

Research Article

Rut Björkman's Spiritual Strategy of Dealing with the Existential Contradiction

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Abstract

Spirituality is not identical to religion, but implies a *life in the spirit* as a result of a religious experience. Spirituality leads to "spiritual knowledge" in contrast to "intellectual knowledge". It is that "search, practice and experience..., through which the subject makes the necessary changes in himself to gain access to the truth." Primary are of course religion beliefs. They are based on a) an existential *experience* and b) the existential response to it in the act of *faith*. Subsequently, whether spirituality - here: by Rut Björkman - does justify the religious experiences of a deep contradiction, will be considered and reflected.

Keywords

Spirituality, Resilience, Psychology, Mystical Union, Existential Ontology, Theodicy

1. The Existential, Ontological and Religious Contradiction

Spirituality is not identical to religion, but implies a *life in the spirit* as a result of a religious experience. Spirituality leads to "spiritual knowledge" in contrast to "intellectual knowledge".¹ [1] It is that "search, practice and experience..., through which the subject makes the necessary changes in himself to gain access to the truth."² [1] Primary are of course religion beliefs. They are based on a) an existential *experience* and b) the existential response to it in the act of *faith*.³ Subsequently, whether spirituality - here: by Rut Björkman - does justify the religious experiences of a deep contradiction, will be considered and reflected.

To a) What distinguishes the original religious experience? It is the experience that the root of all being is ultimately spirit and this spirit is in *contradiction* to matter - just as the human subject itself is primarily "spirit" and exists in contra-

diction to the material body.

To b) The act of faith as an "own act class"⁴ cannot be reduced to any other act of human existence. Rather, it cannot be derived from any other source than from itself and thus affects human existence "in itself", which precedes the human "essence" according to Sartre⁵. This *existential* act is now identified with the *act of faith* in religion: faith transcends everything that "is" and even the reason and other supposed *securities*.⁶ In the act of faith, every person carries out the meaning of his and all existence: *to ground, to realize and to found himself*. The religious self-founding takes place as a spiritual practice through rational reflection, existential dialogue and mystic contemplation.

Can the religiously experienced contradiction be *transformed* spiritually? Or does human existence have to pro-

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foundly acquire the contradiction in order to “resolve” and to “overcome” it – in accordance with the negative-dialectical way by G.W.F. Hegel? Or simply follows from the appropriation of the contradiction in terms of its acceptance the submission to it? The little-known female mystic Rut Björkman offers an option here. In the first part, the *religious experience* of the existential ontological contradiction is addressed, followed in the second part by sketching the concrete *spirituality* of Rut Björkman facing the contradiction.⁷

1.1. What Is Religion

Religions are essentially characterized by their gear towards *transcendence*. Thus no transcendence, no religion! The religious act is the act of transcending the self, the community, the time in which we live and finally the whole universe. The transcendence is spiritual or a spiritual reality, since it essentially exceeds the physical matter. Religion is therefore concerned with obtaining spiritual *salvation* and *happiness* that is “out of this world” and thus it cannot be taken by anything, not even through death.⁸ In order to make sure that the world cannot take happiness and salvation, man must *transcend* spiritually himself and must literally “attach” to transcendent happiness. Even the physical death does not mean separation from this transcendent source of happiness. Human existence remains forever united with the divine or with God.⁹ If man is primarily “spirit” and secondarily “body”, religion and spirituality are essential to him as a path to spiritual happiness.

Religion belongs to the essence of every human being.

Man is man when he is spirit and has a *religious consciousness of transcendence*. Religious consciousness defines itself as the “spiritual knowledge” mentioned at the beginning about “to exist” in mutual interaction with the divine. It manifests itself as a universal consciousness – just as the human mind itself is “everything” to a certain extent (Latin “quodammodo omnia”).¹⁰ In principle, he can think about and recognize *everything* by grasping the spiritual root of all things, and also “be” *everything*.¹¹

Religion thus meets universal so called *all-statements*. The reason for this lies in the transcending of *every* entity or event: transcending the world, the body, the drives, the psyche, but also the reason and the mind.¹² The universality of every religion is existential: no existence without transcendence, and no transcendence without religion! “Who” is a human being determines his existential relation to the transcendence. Whether someone tells the truth, strives for it and stands by it defines his “being”.

