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Professor Dr. Ph. D. Werner Schiebeler

Is our fate determined?

Causality, free will and predetermination
from the viewpoint of
physics and parapsychology

Werner Schiebeler, Physicist, Professor, Dr. Ph. D, born in Bremen in 1923. Studied physics in Göttingen and in 1955 graduated from the Max Planck Institute, Göttingen with his thesis on fluid dynamics. From 1955-1965 worked in the electrical industry at Standard-Elektrik-Lorenz AG in Pforzheim, seven years as head of a development department for electronic teletext technology. From 1965 lectured physics and electronics at the then State School of Engineering, now University of Applied Sciences, Ravensburg-Weingarten. Appointed professor in 1971 and retired in 1983. In addition to the subjects of natural-science and technology, he also taught para-psychology and para-psycho-physics from 1969 onwards at regular special lectures at the University of Applied Sciences, Ravensburg-Weingarten and continued to do so the ensuing years.

The author published numerous articles in journals as well as brochure and four books on various para-psychological topics. In addition, he also released a film about the "Paranormal healing methods in the Philippines" at the Institute of Scientific Films in Göttingen. He received the "Ernesto Bozzano Price" from the Associazione Italiana Scientifica Metaphysica in 1974 and the "1st Swiss Price" from the Swiss Foundation for Parapsychology in 1988.

This treatise deals with a problem area that has always excited the minds of scientists from all the different disciplines. The debate is particularly difficult because concepts are worked with that have either not been defined or inadequately defined a priori, concepts the parties discussing the subject can interpret differently. Words like "will" and "freedom" are amongst these concepts.

1.0 CAUSALITY

1.1 Causality within physics

The task of the exact natural sciences, particularly physics, is not just the termination of bare facts within our world, but specifically their meaningful interrelationship with one another. Their mutual conditionality and dependence is revealed, that is to say, an obvious functional coherence between the conditions of the same constructions is determined at various times.

Events are thereby conceived within the relationship of cause and effect to one another. Whereby the cause happens earlier and the effect later.

An event means that *something changes* and things can only change when something of a physical size exists and when something we call time passes. Time, and so for instance also its lengths, represents a so-called physical basic size that cannot be equated with something simpler and is therefore not amenable with an explanation, any explanation with the equation to something simpler. Time, like other physical basic sizes, can only be measured, that is to say, compared with standard time.

The discovery of an obviously functional coherence, an obvious dependency between the various conditions within an event (initially in unanimated nature) and the establishment of the concepts of “*cause*” and “*effect*” lead to the conclusion and assertion that the same causes always have the same effects and that in reverse, that the same effects are always based on the same causes. This fact is based on experience and it is called the principle of causality or law of causality.

The *law of causality* is indeed the prerequisite in regards to the possibility of studying nature. Simple conclusions would not be possible without it. One can express the law of causality also this way: If all the variables of all the things involved in a natural process are known at any given time, it is virtually possible to calculate its future, but also its past course, in all its details. To predict what will happen under specific circumstances is however the most essential task of physics.

The concept of “*determinism*” is often applied instead of the concept of “*principle of causality*”. One will then say that with the presence of the necessary prerequisites, the future can be *determined* through the past and vice versa. This reversal, namely that the future or also the present can be used to determine the past, is generally not condoned in regards to the concepts of cause and effect, at least not always within the linguistic usage of everyday life. One has a vague idea that a cause must be some existing “*force*” that has the ability to effect something, whereby the “*effect*” happens during the course of time. One has gotten used to the idea that the effect always comes after the cause and not the other way around.

This so extremely important and in its consequences far reaching principle of causality applies in so-called *macrophysics*, ergo in the branch of physics wherein a multitude of molecules and atoms participate in the processes.

This especially applies to classic mechanics and in particular to the mechanics of the heavens also. But a limitation is already in place here also. The period of time a calculated prediction applies depends on how accurately one knew the initial conditions one bases the calculations upon. But as it is principally impossible to ascertain the initial state of a concluded physical system with any or even absolute accuracy, one cannot make an absolute statement about the fate of a system in the very distant future. The *absolute determination* of macro-physical systems have therefore to be

looked upon as an *ideal condition*, one that can in practice be ascertained during observed frames of time and this with relative approximation most of the time (for instance ion astronomy), but this is a condition that doesn't actually exist. *Professor Max Born*¹ describes this fact with the following words:

"The usual assertion that classical mechanism is deterministic is therefore incorrect. Just how this false ideal has been able to root itself so solidly in the heads of people, even in the most excellent minds of researchers, is not a physical problem, but a psychological one, one that could possibly be based on the development of the physical view of the world since Newton."²

As certain boundaries are set in regards to the determination of macro-physical processes, you'll find that these boundaries apply to a much higher degree to *micro-physical processes*, to processes where only a few or only one atom is involved. An atom can react differently to the same influence case by case and this without us having the opportunity to accurately predict individual cases, ergo predict how it will behave the next time. We are talking here about *non-causality* or indeterminacy, but this doesn't mean that no laws at all apply to such processes. They are only of a static nature and therefore make no explicit statement or prediction, they only give a final state with a certain probability.

