

ULTIMATELY
the Will of God decides

Katharina Beta

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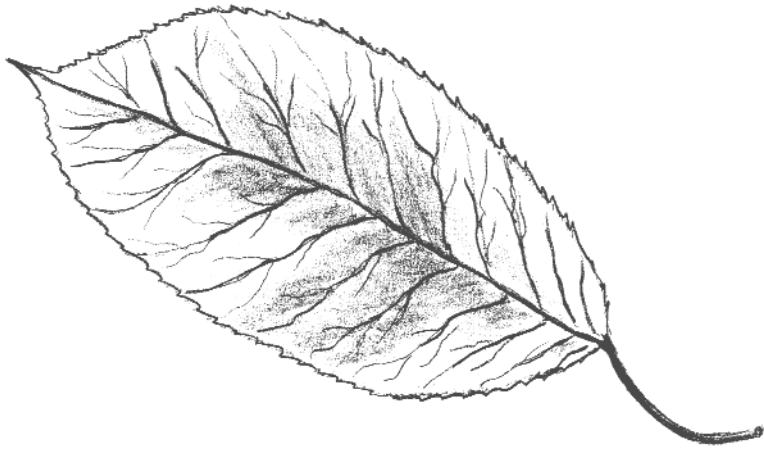
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Dedication

This book was written after my meeting with Dr. Robert H. Schuller in California, a meeting, that changed my life. It was after Easter 2004 that I met Dr. Schuller the first time. He is one of the most inspiring personalities of the 21ST century, He is a pastor with strong personal faith in the infinite power of the Lord and he manages to give others a positive way of thinking and trust in God.

I did not live without religion, but stood immobile concentrating on the head. I had read in the Bible, but I did not live in the Word. It is not important, what we think, but how we see our thoughts. The same applies to our faith and to our way of thinking. It is the distance between the head and the heart that counts.

‘God does not wonders if we ourselves do not actively participate. Even a turtle does not move on, if it does not stick it’s head out of it’s shell,’ said Dr. Schuller.

Our faith must come out of its depths to make success possible.

Dr. Schuller spoke of his conviction that everybody can become the personality that he or she should be according to the will or plan of the Lord.

His conception that a mortal human should be willing to do the will of God, was ever present.

You have to activate your will to become the being that God intended you to be. What you need is faith and the infinite trust in God.

I have to thank Dr. Schuller for his teaching. That was the cause that made me reflect on the ‘freedom of will’, while I enjoyed the vast steppes of Arizona. I visited a very good friend; we had known each other for quite a long time. My literary horizon was expanded by getting to know authors like Raymond M. Smullyan and Jorge Luis Borges. They will accompany us through this book. Especially the philosophy of the freedom of the will be discussed.

We often think that debates lead to nothing, because so many questions remain unanswered.

When I remember the wonderful positive teaching and the optimistic influence of the words of Dr. Schuller, I have to concede that everything is possible. Free thinking strengthened my faith. My way of thinking acquired stability.

I dedicate this book to Dr. Schuller with infinite gratitude.

Katharina Beta

Author

Vienna, December 2009

*We form the vessel of moist clay
But the emptiness within
Permits to fill the jar.
From wood we make
Doors and windows;
But the emptiness within
Permits us to live in the house.
What we can see
Is deemed useful,
But the essential
Remains hidden.*

Chinese wisdom.

The spirit is the wanderer

We all know what is meant when we talk of the unbroken thread leading through an event and setting marks. So we talk of the course of life. With a small knot, or better to say a coil we start our life. Within nine months the cells are rapidly developing, enlarge, form a human body. The end of the thread remains hidden, guarded and untouched. For a moment – in the stream of time – we thrive, we have a bit of fun and entertainment, we collect remembrances, those we would like to keep forever, then we wither and lose our form. The end of the thread will be with our children now. The thread reaches back into the unknown to us past, it moves on into the future. Countless knobs were formed, they had their time of growth and loss, as we grow and fall into oblivion. Nothing rests but a succession of seeds. What is changed and forms new structures as life proceeds, are not the short lived sprouts, but the

inherited gifts in the thread. We all carry the spirit. How, why and where it will lead, we do not know.