1.2. The Existential and Ontological Contradiction

If one now proceeds to the specific formulation or formation of the religions, the existential contradiction suddenly appears. It appears, for example, as a Buddhist “universal suffering”, as a Pauline-Augustinian “discord between body

and spirit”¹³, or as a fallenness for the human community¹⁴. This contradiction was spelled out particularly existentially as a contradiction between “being” and “not being” resp. “be or not to be” and reduced to a supposed loss of any meaning of all being. For Camus, human existence seeks meaning and only finds the “absurd”¹⁵; and according to Sartre she is condemned to freedom “in nothing”. Human existence searches for meaning and finds “nothing”, i.e. a last restlessness, since human existence has to be completely (!) based and grounded on itself.¹⁶ In this way, one’s own vanity is experienced ontologically, which actually represents a contradiction “in itself” – and in the being of all beings, that is, in human existence, in society and in the world.

The contradiction of being is factual and not necessary.

It is deeply inherent in the universe and in man itself.

Søren Kierkegaard detects the contradiction of man as a contradiction between “finiteness” and “infinity”. The “self” of man only succeeds this contradiction through “despair”¹⁷: every hint of existential transcendence and the pursuit of pure infinity lead to failure, so that there is nothing left but to surrender to the existential contradiction and authentically despair.¹⁸

What is not considered here is that there is not only the alternative of being “only” finite or “only” infinite, but finiteness and infinity can also form an *analogous unit*. The finitude can be understood as *analogous* to infinity. If the finiteness of immanence were analogous to the infinity of transcendence, immanent self-realizations of human existence could become *symbols and ciphers* (Karl Jaspers) of transcendence¹⁹. Also, the unconditional striving for absolute, inclusive and existentially calming security can be completely satisfied by *analogous* security: the own existential spiritual being of man is primarily not vanish, but to the highest degree “being” – empowered by the relation to the divine being. This absolute being of God would be the desired security, which can be achieved analogously²⁰. Furthermore, if existential self-determination or the so-called self-design and thus existential freedom were not absolute, but relative, then transcendence would not be “nothing”, but the totally constitutive *fulfillment* of freedom: it is *not* a goal in itself and is *not* absolute – man is not free in order to be free –, but it is *related* to and has the meaning of love.

The existential contradiction is not a constitutive or necessary part of the being.

Much more it is only a possible part of the being.

Thus there is no absolute or “logical” contradiction in being, but a *factual, relative and privative* contradiction. *Not-being* is the simple negation of *being*. It does not have “being” in itself, but is a relational concept of understanding and not an ontological constituent. In opposite to *logic*, at its origin is the hard and absolute contradiction (A “is” not not-A), only a relative contradiction is conceivable in *ontology*.

The *factual* contradiction in being itself can therefore only be relative. It is not permissible to apply the logical principle of non-contradiction or the identity theorem of logic with

Hegel totally to the principle of the analogous unit of ontology²¹. *Identity* is not the same as *unity*! On the contrary, the origin of logic is ontology. The intuition in the analogous unity of being is the origin of the logical principle of non-contradiction. Therefore, logic is the analogous and formalized *derivative* of ontology. The “terms” of logic come from the (intuitive) “understanding” of ontology.

1.3. The Contradiction Addressed by the Religions

The religions now give the recipe for dealing with the contradiction in its various forms. Different *strategies* are conceivable: to make the contradiction *absolute* (gnosis) and / or to postulate its *relativity* (certain forms of spirituality), or to *transform* it (e.g. the Christian Johns tradition) or to consciously *adopt* it and to *realize it existentially* to either “*remain* desperate” forever in this supposed absolute contradiction (Kierkegaard) or to “*transcend* it” dialectically (G.W.F. Hegel).

Shamanism can be mentioned as an example as the oldest religion of mankind.²² In the experience of one's own (human) spirit, the divine spirit is experienced as its transcendent background, as its goal and reason as well as the goal and reason of the whole world. Subsequent to this experience is the experience of the factual contradiction between the mind and matter or the body. The practice of dealing with the contradiction is a) a world view that tends towards the gnosis and b) the concentration on the mind by transcending the body and all matter and thus of all suffering at the contradiction. Such “spiritistic” religions also form the basis of Rut Björkman's self-awareness and spiritual self-interpretation.

