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Śmierć w świetle *Rozmyślań* Marka Aureliusza

Death in the light of Meditations by Marcus Aurelius

Summary

Marcus Aurelius, Roman emperor, philosopher and an outstanding authority of the 2nd century claimed that all in this world is born for the purpose of change, transformation and destruction. In order to understand this one must answer a basic question: what is death? According to him, death belongs to neutral things (it is neither good, nor evil). It is one of the symptoms and mysteries of nature, and, at the same time, it is one of life functions. It causes the decomposition of the body, as well as the elimination or the change of the dwelling place of the spirit. The philosopher concludes that death is close to every human being. This is why all things in life should be done and said, as well as thought of, in such a way as if one was to die today. The right attitude towards death is a vital element making a deeper understanding of death possible. Aurelius recognizes two wrong attitudes: *death anxiety* and *contempt for death*. The right attitude is being sensible and full of readiness to meet death. The thinker also explains what the afterlife of a human being is like, and he reaches a conclusion that the human body decomposes, and the spirit returns to the eternal universe-creating thought, that is to God. Aurelius decisively rejects the possibility of reincarnation as well, because it does not comply with human nature.