One can only accurately determine this after a great number of attempts have been undertaken under the same experimental conditions.

Based on statistic laws of nature, one can on the other hand calculate the overall result of the reaction of a great number of equal atoms with sufficient accuracy. Therefore, for large bodies that consist of numerous individual atoms, the unambiguous laws of macro-physics arise from the statistic nuclear-physical laws that fall under the concept of causality.

1.2 Causality outside of physics

One has always tried, and every human being tries to daily, to apply the *principle of causality* outside of physics. This doesn't always succeed perfectly because the initial state that is supposed to determine the final state that lies in the future, is not always known with sufficient accuracy. According to most authors, the current state should however principally and inevitably predetermine the distant future in all its details. They therefore think that the world of the human spirit is subject to a strict causal connection everywhere in regards to feeling, wanting, thinking and acting, so that every experience, every thought and every act of will is completely conditional to preceding events and circumstances.

They see their conclusions justified through this, because physical processes also take place in the human body and the brain after all. But if these are determined, the mental processes must then also be determined according to them. They therefore infer that if causality applies, free will can no longer apply. This would mean that human and inter-human events are determined for all eternity. They therefore infer that responsibility and guilt no longer exists for individual human beings. One is therefore not able to influence and to control something through one's own will and one's own decisions. Everything that happens is inevitable.

Parapsychology could even try to grasp the fixed future to the furthest degree possible through

¹ **Max Born**, born in 1882, Professor of theoretical physics, Bad Pyrmont, Nobel prize for physics 1954.

² **M. Born**, Comments to the statistic interpretation of quantum-mechanics in "Werner Heisenberg und die Physik unserer Zeit" Publisher F. Vieweg, Braunschweig 1961, P. 109.

precognition. But as precognitions exist that reach across decades and even centuries, one could even regard it as a support in regards to the concept of determination of everything that happens.

That other authors feel uncomfortable when faced with these ideas is understandable. They profess that they are able to ascertain a free will and they refer to their daily experience of being able to think and generally act the way they want to. They see the evidence for this in the way they can do something unusual or change a decision at any time. But they see this as incompatible in regards to the physical processes taking place in the brain, if they are subject to the law of causality. A marginalised observer often gets the impression that a kind of unexpressed transcendental super-reality is taken advantage of when it comes to the functions of the human spirit and its free will. A little of this is expressed by the American parapsychologist *Professor Rhine*³. He writes:

“Our culture for instance presupposes that the spirit differs from the physical body to a sufficient degree that makes the assumption of “free will” possible. Such a freedom of expressing one’s will means that the spirit has its own laws and that the laws of the body and the environment therefore do not or at least not completely control it. They allow it a certain freedom from physical determination, a certain independence in regards to actions. The physical apprehension of the personality on the other side subjects every physical activity to physical laws and leaves no room for a separate freedom. One and the same system of causality, one and the same kind of law therefore applies to the realm of the spirit as well as that of the body. *This is why the question of whether the spirit is merely a function of the brain or not, is for us and for the human society generally speaking of decisive importance.* Because:

- *Our society’s philosophies would collapse without the freedom of choice.*
- *No ethics, no true democracy, well not even a science in the form of free research would exist without free volition.*

If one’s spiritual life is utterly a product of the brain’s physiology then it seems that nothing a human being undertakes can escape the physical legalities. Freedom is then just a fantasy and an ethics subjected to physical laws is nothing more than an utter delusion”.⁴

2. 0 THE SPIRIT AND THE PROCESSING OF INFORMATION

The points of view expressed so far are going to be scrutinised somewhat closer under the aspect that the human spirit is a system that processes information.⁵ The spiritual side of life is the decisive factor for human beings, whilst the biological functions like metabolism, growth, procreation and heredity only play a supporting function, that is to say, make the spiritual life possible.

One can generally describe *spiritual* life thus: It consists of the consciousness (the ego-awareness), of thought processes and the opportunity to act according to the thoughts after a decision of will has been made, the opportunity to collect and to learn from the experiences communicated by the sensory organs, the collection of memories and the opportunity to arbitrarily utilise these memories through the processes of logical thoughts and the triggering of emotions and by these emotions themselves, whereby joy plays a specifically important role.

Life consists of the absorption, retention, processing and transference of information from a physical and cybernetic point of view, that is to say, signals that are transferred through physical energy and

³ J. B. Rhine, former director of the Parapsychological Institute at the Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, USA.

⁴ J. B. Rhine, *Die Reichweite des menschlichen Geistes*, Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, Stuttgart 1950, P. 20.

¹ ⁵ H. Grünewald, *Schaltplan des Geistes*, Rowohlt Taschenbuch, Reinbek bei Hamburg 1971;

F. Marfeld, *Kybernetik des Gehirns*, Safari-Verlag, Berlin 1970;

P. Glees, *Das menschliche Gehirn*, Hippokrates Verlag, Stuttgart, 1971.

lead to stimulations within the living organism.

What does this mean in regards to *will, decision, freedom, thoughts and actions*? We want to restrict our deliberations to conscious processes for now, whereby all utilised and newly acquired information are open to access and availability at any time, something that isn't the case with unconscious or subconscious processes.