Asian religions, which Rut Björkman also receives positively, experience the contradiction as a necessary suffering. Its reason is the isolation, which has its highest realization in the personhood. Therefore, the goal of Asian religions is the abolition of being a person, so that it rises and falls in the “eternal monotony” („Ewiges Einerlei“, G.W.F. Hegel). So here the contradiction or the negative difference of reality in human existence is carried out until it annihilates itself into the final identity of nirvana. What is meant is *not* a self-abolition of the contradiction out of itself, which is why this self-enforcement is not realized in the last, but only in the penultimate consequence. Ultimately, a supposedly absolute contradiction is finally and irreversibly canceled out by setting its antithesis out of itself (!) – as the *non*-contradiction (= the antithesis) does *not* “need” the contradiction (= the thesis) in order to “be” or to be “thought”.

In *Judaism*, on the other hand, there is a fundamental contradiction between divine justice and human injustice. Dealing with the contradiction implies, as with the symbolic scales of justice, the establishment of a balance and equilibrium of justice. This means revenge or reciprocal retaliation for a negative act through appropriate punishment (“eye for an eye” - logic). The meticulous fulfillment of the law (i.e.

the Torah) as a direct and original expression of divine justice results in the justification and salvation of Gods folk. In view of the impossibility of this ancient reciprocal equalization of justice, the required equalization of justice is shifted to a future apocalypse in the early Jewish apocalyptic world as a universal punishment for the unjust and faithless man before God.²³

In *early Christianity* the contradiction of reality is evidently experienced in the so-called paradox of the cross.²⁴ *Paul* in particular emphasizes the Christian logic of contradiction in antithetical formulations, for example between human weakness and divine strength. According to Paul, the Greeks regarded the cross as “folly” and as a senseless contradiction, and the Jews as “annoyance” (1 Cor 1:22), since the crucified man was cursed by God and *not* justified. The violent death of Jesus on the cross is interpreted by Paul with reference to the Jewish Atonement- and Satisfaction theory as a place of equality of justice through atonement and sacrifice: Jesus is the scapegoat who takes on the real sin of man and has to atone for everyone to pay their debt. Formally speaking, by executing the contradiction it is this contradiction that is negatively dialectically erased and eliminated.

This Jewish way of thinking about justice is completed by the *Greek*-inspired tradition of *John*, which interprets *love* as the last principle of all being: “God is love” (1 Jn 4:16). The equalization and equilibrium of justice is therefore primarily a result of and is realized by love, which also becomes the goal and cause of the incarnation. The “*theologia gloriae*” also means that love gloriously and confidently transcends (besides the logic of justice) the death on the cross. Love means total abandon of the son by the father and also the son to man - and thus the reciprocal response by returning the total abandon (Jn 10:18 and others). The goal and the reason for the demand for justice – the logic of reciprocity - can only be fulfilled here through love: the love is reciprocal and the basis of all reciprocity. Moreover, compared to the *logic of love*, the logic of justice is merciless. The logic of love tends to relativize and the logic of justice to absolutize contradiction. Rut Björkman thus tends to relativize the contradiction by locating it in the mind of man alone - and not between mind and body (Paul), in the material world (gnosis) or even in God himself (Hegel).

2. Rut Björkmans ‘Spirituality Facing Contradiction

What about Rut Björkmans spirituality facing the existential and ontological contradiction? Does it circumvent the cliffs of making the contradiction *absolute* to a supposed ontological necessity? Does she *moralize* the contradiction as “injustice”, which demands an adequate *balance of justice* through suffering and atonement?!²⁵

2.1. The Mystical Union of Man with God

The goal of Björkman's spirituality is the *mystical union* with God and thus the *elimination* of all contradictions. She formulates this central experience as follows:

*"Mysticism is the state in which man experiences the unity between himself and the force that lives him, where being, the creative spirit, flows into his consciousness and where the separation from his origin is cancelled out."*²⁶ [3]