On our shoulders, in our eyes, in our tortured hands we carry the entire load of what he have to bring into the future through unexplored territory, into an unknown future, a future we cannot foresee, because it is continually developing anew. We carry our burden on along with every beat of our heart, with the work of our hands and our brain we serve our creator. We stumble, hand the load over to our children, we are knocked down, fall away and are lost and forgotten. The spirit wanders on, enlarged, enriched, mysterious and multilayered. We are used.

Should we not know who or what is using us? Who or what is it, whom we serve with such innocent loyalty? Why are we striving without rest? What can we desire beyond what we have already gotten? What is this spirit? Jacques Monod writes:

'From a river or a rock we know or we think that we know that they are the result of the interplay of physical forces. With these forces we cannot correlate an image of a plan, a project or an intention. In any case not when we assume the basic premise of all processes of natural sciences, that is the premise that nature is objective and not projective.'

This basic way of thinking is highly attractive for most of us. There was a time, not so many generations back, where quite the contrary was valid.

Where rocks wanted to tumble down, rivers were rushing and roaring. Capricious spirits wandered about in the universe and used nature according to their whims. Now we know what kind of profit the understanding and power of the view brought us, where objects and processes of nature are without aim and intention. The rock has no wishes, the volcano has no aim, the river does not rush towards the sea. The wind has no destination. There is also another perspective.

The animistic belief of the primitives is not the only alternative to scientific objectivity. This objectivity may be valid for the periods of time in which we usually think, but this truth may expire, when time is counted in aeons. The assumption that the light is moving in a straight line without any deviation and through adjoining mass may serve us wonderfully when we measure our land. When we want to make a picture of far away galaxies in the same way this way of thinking will lead us astray. The assumption that nature, the surrounding world is without intention will serve us well as long as we think of nature in periods of days, years and lifetimes, but will lead astray as well when eternities are at stake.

The spirit rises, substance decays. Spirit reaches out like a flame, like a speedy dance. Out of nothing it creates forms like a god, is divine. Spirit stood at the beginning, and this beginning was also the end of a former beginning and so forth.

If we go back long enough we arrive at the primordial mist, where even spirit was nothing more than atomic unrest, a throbbing being unwilling to stay motionless out in the cold. Matter desires a stable universe in a state of even distribution, immobile and inalterable.

Spirit wants to have an earth, heaven and hell, turmoil and contradiction, a brilliant sun, dispersing the darkness, shining on the good and the evil ones alike.

Matter wants thought, remembrances, desire. It wants to create a game of forms of increasing complexity and inclusivity. To strive towards a heaven that continually recedes, changing his form, then barely reaches remains just another step leading to other heavens, to the last one...

But there is no last one, since the spirit strives continually upwards, digressing, meandering, bowing, but always reaching upwards, using lower forms relentless to create higher ones, moving towards intense profoundness, consciousness, spontaneity and greater freedom.

Particles gain life. Spirit tries to tear free of substance, whereas matter tries to keep him there, to bring him to a standstill. Diminutive beings curl in the warm seas; the minute forms becoming more complex, for a moment gifted with a spiritual desire.

They meet, touch each other; spirit creates love. They touch and something is exchanged. They die and die again, without pause. Who will miss a multitude of spawn in the rivers of the past? Who would count the myriads of dancing grunions on the beaches of the primordial seas?

Who will hear the never experienced thunder of the waves of the long ago past? Who will mourn the armies of prairie rabbits, the furry masses of lemmings? They die and die and die. But they have touched each other, and something was exchanged.

Spirit arises, creates new bodies, again and again, more complex vessels to carry on the spirit, to continue to hand it on to those who will follow.

Virus changes into bacteria, they become algae, they become ferns. The force of the spirit cracks the rocks makes the tree grow.

Amoebae are in continuous movement, they extend soft stumpy arms to catch the world, to get to know it, they grow strive on, more spirit moves.

