

## Looking for a spirituality facing the climate change

(how to believe in a divine creation of heaven and earth  
in view of the climate change)

Input to a group exchange during the spiritual week at La Garde - June 2015  
by Michael Möbius - with some of the remarks of the partners as **foot notes**

### My interest

- In our technical and scientific epoch *we can recognize the climate change* with all its disastrous consequences *as a new chance* for all mankind, to understand *the world again as a* physical and biological *whole* and no longer as a mass of separate pieces and a field for men's omnipotence. We have borders and see them.
- In our secular world-civilization we could recognize the climate change as a chance for all mankind to understand the world *as an unique miracle* depending from beyond our possibilities. Within this miracle *mankind is forced to find its genuine place anew* - or to lose it finally. We have failed - mainly in the Christian West. But nearly all the nations have followed us.

I feel, that *this necessary turn from the wrong path will be possible*

*by a great spiritual trust* / confidence / faith;

*by a global change of consciousness* and - in consequence of it -

*by a change of common behavior.*

*All the religions and philosophies will have to work together*, because they can't do without one another. They will draw from the wells of their own traditions, but facing this one-world-task they will find answers not without the others.

Comparing with former meetings of *our lived dialog*: After we had asked for a trustful living together in respecting and learning and in looking after peace and in waiting for a oneness, **now we have to stand the test**, together facing the crucial point of the existence of our common life of plants, animals and men and look, what to do.

### My questions for our talk:

- a) How do the informations about the climate change effect you in your faith?*
- b) How can you believe in a continual divine creation and maintaining of mankind together with all beings in view of all that is connected with the climate change?*
- c) Is "your God" able and willing to work out a helpful way out for His mankind together with all creatures? If yes - why? - and how would such a redemption work?*
- d) Is it thinkable, that the mankind will "repent" - and change its behavior? If yes - how?*
- e) Where are the psychic and spiritual resources for people, to try and risk the turn to a new path and to be ready for making the sacrifices?*
- f) How is the relation of the initiatives of individual believers and activists and that of the masses and governments?*

Knowing, that these are questions from me, a western Christian, I beg you, to ask your own questions in this context and try your answers.

**Let me give my personal answers in the way of attempts on my way of looking for my spirituality in times of climate change.**

a) How do the informations about the climate change effect you in your faith?

My faith in God, the Father and Creator is highly tempted.<sup>1</sup> More exactly: I sometimes have my doubts, whether The Highest is able or has the will to save the mankind, which is burying its own grave / is cutting the branch sitting on. But my religious tradition sais: In crucial moments of history God had appointed spiritual leaders like the prophets, Buddha, Mohammed etc and authorized and sent them - and they went and preached and sometimes found enough open minded people to manage a turn. So in our times I am encouraged to cry to God for distinct words and deeds and signs - and me to become ready to follow His call.

*This is my spirituality. How is yours?*<sup>2 / 3 / 4</sup>

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b) How can you believe in a continual divine creation - former and present - and a divine maintaining of mankind together with all beings in view of all, that is connected with the climate change?

I try to understand and believe it by integrating the theory of world evolution with the divine creation. This evolutionary divine creation is happening in each change at the earth, each step of my feet, in each breath, in each thought and in each new published law of governments.

**In the physical and biological periods** the great evolutionary jumps happened by earth tectonic movements - now called catastrophes -, by climate changes and by millions of small biological mutations. **In the later times of spirit and mind** it happened additionally by inventions, rivalry, war and peace and by religious revelations and sciences, which led to changes of consciousness.

**In present**, the grows of the world population and the global capitalistic grow of economics are new motors of evolution, changing and consuming the natural environment and - in many case - produce the climate change. This will lead to an new jump in the evolution - in a still unknown direction.

I like to believe God acting through all that in his universal love, revealed by Jesus Christ using our right and our wrong behavior. *My spirituality is expecting this. What do you expect?*<sup>5/6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Friedrich: effected is not my 'faith', because I don't believe in a personal God. But: I'm sad. For instance: Living in a slum it is much more difficult to live a spiritual life.

<sup>2</sup> Ananda: Most people find satisfaction in satisfying their senses. The true wealth is to be satisfied with what one has.

<sup>3</sup> Deepal: One sees, how poor people will suffer. When the rulers are not just, there will be a whole circle of corruption. If they are right, the crops will be right. ... We find plastic chairs in the remotest village. Poverty makes destruction worse. Sunetra: ... cutting their trees ... Ananda: ... if big companies do not get green.