The *mystical union* in order to connect man with God drives *everyone* inwardly inexorably.²⁷ "Whoever gains unity with this spirit is one with all life that constantly emanates from this spirit". According to Rut Björkman, this unity is like a "rebirth."²⁸ Buddhist terminology is about "enlightenment" and about "finding your own self in the whole universe. Anyone who sees unity everywhere has overcome delusion and worry."²⁹ [3] It is therefore every man's job to become a "mystic being"³⁰ by discovering his life from "our truth as children of God, heirs of eternal life"³¹. [3] Then the "external appearance" is "pierced"³² [3] by the power of God, which *unites* in the depth of man. Additional terms to clarify this are "transparency"³³ and "internalization"³⁴ [2] of the divine unity as overcoming the "self-alienation"³⁵ [2] - and the contradiction!

The *struggle to overcome* the contradiction through positive concentration on the unity of all being - instead of the constant defense against the contradiction - leads to the mystic realizing the unity finding God in himself³⁶ when he finds himself "in the truth", i.e. in God, seeks and recognizes his own "divine nature".³⁷ [3] The divine being, which unites all beings, is made conscious according to Meister Eckhart as "the essence of all things, the innermost reality in everything that works".³⁸ [3] According to Björkman, this is the content of the "knowledge of our truth"³⁹. The union with God through "knowledge" of a final unity and creative power is a dynamic process⁴⁰ that can only be accomplished in a heavenly state⁴¹.

The driving force for true knowledge is *love* as a motor for the search for God and meaning or the urge for spiritual union.⁴² It is the last answer to the *factual* contradiction mentioned above! The essence of love is a God-given and enabled *total abandon* of man⁴³, so that man "releases" "the life of God in and around himself" in order to make people who are "God loving and worshiping" and who "fulfill their purpose and become God's revelation in itself"⁴⁴. [3] *Knowledge* means "love and worship"⁴⁵ [3] as a dialogue with God. The mystic is filled with the loving "desire", in the "nearness" of the beloved, here: to come to God and to remain in this fulfilling state in order to be "in constant exchange" with him⁴⁶. [3] In order to truly love, man should hear and obey God⁴⁷ in order to be receptive to His instructions and pathways. This makes God's "grace" [2] effective as an a priori condition of mystical union.⁴⁸

Therefore, man actively participates in this God-human dialogue, which is made possible and supported by God, *after* he is passively enabled to do so. The mystical union is carried out *primarily* by God and *secondarily* by man: human

activity is *integrated* into and enabled by the divine activity.⁴⁹ Human participation in this relates first to the act of *becoming aware* of the effect of God in the Spirit. Thereby God as the "inside of life"⁵⁰ should be "redeemed" from "invisibility".⁵¹ [3] Awareness of the mutual relationship with God⁵² removes the separating obstacles between God and man⁵³.

This *separation* of the creature from the creator is *identical* with the *contradiction*. Rut Björkman identifies this contradiction with "sin"⁵⁴. [2] The fruit of the sin is (already in the bible) the *death* as "divorce" or separation from the love of God. Sin tends towards this separation.

The special experience of the early Christians was that nothing can *separate* man from God's love and that the contradiction between God and man is eliminated. Rut Björkman now articulates this primeval Christian experience of eliminating one's own *spiritual death* - by "knowledge" of one's own state of being separated from God. The term "knowledge" means the spiritual insight into this separation or its *meditative* awareness: as the contradiction becomes conscious, the mental power is enough to annihilate the contradiction. Now when the human mental eyes open, this is already the first step out of his isolation from the creative-living ground. So it is *not* a matter of meticulous suffering and resolution of the contradiction, i.e. *not* to restore divine justice in the logic of reciprocity of debt, but to *simply go* to God through the dialogue with him realized by knowledge and love.