Sea flowers change into octopi, turn into fish. First they just wriggle along, then they swim then start to crawl.

Fish become snails, then lizards. Then crawl develops into walking, running and flying. Living creatures touch each other.

Spirit arises among them. Shapelessness can develop fragrance, charm and fascination, even love. From the lizard to the fox, from ape to humans, in one glance, one word we find a likeness. We meet, we die, we serve the spirit without knowing it, we carry it on. The more elated the spirit, the farther it moves. We love someone far away, someone who died long ago.

Erich Heller writes: *‘Man is the vessel of the spirit. The spirit is the traveller, who in transition through the land of the humans requests the human soul to follow him to his, the spirit’s own spiritual destination.’*

Seen from nearby the path of the spirit is a wonderful way, a brilliantly glittering trace in a pitch black wood. When you look at it from high on the small twists and turns become a straight line. Mankind has reached the ledge, from where a wide horizon opens permitting to look back into the past.

Thousands of years are clearly discernible and we can perceive the millennia hidden in the mist of antiquity. Beyond the unsteady curves of the recent period of our way a shimmering path leads straight back into unfathomable depths.

Mankind did not start that way and will not end it. But now we move on across passes and abysses. Who made this way we are going? It was not man. Our footprints just started alongside it. Life did not start here. Because the way reaches past even beyond the beginning of life. Spirit is the wanderer. It is he who traverses the realm of mankind. We did not make the spirit, it is not our possession, we can not enclose it, we are only carrying it on. We take it over from never mourned and forgotten forms, carry it through the time given to us and will hand it on enriched or diminished, to those who come after us. Spirit is the wanderer we are the means of transport. Spirit creates and spirit destroys. Creation without destruction is impossible. Destruction without creation feeds on bygone creation, reduces form to matter and strives towards immobility.

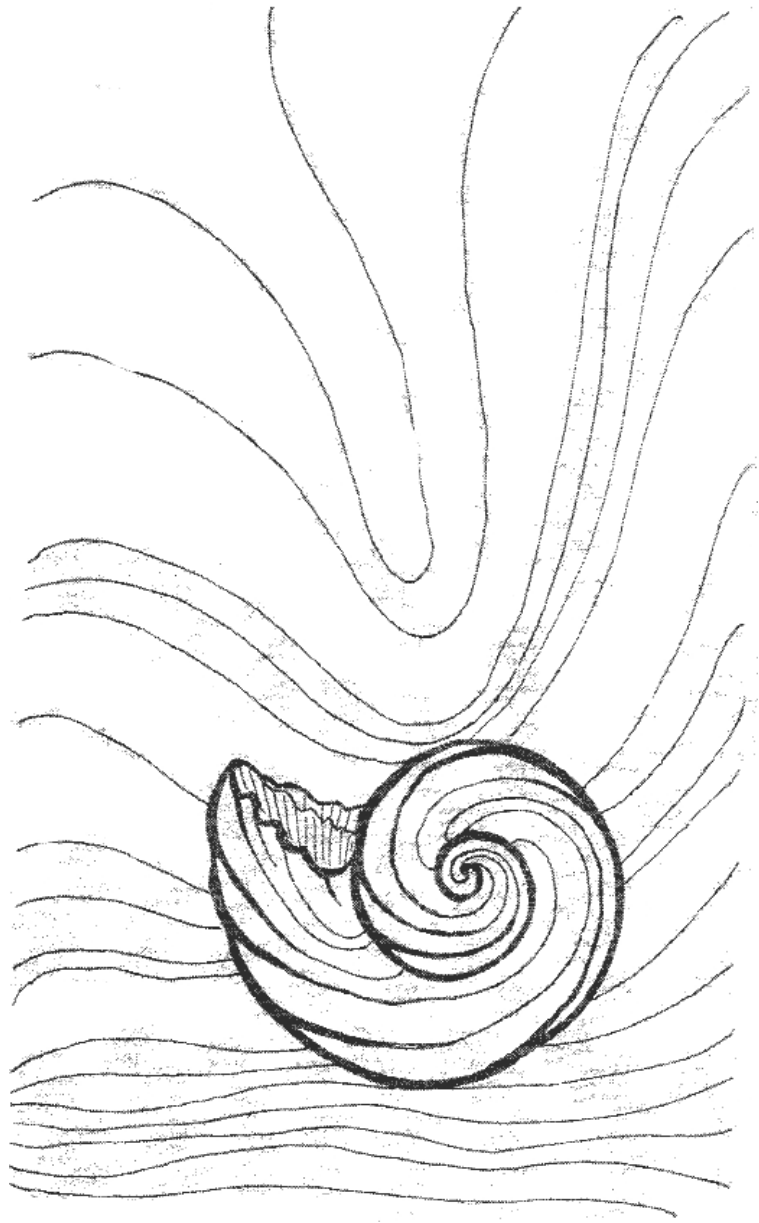
Spirit creates more than it destroys, though not in every season, not even in every age; this causes the turns, these turns to the past, where the matter’s desire for immobility triumphs in destruction, but the force of