<sup>4</sup> Deepal: The climate change reinforces my creed.

<sup>5</sup> Some: God has finished his labor? / God has set the rules in the beginning? / God is continuous intervening? / What about free wish: do people have?

<sup>6</sup> Deepal: According to Buddhism there are five ways things happen:

1. How one is planting. 2. climatically (whether, politics, ecological, ...). 3. Karmically. 4. Depending on nature. 5. How one's mind works..[this notes are corrupted]

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c) Is "your God" able and willing to work out a helpful way out for His mankind together with all creatures? If yes - why? - and how would such a redemption work?

I don't know whether history of men will come to an end in near future. For me it is not adequate to think about God to be unable to anything. In contrary I think God being able to end his "project mankind", if mankind doesn't want to exist any longer. Obviously mankind doesn't wish to disappear. On the other hand, men more and more are not ready to die of anything. Not wanting to die is - according to Jesus - to lose one's life. *People have to learn to die*, otherwise they will not learn to work together with their creator for survival of the basics of their living life in the midst of the other creatures. Confer the motto of the German Church Meeting last week: "... *that we may gain wisdom.*" Know, that the full sentence reads so: *Teach us to number our days aright* (the meaning is: *to consider that we are mortal*) *that we may gain wisdom.*"

So, mankind should know what it wants: To be attached to individual and collective permanent life, enlarging the suffering of the other creatures - or to live impermanent. If they decide to live including death, God surely will open a path out. *My spirituality is a confidence in God's good will. But I need your answer to my question.* <sup>7 / 8 / 9 / 10 / 11</sup>

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d) Is it thinkable, that the mankind will "repent" - and change its behavior? If yes - how?

In our scriptures we find

- the novel of **the prophet Jonah**, who in the name of God preached to all inhabitants of the town of Niniveh to repent and to change - and they all did and so prevented their town from destruction.
- We have the vision of **Mica and Isaiah**, that all the nations shall wander to God's mountain, no longer learning to make war.
- We have the call of **John the Baptist**, to repent, because the axe is already laid to the roots of the trees (that means, the time is five minutes before twelve). In a moment, when there was no longer a chance - there has been a chance.
- We have **Jesus**, whose preaching is summarized in the sentence: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is upon you." The beginning of the "Kingdom of heavens" enabled Jesus and his followers to change their behavior and to get healthy.

I try to trust in such impossible possibility for a qualified number of people in the nations, so that they enter this atmosphere step by step and take the hesitating one's with them.

*This trust is my spirituality. How is Yours?* <sup>12 / 13</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Anada or Deepal: It fits with Buddhist answers: there is a circle of worlds, following to one another. No surprise of ... ends...

<sup>8</sup> Friedrich: Spirituality is a best way to find a way forward.

<sup>9</sup> Ananda: The Tsunami 2004 has been understood as a punishment

<sup>10</sup> Friedrich: Any spiritual approach which sees responsibility is helpful. There could be a good coalition of people with different religions for fighting together. Like Firmas: 'Don't hide your inventions and knowledge for your own.'

<sup>11</sup> Some of us: Not working of fear (of fire / hell) or hope (for paradise)

<sup>12</sup> A Buddhist: Awakening is working. Buddha doesn't speak of repent but of awake. There is a movement of awaking concerning climate change. But too little progress.

<sup>13</sup> Various partners: Hope of intelligence / hope of the next generation and their insights. But: Power of finance, of mining companies etc. Fight between insight and interest. There is a gap between values and actions. Social action groups often are more effective than governments. One remembers the prayer of Francis Drake "Disturb us" - see at the end.

- e) Where are the psychic and spiritual resources for people, to try and risk the change for a new path and to be ready for making necessary the sacrifices?

**If one is confronted** with the demand for all that should be done to stop climate change, he will fall into *fatalism* or into *comfortable stupid confidence* in God (He shall manage it) or into *blind activities*, or into blaming others, whose fault it is, or - not seldom and not unknown to me personally - fall into a *psychic depression*.

**If governments are confronted** for instance with the demand of decisions at summit meetings, they are not able to do much more than their voters would allow them.

Only the opening of

a real chance in this last moment

and the joy at repenting (that means changing behaviors)

and the joy at friendship with plants and all living beings including men

will enforce **one** to jump into this "heaven".

Only a wide spread new consciousness will enable the **governments**, to do the necessary decisions.