During the following, we want *action* to represent the active, physical movement of the human body or a part of it or the act of providing or accepting information. Both processes can be coupled with one another. Ergo: Walking or talking are action in this sense.

Biology and cybernetics have now shown that the prerequisite for every action requires a corresponding information process in the central nervous system of the body, ergo in the human spirit. These information processing processes are for instance denoted with the words "*thinking*", "*deciding*", "*wanting*" in our day to day life.

Thinking connotes that the available information is experimentally tied together so that possible connections and their results with all the probable effects can be tried out. *Deciding* connotes that the process with the most favourable results and effects is selected and *wanting* connotes that the intention is to turn the decision into an action. A decision, as the prerequisite to an action, can however only be taken by the human spirit if sufficient information has been absorbed a priori so it can be processed when the decision has been taken. The necessary information is either supplied to the body through hereditary factors (genes) or they are absorbed through the sensory organs and if necessary refurbished through learning processes.

A part of the information adopted from hereditary factors is called *instincts* and *impulses*. The content of its information can proceed an action during the decision making process and this can be of specific importance, so for instance because the action might lead to feelings of pleasure through a parallel absorption of information. This is the case in activities based on a craving for recognition, the sexual drive, the urge to still a hunger, etc. Every process that we denote with terms like "*thinking*", "*wanting*", "*deciding*" or even "*acting*" is triggered prior to the process through a special absorption of information, but a considerable amount of information absorption and information processing, including corresponding learning processes, must have preceded this.

An example may elucidate this:

A mosquito sits on the arm of a person and bites this person. The receptors in the skin and the eyes signal this process to the brain. A triggering information reception therefore takes place. An assessment of the situation happens through the analysis of the information. Prior information with its associated learning processes register from past experiences that mosquito bites are disagreeable, well even dangerous (Malaria) and that they should be avoided if at all possible. This leads to the will induced decision to kill the mosquito. An appropriate action must be triggered, for instance a slap with the hand. For this to succeed, a suitable program for this movement must be present in the brain. The program stems from past learning processes or the body has been provided with it as information⁶ prior to its birth through hereditary factors.

The decision to slap it with the hand, ergo the will induced decision, can turn out differently if the bitten person happens to be a burglar who would give away his presence through the clapping of the

⁶ Birds for instance do not learn their ability to fly, they inherit it. A bird that has never seen another bird fly and that never had to arduously try beforehand, can one day fly after completing the required maturing process. It can do so without ever having attended a lecture on aerodynamics.

hand. Additional information has more importance in his case, it has a greater influence on conscious decision and he will forbear the slap and put up with the lesser evil of a biting mosquito. But if we were dealing with a poisonous snake instead of a biting mosquito in the case of the intruder, the burglar would in this case forego his caution and try to parry the attack without worrying about causing a noise. The importance of prior information has shifted in this case.

A certain period of time will always pass with any conscious decision. It would only be a fraction of a second in regards to killing the mosquito, because of the clear cut criteria, the decision happens very quickly. This is absolutely required because the triggered action to succeed would otherwise come too late.

But if the conscious decision happens to be the decision to emigrate to Australia, the final decision, right up to its execution, will probably take months. Additional information would probably have to be gathered before, like for instance travelling expenses, immigration regulations, residence and work permits etc. Only after sufficient information is at hand and only after the necessary weighing up and processing of the information will someone make that decision (this also applies to animals) and this will always be according to the point of view of whether the ensuing action will benefit oneself or individuals close to one, ergo offer him or them a better chance in the fight for survival or give them pleasure.

No sane human being does intentionally do something that could cause it damage in the widest sense of the word. The amount of prior information an individual will be happy with before making a conscious decision depends on the individual person's level of intelligence, general knowledge and prior life experiences.

2.1 Conflict situation

Interesting and remarkable are also the cases wherein the conscious decision has to deal with information that would have to lead to two opposite decisions. The decision is then made based on the information (including desires) that seems more important. One could also say that the more powerful motivation tips the scale.

But what happens if the importance of the opposite motive is equally strong, when a virtual physical, delicately poised equilibrium exists?

One then talks about a *conflict situation*. It can lead to a situation where the decision is made according to one of the two opposing motives in the best case scenario or where the individual (human being or animal) will do something senseless, get angry or becomes lethargic or something like this. The information dealing system of the individual, the brain has been overextended here. The cache of nexuses, logical circuitry and programs of the individual did therefore not suffice to come to a meaningful decision.

These conflict situations are most probably those situations where genuinely random events take place in an acausal form, the like we are familiar with in micro-physics. The decision here is on a knife's edge in the true sense of the word. A micro-physical process, comparable to the thermic movement of one or a few electrons and the development of a slight electrical current, can possibly trigger one of the mentioned behaviours in the existing unstable physical equilibrium. One is however not aware of any details of the here mentioned behaviours and assumed processes at this stage and one has therefore no concrete evidence of them, but to copy such behaviour artificially,

that is to say, in electronic data processing systems is absolutely feasible these days.