2.2. Rut Björkmans Spiritual Dealing with the Contradiction

By identifying the contradiction with the separation, Rut Björkman circumvents the absolutization and moralization of the contradiction and thus also a corresponding blaming of man. The reason for the spiritual death or for the suffering from the contradiction is rather passive the "ignorance"⁵⁵ [2] as a mindlessness as well as "godlessness"⁵⁶. [2] The factual (not necessary) spiritual death obscures the awareness of the *root* of one's own death: the separation from God. However, once the human mind graceful initiative of God has being *activated* by "knowledge" [2], then the contradiction or the separation are already partially overcome. The separation is *spiritual* and is therefore only "in our consciousness, but is never really there."⁵⁷ [2] Rut Björkman seems to recognize that "real" or "reality" means primary the mind and spirit, thus the mind is able to destroy the contradiction by *transcending* it and by focusing on the *positive* knowledge of the divine force.

According to Rut Björkman, man achieves the *mystical union* with God, as we've seen above, by listening to and obeying God⁵⁸. Reverse conclusion: if man does not listen to and obeys God, it leads to his separation. In doing so, she completes the pure "knowledge"⁵⁹ [2] of the "separation" from God⁶⁰ [3] by an ethical and voluntary element of *obedi-*

ence. Knowledge, obedience and love together are therefore the key terms with which the diagnosed contradiction can be overcome and suffering can be processed.⁶¹

Björkman is *authentic*. She devoted her entire life intensely to the knowledge by *meditation* as a spiritual vehicle and wrote down her thoughts that had occupied her every day: approx. 20,000 printed pages document the dramatic dynamics of the development of her intellectual life on the way to overcome the contradiction through mystical union. Everyone who unites with God in this way is an "incarnation" of God⁶²: [2] the movement of man towards God (through knowledge) *corresponds* to a movement of God towards man, so there is *mutuality* between man and God that is enabled by God.

According to Rut Björkman, this mystical union leads to the *abolition of the person* - both man⁶³ and God, who is reduced to a non-personal and neutral "creative force"⁶⁴. [3] The oceanic feelings of the longed for mystical union therefore have a similar effect as when the contradiction between God and man is resolved: both lead to the *elevation and levelling* of being a person. Rut Björkman seems to have a non-personal concept of spirit, which is why she uses the neuter "strength" etc.⁶⁵ The spirit of unifying is a *non-personal medium* of unity.

The "awareness", „knowledge“ and „consciousness“ of the divine "power" even leads to a "spiritualization"⁶⁶ and "divinization"⁶⁷ [2] of the human *body* as an expression of an increased *unity* of body and soul to the "temple of this divine being"⁶⁸. [3] This unity is the result of the mystical union of man with God⁶⁹. Even the "body" becomes "an instrument of divine origin"⁷⁰. [3] In doing so, it involves the *whole* human being into the mystical union. This could also be read as expression of a monistic view of being, i.e. matter and spirit have the *same* origin and are not in contradiction with each other.

3. Conclusion

According to Rut Björkman, the *unity* of the spiritual man with God presupposes the admission and thus the "knowledge" of the *separation* of man from God. This separation is an expression of a deep *contradiction* in being itself and of a *disturbed unity*. Contrary to the Abrahamic religions, the contradiction is *not* based on a rebellion of man against his creator, for which he is being punished. The separation is therefore also *not* a moral injustice, but the state of being far from God. Therefore, the contradiction and separation are also overcome by their simple "knowledge", in that man feeds himself and his *spirit* from the constant dialogue with God, which he experiences as a creative force in and through himself. In short: *knowledge of the contradiction in the spirit of love* is Rut Björkman's spiritual pathway.

Therefore, the man who engages in this knowledge and opens his mind accordingly can be *healed* from the contradiction by virtue of this spirituality. The contradiction is

being dropped beside the goal to enter the mystical union. To what extent this is actually the case is another matter. However, it is important to understand that Björkman's "knowledge" is motivated *existentially* - as an authentic struggle for the truth of being. This struggle is a *process* so that recognizing and loving the truth does not simply remain as a permanent state of affairs, but must be painstakingly worked out every day. The ultimate spiritual driving force for this is and remains man's love and desire for a *mystical union* with God transcending all contradiction.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

References

- [1] Michel Foucault: Hermeneutik des Subjekts. Vorlesungen am Collège de France 1981-1982, Frankfurt 2004.
- [2] Björkman, Rut; Mook, Reinhard: Leben in der Erkenntnis. Rut Björkman im Dialog mit großen Philosophen, Andechs 1997.
- [3] Björkman, Rut; Mook, Reinhard: Leben aus dem Ursprung. Rut Björkman im Dialog mit großen Mystikern, Andechs 1997.