creation leads to this endless striving straight way forwards. From the primary mist of the matter to the spiral nebula of the milky ways, to the order of solar systems, from melted rock to an earth of air, land and water, from the abyss to the light, to life, from feeling to recognition, from memory to awareness, man has become the mirror, where the spirit is reflected. In the river currents turn back, vortexes are swirling.

The river itself stops, recedes, reappears, flows on. The development of form, growing awareness, of moving from matter to consciousness, towards thinking, this is the main direction. The harmony of mankind with nature consists in the continuation of this journey on its ancient track, towards a greater freedom and a deeper awareness. *'We are machines programmed to survive,'* stated Richard Dawkins. *'We are blindly programmed to sustain the egoistic molecules, called Genes. This is a truth that still evokes amazement. Though this has been know for years, we simply cannot adapt to it. What remains is the hope that we can contrive to bring others towards this astonishment.'*

The beginning was elementary. It is difficult to explain how a simple universe came into being. Even more difficult to explain the sudden appearance of a completely developed complex order, of life, or the being that was capable of creating life.

Extract from Richard Dawkins: 'On not knowing how to live' by Allen Wheelis



CHAPTER I

I have dreamed you - therefore you are

Nobody saw the canoe sink into the mud. Nobody saw him going to shore in the depth of the night. Several days had passed before the inhabitants of the little village detected that a taciturn man from the south had come. His home was one of the numerous villages at the upper course of the river. A small place situated on a steep mountain slope, where the language had no distinct sound.

They all talked about how the silent man had kissed the mud of the river bank. He had hurt his hands when he pulled himself up to the river bank.

Bleeding he staggered towards the wall of the temple. A wall adorned with images of horses and tigers, cut into the stone. The outskirts of the temple showed the traces of old burns. Shrubs thrived in the swamp surrounding it. High trees grew between them, though you could not call it a wood. Maybe a long time ago there had been one, when tigers and horses wore the colours of fire. Now they were grey as ash.

The silent stranger lay down and rested besides the large sculptures.

As the warmth of the sun gained strength he awoke.

Calmly he registered that his wounds had healed.

He closed his eyes and went back to sleep, as if he had been ordered to do so, as if it was his duty to fall asleep.

The man knew that this temple was the place of his destination. He saw that the abundantly growing tress and shrubs had not yet succeeded to overgrow the ancient walls. About midnight the cry of a bird awakened him.

Traces of unshod feet, some figs and a jug of water told him that the villagers had watched him in his sleep.

They were afraid of ancient magic. Fear shook him. In the decaying wall he searched for an aperture, maybe an old tomb and there he hid under unknown foliage.

He was driven by a deep instinct, not something simple but a metaphysical force.

He wanted to dream and in dreaming to create a human. He wanted to dream him into reality with every detail and force reality to accept him.