Conflict situations arise in the human existence more often than one generally assumes, be this when shopping in one's everyday life when faced with the temptations of a profuse range of products, be it in politics where the need to be admired and common sense oppose one another in politicians. At any rate, one has to expect that acausal events have a great influence on the life of individual people as well as the community in conflict situations.

2.2 Free will

From the insights physics, biology, anatomy and cybernetics have delivered us so far we can *come to the conclusion that free will*, with a healthy human being (that is to say, one with a correctly functioning information processing system), *consists of the opportunity to make a decision* based on the available information (that is to say, information adopted into memory) and processing this information through logical operation⁷ to then try to put it into action. All of these processes are indeed of a physical nature and they can already be partially, and maybe completely, technically measured one day.

Free will is not seen as something outside of the laws of nature here, something undefined, extraterrestrial or mystically obscure, but something that is open to examination, measuring experience and analytical dissection, something that runs along solid legalities. We must therefore already change the way we ask questions and look at problems. It is no longer: Are we dealing with freedom of will (or freedom of choice), which means that one can do as one pleases (within certain boundaries), *or* has causality, determination and freedom of will been abrogated so that all thoughts and actions are determined by outside compulsions and that one's own ego is excluded? Putting the question like this means that concepts like *will*, *freedom* and *ego* are used in a completely blurred and undefined way. One gets the impression as if the word *freedom* was equated with a kind of random generator.

We must say nowadays that: One's own ego is the information processing system of human beings, localised within the central nervous system. This system can only decide and want something when information (signals and stimuli) approached it. The decision will only be made after adequate information processing has taken place and according to criteria that is implanted in the information processing system of human beings, according to their inner "wiring", their implanted programs etc. These processes run predominantly (apart from conflict situations) according to the causal laws of macro-physics.

Freedom now connotes that one's own ego only make a decision to want and to act according to its *own* information and according to its *own* information processes and not based on external influences and the circumvention of one's own information processing, controlled through the circumvention of one's own assessment, ergo induced to act according to external coercions.

- *A contradiction between causal legalities and the freedom to want and decide something no longer exists when looking at it this way. The causal legality represents the unalterable prerequisite to freedom of will here, no thought, no decision, no will, well not even life and therefore no freedom would exist without it.*

According to the presented deliberations and definitions we must also allot *animals* and *plants* a

⁷ Always according to calculator technology.

freedom of will in an information processing sense. These creatures also receive constant stimuli, that is to say, assimilate information, deal with it in decision making processes and put it into action after, action that is supposed to make their procreation possible and secure.

- *Freedom of will is in this context indeed one of life's characteristics.*

Let us refer to *August Bier*⁸ in regards to this context, he talks about life's two characteristic attributes:

“Sensitivity and determined action. Only what's alive is sensitive. The things that are not sensitive have either never lived or are now dead.”⁹

These thought processes must make a lot of readers feel uncomfortable. A lot of people feel for reasons of validity that there must be a principle difference between animals and plants on the one side and human beings on the other side, whereby the mysterious freedom of will represents a specifically important point. Animals or even plants are not allotted a freedom of will. It is purely seen as a human privilege. One should however be careful and not turn such inherited opinions into dogmas. There is of course a difference between human beings and other creatures; but it is not of a principle nature, but rather a *gradual* affair.

The freedom of will of plants and animals naturally occupies a different level than that of human beings the way it can also be very different between individual human beings. The difference lies in the type and the volume of the information process that precedes a decision of will. The volume and nexuses of logical operations before a decision of will takes place are much greater than that of other creatures. Whilst a decision of will of a plant might only require the weighing up and analysing of three different pieces of information in regards to its growth, for instance temperature, light conditions and moisture, the required weighted up and analysed information in a decision of will of animals, and particularly human beings, can be much greater. We can therefore allot animals, and particularly human beings, a much greater freedom of will than plants.

Besides, a remarkable difference exists between plants and animals, namely that animals can learn from their actions, that is to say, they can create and record a new cache of information from positive and negative experiences that can then be meaningfully applied in new decisions of will. Plants cannot do this; they can only act and react according to inherited (to use a technical term: “hard-wired”) programs.¹⁰

The thesis that there is no principle difference in regards to the freedom of will between human beings and other creatures, but only a *gradual* difference finds support in the fact that during the course of evolution, ergo over a very long period of development, human beings developed from animalistic creatures.

The determination of when the ancestors of today's human beings could have been classified as human beings, maybe after the utilisation of fire, is absolutely arbitrary. It would be equally arbitrary to say that creatures possessed the freedom of will from a specific generation onwards, but not the generation before. One has to assume a continuous development without an appreciable leap here also.

⁸ **Professor A. Bier**, 1861- 1949, a surgeon in Berlin from 1907-1932. German National Award for Science 1937.

⁹ **A. Bier**, *Die Seele*, J. F. Lehmanns Verlag, Munich 1940, P. 97.

¹⁰ If the author should be unaware of possible strange, special cases, they will not be of decisive importance here.

2.3 Preordination of human behaviour?

The previous expositions about freedom of will can be recapitulated as follows:

A large part of the human decision making process must surely happen according to the causal principles of physics. Some of these decision making processes can also be realised with today's computer systems and they also happen there along physically strict causal lines.