1 Michel Foucault: Hermeneutik des Subjekts. Vorlesungen am Collège de France 1981-1982, Frankfurt 2004, 380-381.

2 Michel Foucault: Hermeneutik des Subjekts. Vorlesungen am Collège de France 1981-1982, Frankfurt 2004, 32.

3 The so-called "Philosophy of Religion" develops these individual moments further, cf. summarized Winfried Weier: Religion als Selbstfindung. Grundlegung einer existenzanalytischen Religionsphilosophie, Paderborn 1991.

4 As well known, Max Scheler insists on the irreducibility of the religious „act“, Max Scheler: Vom Ewigen im Menschen. I.1. Religiöse Erneuerung, Leipzig 1923.

5 „What does it mean here that the existence of the essence precedes? It means that man exists first, meets each other, appears in the world and defines himself afterwards.“ (Jean Paul Sartre: Ist der Existentialismus ein Humanismus? Drei Essays, Frankfurt 1989 (1946), 11).

6 For the existential pursuit of maximum security, see Winfried Weier: Strukturen menschlicher Existenz. Grenzen heutigen Philosophierens, Paderborn 1977.

7 To dive deeper into the spirituality of Rut Björkman see her trilogy: Björkman, Rut: Licht einer anderen Dimension. Bd. 1: Träumender Kosmos, Bd.2: Träume von Gott, Bd. 3: Der Traum vom Menschen, Andechs 1992. In the following, the two centrally quoted writings are abbreviated: Erk: Björkman, Rut; Mook, Reinhard: Leben in der Erkenntnis. Rut Björkman im Dialog mit großen Philosophen, Andechs 1997; Urs: Björkman, Rut; Mook, Reinhard: Leben aus dem Ursprung. Rut Björkman im Dialog mit großen Mystikern, Andechs 1997.

8 The implied transcending of death seems to be just as essential for every religion - even if one does not have to declare it negative-dialectically as "being to death" (Martin Heidegger) and should identify death with "love" (G.W.F. Hegel): „Man, the finite, is set as the moment of God in death itself, and death is the reconciling. Death is love itself; it is looked at absolute love.“ (Georg Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel: Die absolute Religion, Hamburg 1966, 166)

9 See Paul in the New Testament (Rom 8:34-39)

10 See Aristotle well-known statement in *De Anima*: „ἡ ψυχὴ τὰ ὄντα πῶς ἐστὶ πάντα“.

11 The history of philosophy can certainly be interpreted as the awakening of this all-being ability of man (the so-called anthropological turn) and the associated nullity of this all-being. See Winfried Weier: Die Grundlegung der Neuzeit. Typologie der Philosophiegeschichte, Darmstadt 1988.

12 Vgl. the anthropology of Plessner. „Spirit means the ability to distance and

only in the distance from it does human environment become a world of factual character.“ (Helmuth Plessner: „Mensch und Tier“, in: Ges. Schr. VIII (hg. v. G. Dux u.a.), Frankfurt a.M. 2003, 64

13 Paul in Rom 7:15-19, where the conflict between the "law of the spirit" and the "law of the flesh" is described; see Augustine: Späte Schriften zur Gnadenlehre (hg. v. Christoph Scheerer u.a.), Berlin 2019.

14 The experience of "lost souls" („massa damnata“) seems to be the root of the „original sin“ of Augustine (as „peccatum originale“). Vgl. Imre Koncsik: Die Ursünde. Ein philosophischer Deutungsversuch, Marburg 1995.

15 Albert Camus: Der Mythos des Sisyphos, Reinbeck bei Hamburg, ²¹2016.

16 Jean-Paul Sartre: Das Sein und das Nichtsein. Versuch einer phänomenologischen Ontologie, Reinbeck bei Hamburg 1994.

17 So the well known introduction by Sören Kierkegaard in: Die Krankheit zum Tode. Eine christlich-psychologische Entwicklung zur Erbauung und zur Erweckung, Berlin 2019.