I myself try to enter this promised area by small steps. I try to disseminate this joy and this expectation, knowing, that our protestant church in Germany on one side encourages the church members to new behavior - spending much money for helpful projects and manifold information- but at the other side - does *not enough* points out the pleasure of this life change. the message should be: "Yes, we can, since God can with us."

*That to practice is my spirituality. What sort of psychic resources do you point out to believers in your community?*<sup>14 / 15 / 16</sup>

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- f) How is the relation of the initiatives of individual believers and activists and that of the masses and governments?

Change of consciousness and behavior will always start in the life of individual persons. Their followers always will be a minority. But minorities, who have found answers to the challenge of the time have sometimes a stronger influence than the majority. I can imagine, that the thinking and the life feeling of a majority might change soon.<sup>17</sup> This again will encourage many, to say and to do and to decide, what has to be done. Governments will not necessarily be the last, who "jump on the train". Individuals are "eye openers". In a story in the Bible (2 Kings 6, 8 - 22) the prophet Elisha answered to his servant, who was afraid of the hundreds of soldiers who tried to catch the prophet: "Don't be afraid. Those who are with us are more than those who are with them." Then the servant's eyes were opened and he saw "the hills full of (heavenly) horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha."<sup>18 / 19</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> About the power to turn. What is it, that you or I can do? One partner: Create more opportunities to speak about the subject. Friedrich: To overcome poverty is a condition to make progress in preventing climate change.

<sup>15</sup> Deepal: The way we think have to be changed. Ed: the focus on mankind has to be changed. What are we doing exterminating flowers and animals? Ed: Since centuries People know, what to do, but they don't do it. I'm very pessimistic.

<sup>16</sup> Arthur Dahl: God has sent us the answers for long. We have to practice the solutions. Ananda: We all are so well informed. Bu it's not so easy, to find the results of all the different sights.

<sup>17</sup> Some partners: Citizens initiatives are working successful. With millions of voters in at least 17 countries you can move much. A hope rising signal is the recent French law, forbidding restaurants to throw away meals, that had not been served and giving order to donate them to the poor.

<sup>18</sup> One: In a way governments are necessary and helpful. But in communication they cling too much to ... Young people's brain works in a very different way. I'm very hopeful because of this. Another one: Remind the corporate happiness in Bhutan and in some factories in the west.

<sup>19</sup> Arthur: In Paris they will again pass cloudy resolutions. One shall put them under press, to fulfill their promises.

## Spirituality in times of climate change means to me:

- First: Nothing else but the basic spiritual behave of a Christian: daily **to turn my heart to God.**
- **To be humble**, knowing, how helpless and guilty I am; knowing, how little men's insights into the mechanism of climate still are; knowing, how insecure the measures are, that are planned.
- **To depend on God**, the Father and every moment creator, the Son and every moment rescuer, the Holy spirit and every moment the fulfiller
- **To learn the brotherhood** with all living beings and to grant this insight a place in my consciousness.
- **To recognize and confess**, that I'm so much clinging to an anthropocentrism, that it will need a hard work to overcome it.
- **To be brave**, doing things, that seem to be harmful for me and my family and that are not supported by the majority
- **To enjoy the "Kingdom of God"** coming towards my steps and thoughts in each moment
- **To sympathize with all those beings**, who bear the consequences of climate change already now, and those populations, who will be the next victims and are demanding climate justice
- **To be glad about all, who awake** and ask and are on their way of climate justice
- **To be interested** in the motivations and in the driving forces of climate activists
- **To form an alliance** with those, who are asking deeper ...
- **To be thankful** for the smallest step forward and to be sad and eventually impatient about the stagnations.

Michael Möbius

## *Sir Francis Drake, an adventurer, wrote it as he departed to the west coast of South America:*

Disturb us, Lord, when  
We are too pleased with ourselves,  
When our dreams have come true  
Because we dreamed too little,  
When we arrived safely  
Because we sailed too close to the shore.

Disturb us, Lord, when  
With the abundance of things we possess  
We have lost our thirst  
For the waters of life;  
Having fallen in love with life,  
We have ceased to dream of eternity  
And in our efforts to build a new earth,  
We have allowed our vision  
Of the new Heaven to dim.

Disturb us, Lord, to dare more boldly,  
To venture on wilder seas  
Where storms will show Your mastery;  
Where losing sight of land,  
We shall find the stars.

We ask you to push back  
The horizons of our hopes;  
And to push back the future  
In strength, courage, hope, and love.

This we ask in the name of our Captain,  
Who is Jesus Christ