



9/11- Alive or Dead?

It is the sixth year of memorial. A sixth year in which this subject slowly has become dead and exhausted. But then again this date is the origin of two wars, which are still living up again and again, which have for long now proceeded, still not ended. Afghanistan and Iraq were both defeated, but neither were they becalmed nor pacified.

The protest against these wars seems itself almost a Hollywood-documentary and that despite the problems, the protests. And there actually are comics explaining September Eleventh and an equally a Hollywood-film about this day. Is it still a trauma or does the whole media production serve the assimilation of the trauma into the American self, just as the second world war and Hiroshima have been assimilated into it? But while the defeat of the "third Reich" was a glad Moment and Hiroshima still is a disputed line between good and bad in American history, September Eleven is something far more different: a grown up trauma.

In contrast to Pearl Harbor you cannot find a clear victory over the enemy. How is that supposed to be done, if the enemy is a terrorist, that is a sleeper and inhabitant of the underworld? It is known, that Iraq is looked upon as a second Vietnam. The wound is gaping deeper for Americans after all of this time: where is the greatness of our nation? Where is the strength and magnificence of our own country? Themes, that are important to Americans, because they link their citizenship and nationality to these ideals. But to ask the question this way around was what lead to the two wars- to scratch open the wound- doesn't that mean to embrace the wound? It is no question of our losses, but a question of our losses, as paradox as this might sound. And it is a purely American question in this case, because we have had gained losses through September 11., but also losses through the wars. The question is for what. For what the war, but to state another question, for what all of the holding on, the embracing and kissing of the wound? Those people did not deserve their death, it's clear. But they didn't deserve that we in mourning them die ourselves, give up our self. Yes, the dead should be remembered on September 11th, they should be mourned, but this mourning should not become the monument of the American self. These people and also millions of other people, not only the citizens of the USA, have not lived for this. After the question appeared, for what these people have died, why they died- this shock and endless wound, that no propaganda can scale down, but can level up, the question appears, not only for the USA, but for all of us: what are we living for?

Is it the greatness of the Nation, the saviour of the freedom or the saving of the own wealth? The worst question you can ask, the question that has never been inquired in politics – as the answer would have to come from the people, each sole and single citizen-, is this question, because this decides upon the future. If I am writing an article on sixth mourning of 9/11, what else should I write then what everybody already knows? And isn't it exactly that, which would be disrespectful towards the victims, to always lament on their deaths, their horribly ended lives?

Until today I have to think about the reporter on CNN, that couldn't maintain a sturdy appearance. She couldn't do anything else than cry, be human, instead of functioning as a medium. I myself had to think of a person I met twelve years ago in a plain. She came from New York and we wrote each other, but lost contact relatively fast, too. I wrote, even though expecting an answer would be unlogical. And it was unlogical. But the point is the loss of control, the loss of logical function. If there is a line to be drawn under, then here, under this daily process of function. And that is exactly what 9/11 has caused for many Americans.

The will to function, to still be the great nation, that our dead have not died for nothing, that everything still may work out, has lead to two wars. But it is exactly this résumé that we cannot function as before, that we are making a trauma, be it Europe, be it the US. At this conclusion it is to be asked where we will finally draw the line and grow up from this trauma, to again become alive, instead of simply functioning and further turning the honest mourning into a ritual lament. In the end you cannot sustain the memory through the mechanics of performance. You need the heart to participate in the memory. And that requires ultimate vividness and the question: It is 9/11, what are we living for?



(Text: Daniel Schulz)