

Of Life, Death & Salvation

Chapter Five: About Death

„Jeder Atemzug wehrt den beständig eindringenden Tod ab, mit welchem wir in jeder Sekunde kämpfen [...]. Zuletzt muß er siegen: denn wir sind ihm durch Geburt anheimgefallen, und er spielt nur eine Weile mit seiner Beute, bevor er sie verschlingt.“

„Each breath defends against a constantly threatening death, with which we battle each and every second [...] (and) which finally must win: because we are attacked by him from birth, and he only plays for a while with his prey, before he kills it.“

Schopenhauer is writing often about the issue of death, for example especially in the second volume of *The World as Will and Representation*. There we find some very impressive quotations like this one above: since birth man keeps struggling with decease but in the end death must win, because he just plays a while with his prey before he swallows it. Schopenhauer says nature is totally merciless, because only the species must survive – therefore we have hundreds of egg cells and millions of sperms – but the individual dies in the greatest coincidences and there is nothing we can do about this!

Religions or philosophies often teach us that man is the crown of creation or that we are a likeness of god, and therefore a lot of people think that they deserve a long life in dignity, but the contrary is the case: nobody is listening to our wishes and prayers and every day, as I write in my lyrics, countless people die unworthy and painful by „*misery, sickness and plagues*“ or we get killed through „*violence, murder and rapes*“. Nature is merciless and there is no such human dignity in life as we often try to construct artificially, for example especially in Christianity.

When we observe our surrounding world then we see that animals have exactly as many organs and abilities as they need for the obtaining of food and breeding of their brood. Therefore the loss of a limb, or only its usage, is resulting in the inescapable death. Even of mankind, so mighty tools like reason and intellect the humans may have, live more than three quarters in a constant fight always at the edge of downfall and death. Every individual has been equipped by nature only with the absolute necessary and nothing further; this is the struggle of life constantly fighting with death.

But is it really death that is threatening us the most? Here is Schopenhauer continually questioning us: don't the hours go the quicker the more comfortable they are, but the slower the more painful they are spent? And don't we realize time when we spent it in boredom, but when amusement is present we don't feel it passing? Schopenhauer says that both is proving that our existence is the most joyful when we feel it at least, ergo it would be better when we didn't have one at all. Death and suffering only show us in the end that life is something that should not be, something that has to be denied. And this leads us to the next chapter about the true meaning of life and of death...