This magic purpose devoured his entire soul. If someone had asked him his name, he would not have known the answer. If someone had inquired into his former life there would have been nothing but silence. The uninhabited ruins of the temple gave him an opportunity. They admitted only a minimum of the visible world. The villagers around were no real problem. They brought him simple food, rice and fruit. It was enough for him. He had only one purpose: to sleep and to dream.

In the beginning his dreams were chaos. But with time they took on a dialectic form. The stranger dreamed himself into the centre stage of a circular amphitheatre. Lots of silent disciples sat on the steps. Their faces seemed to be aeons away although clearly discernible. A man held lectures on anatomy, cosmography and about the soul. The faces listened intently.

They were trying hard to give prudent answers, as if they knew the final aim of this test, that one of them could be released from this empty spurious state and be admitted into the real world.

In his dreams and when awake the man considered the answers his ghosts had given. Fraud could not impress him and in some questions he found a growing understanding. He was searching for a soul worthy to participate in the workings of the universe.

When ten nights had passed he recognized with bitterness, that nothing could be expected from the passive ones of the disciples, whereas something could be expected made from those who voiced reasonable

disagreement.

The first, though they earned love and compassion, would never become individuals, the others were more promising. Soon he dreamed as well in the afternoons, only in the morning he was awake for a short time.

One afternoon he relinquished the imaginary college forever only one disciple could remain with him. He was a thin, reserved young man, sometimes unruly, whose sharp features resembled the man who had dreamed him. Some time he was quite cast down because of the sudden loss of his fellow students. The progress he made in the private lessons amazed his teacher. Then disaster struck. He awoke from sleep as if coming out of a sticky slimy plain. He saw the light of the fading day and at first he mistook it for the glimmer of dawn. Then he knew that there had been no dreams.

During this night and into the following morning restless sleeplessness took him. He decided to walk into the woods and vent his strength in movement. All he got was a thread of a thin slumber slightly embellished with raw chaotic useless viewings. He tried to revive the college again.

Just when he had spoken the magical words it formed only vaguely and disappeared. Tears burned in his old eyes all the endless hours he had to stay awake.

At last he understood that the task of forming the ever moving substance of dreams and hold it at some point was quite exacting.

He had tried to enter into the mysteries of the higher and lower orders, but it was more enacting for him that to weave a rope out of sand or stamp a coin out of volatile wind.

He understood further that this breakdown at the beginning was inevitable. He swore to erase the gigantic hallucination that had lead him astray form his mind. At the same time he searched for another method to go to work. But before he began again he took his time to

restore his strength that the feverish illusions had cost him.

He stopped to dream on purpose and finally achieved that he could spend the better part of the day asleep. In the first moments he dreamed of a beating heart. In his dream the heart was moving, warm of life and secret. It had the size of a balled fist and hang, a purple oval, in the mists of a human body. The body had neither face nor sex. With intense love he dreamed of it during the following two weeks of moonlit nights.

In each consecutive night the heart become more vivid. He did not touch it. He was content to see it and to watch it and to follow it with his gaze. He was aware of it and felt it from various distances and at different angles. In the fourteenth night he stroked along the main artery with his index finger and then stroked the entire heart, the inside and the outside. He was content with the inspection. In wise deliberation he spent one night without dreaming. Then he touched the heart anew, called the name of a planet and started to view another vital organ.

Before a year had passed he had made the skeleton and the eyelids.

He encountered great difficulties with the innumerable quantity of hair on the head. He dreamed a fully grown man, a young man. But the young man could not sit up, he could not talk and he would not open his eyes.

The dreaming wizard dreamed him night for night. In the ancient Gnostic cosmic mysteries the magicians moulded a raw Adam, who could not stand upright. As clumsy and raw and elemental as this peace of clay Adam was the dreamed Adam the magician had wrought in these nights. Once the desperate wizard was near to destroy his handiwork, but he could not. In vain he prayed to all the spirits of earth and water, he fell to his knees at the feet of the statue of the deity and prayed for unknown help. At sunset he began to dream about a statue. He dreamed

it coming to life, filling it with life. It was no ungainly crossover between a tiger and a horse, but it was both creatures at the same time, but also a bull, a rose, a storm.