18 Vgl. Jürgen Boomgarten: Das verlorene Selbst. Eine Interpretation zu Sören Kierkegaards Schrift „Die Krankheit zum Tode“, Göttingen 2016.

19 Karl Jaspers: Der philosophische Glaube angesichts der Offenbarung, München 1963.

20 Then, of course, one's own human existence must not be *absolutized* as in Sartre and thus *defied* as in Nietzsche.

21 See to the "logical" or "formal" *univocality* of the concept of being since Duns Scotus: Gustav Siewerth: Die Analogie des Seienden, Einsiedeln 1965.

22 See as an introduction: Maria Cipolletti: Kosmospfade. Schamanismus und religiöse Auffassungen der Indianer Südamerikas, Baden-Baden 2019.

23 Karlheinz Müller: Geschichte und Kultur des Judentums. Eine Vorlesungsreihe an der Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg, Würzburg 1988.

24 Helmut Merklein: Studien zu Jesus und Paulus II. Tübingen 1998, esp. 285-302.

25 True to the motto: first the guilty party has to pay his debt, and then he is forgiven out of love - only after there has been a balance of justice through atonement and suffering there is nothing left to "forgive" by love!

26 Urs 15. Rut Björkman explicitly compares this with other mystics, whom she sees as a *paradigm* for union with God: "This state is what the Zen Buddhists call Satori, the Indians Samadhi, and the Christians talk about the Unio Mystica, the oneness with the divine... So revealed the mystic is a way of life that people don't yet know." (Urs 15)

27 „Mysticism is being connected with God.“ (Urs 18).

28 Urs 100. – „Like a transparent light, my soul floods the reality of invisible life.“ (Urs 53)

29 Urs 53

30 Vgl. Urs 11

31 Urs 22

32 Urs 27

33 Erk 79

34 Erk 171

35 Erk 82

36 „Where are you looking for God? As far as I surrender to Him, I find God in me. The God you are looking for is around you; It lies in people, and you only need to open up people and thus God.“ (Urs 12)

37 Urs 12

38 Urs 13f

39 Erk 9.11.18.19.85

40 „I am in the hands of a creative event that continually demands me.“ (Urs 20)

41 Erk 38

42 „Because what you didn't love, you wouldn't be looking for. But whoever loves always wants to be united with the object of his love, with God.“ (Urs 12; vgl. Urs 91)

43 Based on the classic Kenosis teaching, Rut Björkman speaks of "emptying all arbitrary spirituality" in order to get a "back connection" with God (Urs 109). See Erk 20f

44 Urs 14

45 Urs 13

46 Urs 85

47 Erk 43.107

48 "Grace" is "the effect that the spirit develops in and through the human being who recognizes himself as this force and remains in it. Nothing else is important." (Erk 70) – As with other mystics, this also sounds *pan-en-theistic* to describe the intimacy of the God-human union.

49 „It is only the power of God in us that can redeem us spiritually to our own divinity.“ (Erk 27; see Erk 31)

50 Urs 86

51 Urs 37

52 Vgl. Urs 87; Erk 64 and others.

53 Vgl. Erk 71

54 Erk 127

55 Erk 32f

56 Erk 175. Rut Björkman focuses anthropocentrically on what happens if man become *spiritually dead*.

57 Erk 32f

58 Thinking about, speaking about and discussing the truth does not lead to our revelation. To do the truth that shines in us, to translate it into life, is all that is necessary.“ (Erk 107).

59 Siehe etwa Erk 78, Urs 92 u.a.

60 Urs 119 u.a.

61 Erk 78 u.a.

62 Erk 117

63 The unconscious feelings determine the concrete consciousness of the human being: see Erk 77-80, 91-94.

64 „What are we then, if not creative power in individual manifestation?“ (Urs 38)

65 It is doubtful whether this is just for humanity. See Imre Koncsik: Vergessene Personalität in der Schöpfungslehre?

in: Grenzgebiete der Wissenschaft (Resch-Verlag) 52 (2003), S. 127-162

66 Urs 112

67 Erk 144

68 Urs 113

69 „We will grow into the longed-for connection with the reality of the living God... Then we are in God and God is in us.“ (Urs 92)

70 Urs 113