But one has to add the decision making processes that result from conflict situations to this group of causally happening decisions of will.

This is where the principle of causality and determination finds its limits.

Random events come into play and they make a prediction of human behaviour impossible. Reports from parapsychology, they will be dealt with later, do not allow a conclusion of absolute determination of a human being's fate into the distant future.

2.4 Ethical assessment

We will now shine a light on a second problem. If, as we have demonstrated here, the freedom of will consists of information processing processes taking place within the human spirit along physical legalities, the obvious question arises of whether concepts like *guilt, responsibility, punishment* etc. do not become senseless and superfluous or should be given other meanings. The concepts of guilts and responsibility are usually given an ethical and moral connotation most of the time. But a lot of people will initially not be able to see that a possible connection between physics and information processing on the one hand and ethics and morals on the other hand could exist side by side.

2.4.1 The sense in punishment

But let's first deal with the concept of *punishment*. When we observe all of life's processes on our Earth we can ascertain the striving of all living individuals to protect, respectively continue with their existence. Every species and type also has this striving and is therefore engaged in a fight, in a fight for survival that is usually to the detriment of others. To put it simply, the stronger will eat the weaker. But that this fight does not go on at infinitum and eventually lead to the annihilation of all creatures, because creatures of the same species developed forms of behaviourisms amongst themselves, or a creator instilled it in them, that has the result that creatures within the same species are spared or even promoted.

This enhances the chance of survival for the whole species and, in the final analysis, also that of a singular individuum.

A part of the behaviourism to protect other individuals is clothed in the form of regulations and laws that are based on specific moral expectations. Morals are however structures of expectations and thoughts people possess in regards to aims and courses of actions that protect and promote other individuals. These moral expectations can however be very different and it depends on whether they are of communistic, of Christian or any other origin. All moral expectations and the resulting laws have one thing in common, namely that trespasses by individuals against these laws are being punished. Punishment is coupled with reparation. Punishment thereby connotes an action (or lack of action) that the affected individual finds adverse, painful or something similar. It is designed to make the individual desist from trespassing against moral expectations and laws ever again.

2.4.2 Punishment in conjunction with a learning process

We can also retain the sense in punishment in respect to the knowledge we glean from our information processing processes. The task of chastisement and also that of indemnification is to set a learning process in motion that leads to new preliminary information for future decisions. The importance of the information should then change with the result that in case of a repetition, a different decision will eventuate, one that does not contradict existing legalities and that does not lead to punishment and therefore to inconveniences. Making reparations can in many cases already fulfil this task.

The learning process initiated by the punishment should, if at all possible, have a deterring effect before a trespass is committed because of the punishment that can be expected. If the trespass happens in spite of this, the execution of the punishment should lead to a change of heart, respectively the learning process.

Those that trespass against laws in spite of the threat of punishment, in order to gain a personal advantage and to the detriment of others, are initially unreasonable. They do not realise that the strict adherence to the laws will eventually also benefit them. They do not appraise the committed evil that results in punishment, sufficiently or they hope that their deeds go undetected.

Why is this so? The initiation of learning processes as a form of discipline and to promote new behaviours is always regarded as something uncomfortable. To re-think and to learn is arduous and it is in connection with a heightened level of energy-consumption from a physical point of view. The power consumption of a normally active brain is roughly 25 Watts and represent around a quarter of the whole power consumption of a person that is not engaged in heavy physical work. But every human being tries to deal very sparingly with the physical energy that is stored within the body because of an inherent powerful impulse, the impulse of convenience. This makes a lot of people completely close their eyes to new insights and they can often only be encouraged to re-think or to correct their inner attitude through external pressures, like for instance through criminal sentences, severe calamities or similar events.

2.4.3 Guilt

After the sense in punishment has been dealt with, the prerequisites for punishment are to be investigated. The prerequisites for punishment in criminal law are: 1. Legal and concrete factual findings. 2. Illegality. 3. Guilt (that is to say that one has to be able to reproach an offender about doing something). A textbook of criminal law states this about the concept of guilt:

“This means that one can reproach an offender about his (factual and illegal) behaviourism, that one can make him responsible for it. Just how this reproach can be psychologically and philosophically explained, whether the responsibility and particularly the ‘freedom of will’ are the presupposition for this or whether it is possible that it is on a deterministic basic principle, is very controversial. We cannot deal with this here; we must therefore dispense with a theoretical starting point.”¹¹

Based within the framework of the exposition presented here, guilt should be defined as follows: *Guilt* is the lack of timely and sufficient learning processes that make law-abiding behaviourism possible within society. When this deficiency and the evidence of a punishable action are found to be the case with an individual, it will be charged. This means that it must assume liability and bear the consequences, that is to say, be subjected to a learning process.

¹¹ H. Engelhard, *Einführung in das Strafrecht*, Adolf Rausch Verlag, Heidelberg 1946, P 23.