This multiform being told him that its name on earth was fire, that in this circular temple sacrifices had been given to him and that by his magic he would give life to the dreamed man of mist, that all creatures, with the exception of the fire itself and the dreamer should see a real human made of flesh and bone in him.

He ordered that the one after being instructed in the ancient rites, should be sent to the other now ruined temple, whose pyramids at the downside course of the river were still habitable, so that a voice should proclaim again his mane in the relinquished shrine.

While the magician dreamed on, in this dream the dreamed man woke to life and he followed the instructions he had received.

At first, within a period that lasted two years, he dedicated himself to instruct his creature in the secrets of the cosmic forces and the worship of fire. It pained him to the core of his heart that he should let his handiwork go.

Under the pretext of vital scholarly necessities he expanded the hours dedicated to slumber more and more every day. Under close scrutiny he found that he had not made the right shoulder correctly and redid it. Then he suffered from the impression that all this had already happened before...

Altogether these days were filled with happiness. When he closed his eyes he thought:

‘Now I will be with my creature.’ Or, but more seldom: ‘The son I made is waiting for me and he will not be there if I do not go to him.’

Step by step he accustomed him to reality. Once he ordered him to set up a flag on the top of a far away hill. On the next day the banner was flying from the hilltop.

He taught him other, similar accomplishments, requiring more and more audacity. Not without bitterness he found that his son was ready to be born, maybe even waiting for this.

That night he kissed him the first time and told him to go to the other temple, whose ruins were situated down river, the path leading through impenetrable forests and swamps. Now the magician erased all remembrances of the disciple's student years, so that the son should never find out, that he was of his making. He should consider himself a man, like all the others.

His victory and his peace were marred by satiety.

In the dawn of morning and the shadows of the evening he grovelled before the stone statue. In his head he pondered the thoughts that his unreal son would carry out the same rites in the ruins of the other temple, far down the river.

In the nights his dreams did not show the youngster, he had ordinary dreams like other humans.

The sounds and colours of the world remained hazy for him. The absent son still drew the live force out of his soul. The laws of life had been fulfilled. The wise one remained in a state of trance.

After a long time, some people said it must have been years, others believed it had been decades, he awoke at midnight, by the noise caused by two men rowing a boat. He could not recognize their faces.

The men told him the story of a mighty magician in the temple of the north, whose strength was such that he could walk through fire and never burned.

The wizard remembered the words of the divinity and he was convinced that of all creatures living on earth only the fire would know that his son was a spirit.

This insight gave him peace, but it did not last and started to torture him. He began to fear that his son would start to make inquiries about this extraordinary gift and would then find out about his odd nature.

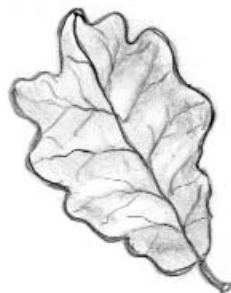
To find out that he was no human being, but just the emanation of somebody else's dream and feel unfathomable humiliation and shame. Every father is concerned about the fate of his sons, the sons he begot in sensuous rapture and felicity.

How understandable that the magician feared for the future of this son whom he had made part by part in one thousand and one secret nights of dreams. His doubts and fears found a sudden end. The first signs of the foretold end appeared. After a long draught he could make out a small cloud behind the far away hills, small like a little bird. The sky in the south turned pink, then a sooty red, mists sprang up and shrouded the metal of the ruins in rust. The animals fled in haste.

What had happened centuries ago happened again. The ruins of the temple dedicated to the god of fire burned in bright flames.

On the morning when all birds had gone, the magician saw the ring of fire tightening around the walls. One moment he wanted to flee into the fire until he understood that death was approaching to crown his age and relieve him from his sufferings.

We advanced towards the ring of fire, the flames did not bite into his flesh, they caressed him and rushed into him without heat or burn. Relieved, ashamed and appalled he realized that he as well was only an image, someone else had dreamed him.



(Extracts from: Jorge Borges 'Labyrinthe')