεῦμα* should make us wary of simply assuming that Paul of course had a material concept of the (divine) Spirit. The fact that Paul does not address this question or overtly presuppose such a materialist pneumatology allows for speculation. However, we should be frank that it is just that: speculation. It can be useful to analyze a certain (enigmatic) Pauline passage against the background of this hylozoistic hypothesis. Nevertheless, while it is possible that Paul and his companions held to a *stofflich* *πνεῦμα*-concept, we should not make our interpretation of the work of the Spirit or his theology in general depend on this hypothesis.

(2) On the other hand, one also needs to avoid a false “physical-versus-mystical” antithesis. We have just seen that Hart rightly warns of such oversimplifications, too.¹²⁸ Accordingly, one should steer clear of interpreting Paul and partic-

¹²⁷ D.B. HART, The Spiritual Was More Substantial Than the Material for the Ancients, *Church Life Journal*, 26 July 2018, <https://churchlifejournal.nd.edu/articles/the-spiritual-was-more-substantial-than-the-material-for-the-ancients>; cf. the continued debate in id., *Looking Awry at Resurrection Bodies*, *ibid.*, 4 July 2019, <https://churchlifejournal.nd.edu/articles/looking-awry-at-resurrection-bodies>.

¹²⁸ It is thus not helpful to presuppose “either–or” categories and deny the possibility of a “both–and” co-existence. Cf. HODGE, *Kinship and Ethnicity*, 76: “[...] gentiles join Christ by taking his *pneuma* into their hearts, incorporating his substance into theirs. In this way, this procreative *pneuma* creates new kinship, and does so materially. This conception of *pneuma* as a physical, transformative agent challenges the oppositional relationship between ‘physical’ and ‘spiritual’ kinship which Pauline scholars often assume.” By emphasizing the physical dimension, Hodge seems to intend to approach Paul’s theology in a “both–and” manner. How-

ularly his pneumatology with a Platonic framework. As I have argued elsewhere at greater length, there are no passages in Paul that suggest that he thought of *πνεῦμα* as being immaterial.¹²⁹ Philo does define *πνεῦμα* as immaterial, but the distinction between immaterial and material is ambiguous (see, e.g., Aristotle, *an.* 1 405a7, and the discussion in section 1.1 above).

(3) Since the nature of the Spirit in Philo and Paul remains elusive, my concern is that the focus of certain strands of Pauline scholarship on the potentially physical mechanics of human transformation obstructs our view of the relational-mystical dynamics of transformation that are more explicitly at work in Paul. For this reason, the focus of the majority of my work on Philonic and Pauline pneumatology has been on how the Spirit functions rather than on its ontology.

(4) While the mystical does not exclude the physical,¹³⁰ it seems that the mystical-relational dynamics discussed in the second part of this chapter provide a better account of the various dimensions of human transformation that we find below the surface of the Philonic and Pauline texts.

(5) Many of the key features that Philo and Paul ascribe to the work of the Spirit in the context of these dynamics can be classified as “mystical.” In particular, we find in both authors the thematic connection of the work of the Spirit as enabling an intimate beholding of God that leads to a transformed, virtuous life. These significant parallels between the views on the work of the Spirit of the Hellenistic-Jewish philosopher from Alexandria and those of the Jewish-Christian apostle to the gentiles do not require literary dependence of the latter on the former. Nor do they line up the apostle with a particular strand of cosmological reflection on ontology – be it Hellenistic-Jewish, Greco-Roman, or both – because we have seen that Paul does not explicitly clarify where he stands with regard to the supposed material-substance monism of antiquity. However, the fact that these convergences between Philo and Paul exist suggests that both were part of a religious milieu that held similar outlooks on the *activity* of the divine Spirit.¹³¹ Like Paul, Philo interprets the Pentateuchal narrative of Moses’s

ever, it remains a matter of debate whether she and others who emphasize the material aspects of Paul’s soteriology indeed succeed to include and give equal weight to both sides of the coin. As Paul seems to be more explicit on the relational-mystical dimensions of human transformation, I contend that this is where Pauline interpreters should place the emphasis too.

¹²⁹ RABENS, *Holy Spirit*, 82–86.

¹³⁰ The mystical certainly has physical corollaries, as, for example, in the case of the Abrahamic and Mosaic contemplation of and assimilation to God in Philo, in the course of which the patriarchs become (temporarily) immaterial. Cf. nn. 99 and 100 above.

¹³¹ For a discussion of a potential common background to Philo and Paul, and alternative ways for the Philonic-Alexandrian traditions to have been transmitted to Paul, see G. HOLTZ, *Von Alexandrien nach Jerusalem. Überlegungen zur Vermittlung philonisch-alexandrinischer Tradition an Paulus*, ZNW 105 (2014), 228–263. For similar convergences between Philo and the Johannine literature, see V. RABENS, *Johannine Perspectives on Ethical Enabling in the Context of Stoic and Philonic Ethics*, in: J. van der Watt/R. Zimmermann (eds.), *Kontexte und Normen neutestamentlicher Ethik/Contexts and Norms of New Testament Ethics*, vol. 3: Re-

meeting with God on Mount Horeb as transformation through contemplation. Strikingly, Philo uses the same key term for the beholding (as in a mirror) as employed by Paul, *κατοπτρίζω*, which is a biblical hapax legomenon.

(6) For Philo and Paul, the relational dynamics of an intimate encounter with the divine are the secret of mystical transformation. For both, it is the Spirit that is the facilitator of this relational dynamic.

(7) In contrast to Philo, Paul does not ascribe this “ministry of the Spirit” (ἡ διακονία τοῦ πνεύματος, 2 Cor 3:8) to Moses. It is only in turning to Christ (3:16) that the “veil” is lifted by the Spirit in the context of the missional ministry of Paul and the apostles.¹³² The Spirit thus has a Christological focus in Paul – also because the Spirit makes believers behold Christ and take on in his character.

(8) While only Philo produces some abstract formulations on anthropology and pneumatology from a substance-perspective, neither Philo nor Paul provides us with a conclusive analysis of the potentially physical dimensions of human transformation. Both, rather, give room to the mysterious and mystical work of *πνεῦμα*.

thinking the Ethics of John. “Implicit Ethics” in the Johannine Writings (WUNT 291), Tübingen 2012, 114–139.

¹³² For Paul, contemplation of the divine thus has a communal context (cf., e.g., RABENS, *Holy Spirit*, 190, 236–241), whereas for Philo more often it seems to be done in solitude (cf., e.g., *Abr.* 87).