2.4.4 Revenge and retribution

Within this thought structure that must be looked at without inner emotions and prejudices, punishment should only be applied to the degree required to bring about the re-education of an individual. Punishment as revenge or retribution, ergo as something that goes far beyond the required learning process, is to be rejected because it is senseless. Revenge only makes people stubborn and it makes them unreasonable, it therefore effects the opposite from what meaningful punishment is supposed to achieve.

Thoughts of revenge and retribution in regards to a disproportionate infliction of damage is a very powerful impulse that is deeply entrenched in all human beings. This impulse probably stems from the times (for instance whilst leading an animal's existence) where legal norms did not exist and when revenge was the individual and private application of punishment on another individual. This individual was thereby informed that it would be advisable to not start a fight with the revenger.

This impulse to take revenge and to retaliate has become superfluous in this day and age, it make living together more difficult and it must therefore be suppressed or supplanted through intensive learning processes. Every released prisoner can attest to how difficult this is, because they are snubbed or insulted by their environment, even though they have not reoffended. This is where the environment dishes out its private revenge and it often negates the intended effect of the punishment.

2.4.5 Forgiveness

The Christian religion does not reject revenge and retribution to such an extent, and replaces them with forgiveness, without reason. But forgiveness is not a one-sided act in the form of an unconditional amnesty, ergo a simple abolition of forfeited punishment. Forgiveness presupposes a rueful judiciousness in regards to the abhorrence of the deed and the absolute will to improve. Therefore, the proviso for forgiveness is that the learning process that is normally set in motion through the punishment, has already been performed. Punishment has now become superfluous in this case. Its enforcement would be pure revenge. The evangelistic chaplain uses the following words of absolution after a confession wherein the misconduct has been acknowledged, regretted and a vow to improve given:

Having gained this new insight, I proclaim to all those that heartily rue their sins, those that truly believe in Jesus Christ and that have made the serious resolution to improve their life, God's grace and the forgiving of their sins.

2.5 Conclusions from a physical point of view

The freedom of will has up to now been looked at from the point of view of physical legalities and the questions build into the processing of information. It has been explained that the course of physical laws during processes of life and processes of conscious decisions does not connote the absolute and predictable inevitability and complete determination for millennia ahead. The boundaries of the concept of causality and particularly that of micro-physics were demonstrated. The opinion of the physicist *Pascual Jordan*¹² should be cited here in conjunction with this. He writes:

“‘Quantum mechanics’, which ascertains the legal coherences completely and in a comprehensive way,

¹² P. Jordan, born 1902, Professor for theoretical physics in Hamburg.

teaches us also that our incapability to make predictions beyond the static legalities and also individual cases is not based in the deficiency of our knowledge (something that could be remedied in the future): Real 'freedom'¹³ applies to events happening with individual atoms and this represents something entirely new in regards to the old concepts of the natural sciences.

This result from modern physics bring about a completely changed relationship between religion and science. We will completely desist from anticipating further philosophical explanation here. May it suffice to have shown that the problem situation possibly developed from an anti-religious exploitation by the sciences – and for which Kant tried to give an astute solution, one however restricted by certain boundaries materialism imposes – that simply no longer exist after the concept of the absolute inevitability of natural events has been refuted through physical experiments.

It may seem that the hope for a new harmonisation between religion and science proclaimed here might be too lightly substantiated if the discovered 'freedom' only applies to atoms and electrons, whilst for the larger bodies, existing of lots of atoms, the old concept of causality remains in force. But 'quantum biology' has started to appear next to 'quantum physics' over the last few years and it has deduced its insight from biological experiments that the reaction of living organisms largely depends on the processes of extreme subtlety – the kind of subtlety that one is virtually dealing with individual reactions of individual molecules: This dependency of life's events on 'controlling' processes that are no longer subjected to the causality of a rough physical structure, basically deprive unbroken mechanical causality because of biological appearances.

Whatever one's thoughts might be in regards to the final appraisal - something associated new scientific insights will find one day – nobody will be able to get rid of the fact that the old, major problems of a centuries long battle between the natural sciences and religion will be completely unrolled through these new insights."¹⁴

2.6 Precognition and predestination

At the end of this treatise we should also deal with *parapsychological* views of *freedom of will* and *predestination*. Even though physics does not accept an absolute predestination based on today's insights and opinions, the fact that precognition is known in parapsychology could lead to the assumption that actually all events are exactly predestined. Predictions that stretch over decades or even centuries do indeed exist within parapsychology and they finally eventuate in all their predicted details.

But do *all* of them really eventuate in *all* their details?

By closely scrutinising the predictions of serious previewers one ascertains that a lot *does not* eventuate or *not accurately* eventuate. Dr. Schmeißing writes in his book "Das Zweite Gesicht in Niederdeutschland"¹⁵ according to accounts of corresponding examples:

"An inevitable fulfilment, down to individual, radical details as it is often emphasised in accounts of predictions, does not necessarily happen. Not only details could fail to eventuate, but whole previews could also remain unfulfilled."

One can naturally foster the assumption that mistakes in the transmission of the preview of these false forecasts crept in during the reception by the predictor. But this cannot be verified a priori and naturally also not the opposite.

¹³ Freedom in regards to the unforeseen, footnote by the author.

¹⁴ P. Jordan, *Die Physik und das Geheimnis des organischen Lebens*, Verlag F. Vieweg, Braunschweig 1947, P. 155.

¹⁵ K. Schmeißing, *Das Zweite Gesicht in Niederdeutschland*, Verlag J. A. Barth Leipzig 1938, P. 154

2.6.1 Interference with previewed events

Of particular interest in this respect are cases where the preview of an unpleasant event was known by the affected person before the event took place. Let's assume that the preview was accurately received by the predictor and that an unalterable determination continues to exist. It would have to be impossible in such cases to arrest the exact fulfilment of the preview, even if one would hear about the preview in good time.

There are in fact reports where the fateful outcome of an event could be averted. *Justinus Kerner*¹⁶ reports of such an event about his patient *Friederike Huffel* from the year 1827:

"She saw her brother lying on a bier dying during a number of previews and, pressed for answers, she said that her brother would become the victim of an attempt on his life on the 18th of January, she was even able to give the age and the pedigree of the assailant. The brother was thus warned and behaved very carefully on the specified day and during this questionable situation. The culprit, a wood thief, therefore missed him when he shot at him. The shot only left traces on a tree and in the snow."

The immediately affected knows nothing about the preview in the following report. But his relatives know about it and they try to have an influence on the prediction from a distance:

"A woman who had what she called 'second sight' from when she was a child, repeatedly dreamt: Her son kneeling in a fallow field in the beam of a search light, insignias torn from his shoulders, without a belt and his eyes looking to the right at her in mortal fear as of looking for help. He had a greyish black spot on his neck like a bullet wound. She confided in her father confessor who calmed her down by saying that the 'second sight' must not necessarily eventuate. He advised her to pray for mitigation. For all the years her son spend in Russia she suffered greatly, particularly in early spring – the time indicated by the fallow field. An 'inner voice' told her on the 8th of February that the day of fulfilment had arrived. The family prayed for divine assistance the whole evening and all through the night. A calmness came over her in the morning like something a seriously ill person would feel after getting over a crisis. She then knew that her son had survived. He was either dead or in captivity.

He returned from Russia in 1948. On the evening of the 8th of February 1945, Russian tanks had broken through German lines, surrounded the fleeing wounded of a military field hospital with spotlights and shot them in a fallow field. They also asked him to kneel down in order to shoot him in the neck. The order came through at the last possible moment to take this individual prisoner away to be interrogated. As morning broke, the Russian colonel told him to sit on the turret of the tank. He was the only one that was saved."¹⁷

The third report does not actually deal with a preview and this means that none of the involved people can correctively intervene. But one gets the impression that an otherworldly entity¹⁸ is aware of the looming fate and tries to correctively intervene:

"It was during the war, on a beautiful autumn morning, when we emerged from an air-raid shelter into daylight, pleased that the attack had passed without causing us any damage. The doorbell rang soon after and my neighbour stood there very excited. 'Mrs. H. the police bunker received a direct hit and all the men inside are dead.' I ran to the phone filled with fear in order to find certainty. I received it. 'Yes, your husband was also in the bunker' answered the voice on the other end of the line.

Still feeling completely numb, I sat on my bike in order to drive there. 'Franz, Franz' I called out loud, 'that I will see you again buried under rubble cannot be true.' I could and did not want to believe it.

¹⁶ *Die Seherin von Prevost*, published by Verlag Ph. Reclam, Leipzig 1938, P. 162.

¹⁷ **H. Bender**, *Der Krieg im Spiegel okkulten Erlebnisse*, in *Neue Wissenschaft* 1960, H. 1, P. 18 – 24.

¹⁸ This report can however also be interpreted from an animistic point of view.

On the way there I met a nurse the I knew. She offered me help with the words: 'I will not allow you to go there by yourself, I will go with you.' We had only ridden a short distance when our eyes thought that an apparition came towards us. It was however not a ghost, but a living person, my husband. Both of us dropped our bikes and we were in each other's arms. To see him again was like a dream.

He then told me the strange story of why he wasn't laying under the rubble with the rest of the pitiable people. His group had to travel from the city to an outstation when the pre-alarm sounded. My husband went to a storage room to get his equipment. When he reached for his steel helmet on the upper shelf he wasn't able to lift his right nor his left arm. It was as if somebody had put all of their weight on the arm he was trying to raise. He tried over again, but the pressure was too great and he couldn't manage it. A few minutes had passed in the meantime and they proved to have a determining influence on his fate. The pressure abated only after he was alone and after he had retrieved his steel helmet from the shelf, he quickly followed his comrades.

The first bombs fell in the direct vicinity when he came to the bridge that led to the outstation. I was impossible for him to cross the short distance across the bridge to the safety of the bunker. He had no other option than to look for cover next to the first pillar of the spanned bridge even though it was probably the target of the attack. He did so filled with fear, expecting a hit at any moment.

But the path across the bridge that he hadn't manage to complete was not going to end up in death for him, but meant life. What spiritual power had saved him from perishing? Was it his father who had passed across to the other world before him?

One cannot answer this, one can only give thanks."¹⁹

The presented accounts are naturally not evidence in the strictest sense. They and also other, similar accounts only provide certain clues. But one also has to ascertain that what is known about *precognition* is not evidence for any inevitable predetermination. Precognition in its presently known form is more like a weather forecast by meteorologists. Weather forecasts hardly ever happen exactly as predicted, they often happen approximately and they are sometimes completely wrong. Weather forecasts are not a game of chance in spite of this, they are of great scientific and practical value.

To round this up, two reports about "otherworldly" spirit entities will be added here and they should also not be seen as actual evidence, but as utterances from "another" world, one that we enter after our demise, they are worth reading and contemplating.

First off a report of an entity that has transmitted its knowledge to interested listeners via a trance medium for over 25 years. On the 4th of March 1972 he said in Zurich:

"Everybody should be a divine archetype for all the others. Everybody should live in a way that must be admired. Everybody must have their inner order. But if disorder touches their inner world now and then, they must grab the opportunity to restore their inner order. But one can only maintain one's inner order if one orientates oneself along divine laws. God's commandments are designed for this and one should be guided by them.

These commandments are signposts to a higher existence. Human beings on Earth do indeed have spiritual chaperonage. God's angels are meant here and they approach and try to draw people's attention to the mistakes they make. They warn them, they shake their conscience, they try to influence them, but they have to accurately abide by legally stipulated direction in regards to the level of influence they may have on people. This influence is different in each and every case.

- *A life-plan has been fixed for every living human being; a life-plan that is irremediable wherein all fateful occurrences of one's life must be adhered to exactly the way they have been determined. But individuals are given the opportunity to alleviate and to change the circumstances, ergo their fate. Changes can come*

¹⁹ **Hanna H.** *Minuten entscheiden ein Schicksal*, in: Esotera 1970, H. 4, P. 34.

about through skilfulness, through just and deliberated thoughts and deeds. A lot of thing can be improved in one's life. One can also savour one's fate in all its severities, it can even be aggravated through irrationality, through indignation, through discontentment and unteachability. One can extenuate or aggravate one's predetermined fate oneself. But it has been determined that one has to deal with one's fate.

What we actually want to say to you is: Human beings are masters of their own destiny. They set and guide their own little ship. Life offers them so many opportunities to alleviate some of the harshness and severity of even the hardest fate that may have been instigated for them, namely through a god-pleasing life.”²⁰

Last but not least follows an account of a high-ranking spirit entity that was transmitted through a trance medium in Koblenz around 1920. *Parson Johannes Greber* refers to it in his book:

“Job’s fate mentioned in the Bible is nothing else but a test because God wanted to find out how this just human being would deal with the severest of calamities... All the tests that God imposes on human beings would be akin to a comedy play, if God *knew in advance how these tests would play out*...

That God most probably knows in lots of cases how the free will decisions of people will be, because he knows the deepest depths of his creatures, is clear. Spirit entities like me also have this knowledge to a high degree. Even you human beings are capable of predicting with relative certainty how others will behave or act in this or that a situation, if you know the character of your fellow men. All of this is however based on assumptions. But we are not dealing with this here, we are dealing with the infallible certainty of knowing in advance what a decision that depends on someone’s free will, will be.

No spirit possesses this infallible knowledge. Not even God. This is why God didn’t know in advance whether some or a lot of the spirits he created would fall from grace (fall away from him) and naturally also not who amongst them would do so. He only knew the possibility of such a fall from grace, because the free will he endowed his creatures with left such a probability open.

If God had known in advance - how you learn – that the creatures he called into being would fall from him by abusing their freedom, he would not have created them in the first place, he would only have created those that he knew in advance that they would stay true to him.”²¹

Thus far the two accounts from “another” world in regards to the problem of one’s life’s fate, its influenceability and foreknowledge. It is left up to future research to verify or to refute these accounts. If they should be true, it is quite likely, well even understandable that the predictors of paranormal events can sometimes recognise, in a certain fashion, the life plan mapped out by superior powers. False prediction would find substantiation in this, namely that human beings have influenced or escaped this life plan through deliberate or careless actions.²²

2.6.2 Outlook

An attempt was made in the preceding expositions to dissect a problem area, *afflicted with great prejudices* for most people, in a purely factual way. Our present state of knowledge was used in this process. Some people might not, or not immediately befriend the presented thought processes. It requires a lengthy period of accustoming oneself with this somewhat sober point of view to begin with. But the one or the other might have gained the impression that specifically physics, technology and parapsychology can make statements about this field of knowledge, something one always thought to be the prerogative of philosophy or theology. It is also very possible that the insights

²⁰ In: *Geistige Welt*, 23. No: 11/1972, P. 83, Verlag Arthur Brunner, Zurich.

²¹ **J. Greber**, *Der Verkehr mit der Geisterwelt, seine Gesetze und sein Zweck*, Verlag J. Felsberg, New York 1937; Neuauflage 1970.

²² **B. Rensch**, Probleme der Willensfreiheit in biologischer and philosophische Sicht, in *Hippokrates* 1962, P. 1019-1032/

gained over the next decades will be able to paint a much clearer picture of the situation as it is presented today.

* * * * *

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