




BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH: EXISTENTIAL ANGUISH AND THE SEARCH FOR MEANING IN CLARICE LISPECTOR AND HEIDEGGER

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the relationship between death and existential anguish in the work *The Hour of the Star*, by Clarice Lispector, in the light of Heidegger's philosophy. The character Macabéa, marked by a lack of self-knowledge, faces death as a moment of existential revelation. Heidegger sees death as a constitutive possibility of being, which defines Dasein and the relationship of the individual with himself. Death, more than a physical end, is a condition for self-knowledge and the meaning of life. The article concludes that both Lispector and Heidegger challenge us to confront our finitude in order to find meaning in existence.

Keywords: Death. Existential Anguish. Identity. Epiphany.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, experiences of loss and grief have become a constant in many people's lives, especially with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Death, an ever-present theme in human existence, has been amplified, forcing us to reflect not only on biological death, but on existential death. The question "why live?" becomes an urgent existential and philosophical question in the face of a scenario of loss and uncertainty. Existential anguish, as explored by the philosopher Martin Heidegger, is a fundamental element of the human condition, with death, in its various forms, being one of the greatest occurrences of this anguish.

This article aims to explore the theme of death and existential anguish through a philosophical and literary analysis, based on Heidegger's ideas and the work "The Hour of the Star", by Clarice Lispector. The character Macabéa, with her existence marked by a lack of definition and an existential incompleteness, will be the main focus of our analysis, as her trajectory can be understood as a representation of the search (or lack of search) for a meaning to live in the midst of the misunderstanding of death.

The objective of this article is to analyze, in the light of Martin Heidegger's philosophy, the implications of death and existential anguish in human life, using the character Macabéa as a case study to illustrate how death is experienced in a symbolic and existential way. It is intended to discuss how the lack of meaning in life and the lack of a projection of death can result in an existence through anguish and incompleteness. In addition, the article seeks to highlight how these philosophical reflections can be applied to the contemporary experience of loss and existential crisis experienced by many people, especially in times of pandemic.

The methodology adopted will be qualitative and interpretative, with a hermeneutic approach, focused on the analysis of philosophical and literary texts. The work "The Hour of the Star" will be proven based on Heidegger's main ideas about death and existential anguish, especially with regard to the understanding of the human being as a being for death. A critical reading of Macabéa's behavior and psychology will be made, using Heidegger's concepts to interpret her lack of life project and her relationship with death. The method of analysis will be comparative, involving the connection between philosophical theory and Clarice Lispector's literature, seeking to understand the manifestations of existential anguish and the implications of meaninglessness in life and death.

This article, by exploring existential anguish through the ideas of Heidegger and the character Macabéa, seeks reflections on the crisis of vivid meaning in contemporary times, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic. Death, both biological and existential, provokes

the questioning of the place and purpose of the human being in the world. Macabéa, with her life without rumor and without projection, illustrates the existential emptiness that many face. The analysis of these concepts reveals that coping with death and finitude continues to be one of the most universal and challenging issues in the human experience, requiring reflection and a new way of relating to life.

THE ANGUISH OF BEING AND THE REVELATION OF DEATH IN THE WORKS OF HEIDEGGER AND LISPECTOR

Contact with loss and understanding its need is a profoundly complex process for human beings. Often, we avoid losing all costs, clinging to truths and certainties that prevent us from understanding that, in many moments, losing is necessary. The search for existence is, in fact, a constant process of loss. In recent years, especially with the devastating impact of the pandemic, many have been forced to step out of their comfort zones and frequently face the physical death of loved ones. This confrontation with death led to a deeper reflection on one's own Being and existence, generating the question: what does it mean to exist?

The loss of so many lives has made death a constant and inescapable reality, forcing humanity to deal not only with biological death, but also with existential death. The need to "die" internally, to leave behind old certainties and seek a new meaning for life, has become urgent. In this scenario, one of the biggest questions that human beings face is the search for a purpose: why live? Or, more intimately, why live? This existential conflict, which accompanies humanity throughout its trajectory, continues to be one of the greatest challenges of our existence.

The human being, as a being who "is there" and destined for death, often finds himself in a distressing process of self-discovery. When trying to understand his place in the world, he is faced with finitude and emptiness in the face of the things that surround him, which leads him to nothingness. This harrowing search for meaning inevitably leads us to confront our own mortality. Heidegger, in *Being and Time*, explores this idea by stating that "we determine the idea of existence as the power-to-be that understands, and where its own being is at stake". The philosopher adds: "Being, but always mine, the power-to be is free to property and impropriety or even to a mode of indifference" (Heidegger, *Being and Time*, Part II, p. 11). Thus, death is not only the end, but a starting point for a deeper reflection on life and Being.

To illustrate the complex relationship between death and existential anguish, I turn to the character Macabéa, created by Clarice Lispector in *The Hour of the Star*. Macabéa, like

death, is shrouded in mystery and indefiniteness, representing a being in search of a space to exist, but without success. She is described as "incompetent for life" (Lispector, p. 39), an expression that reveals her existential annulment and inability to find a clear purpose. Her existence is marked by the lack of a defined project, and, even in the face of the emptiness of her life, Macabéa does not project her death — a death that, as Heidegger teaches us, is "irremissible and non-transferable."

His "life project", outlined by a fortune teller, is a desperate attempt to give some meaning to an existence that escapes him. Annulled by the lives around her, Macabéa seeks to understand her being, albeit in a tortuous and unsuccessful way. His journey reveals the constant struggle of the human being in the face of finitude, trying to signify his own presence in the world. Thus, the character illustrates the incessant quest of all of us to understand and face death, even without fully understanding the nature of our own mortality.

The distancing from the SELF and the loss of connection with one's own existence are issues that permeate the human experience, especially the trajectory of Macabéa in *The Hour of the Star*. What leads a being to disconnect from his essence and distance himself from his most intimate truth? What makes the Being lose intimacy with his own existence, to the point of seeing himself in the face of death, be it symbolic or real? These questions invite us to reflect on the transience of life and the existential anguish that accompanies us along the journey. By becoming aware of death, we can, paradoxically, find a way to give meaning to our life.

Macabéa experiences this epiphany when she realizes that her existence is marked by the duality of being in the world and being for death. In *The Hour of the Star*, Clarice Lispector provokes us to reflect on what it is to live fully and authentically, without getting lost in the promises of the future, allowing us to symbolically die at each new dawn. Macabéa's death reveals itself in two distinct forms: existential death, which annihilates her SELF in the emptiness of her existence, and literal death, which translates into the total loss of identity. In this way, the work offers a deep reflection on how the search for meaning in life is closely linked to facing finitude and human fragility.

According to Heidegger, the human being is "a being for death", and it is in this recognition of finitude that he can really confront existential anguish. Macabéa, in turn, experiences this conflict between her Self and the Others, especially when she sees herself ignored by society. She is described as a "northeasterner, from Alagoas, so poor that she only ate hot dogs", a marginalized figure, who, however, carries with her a much more complex story than her social condition suggests. Macabéa finds herself without a defined,

fragmented identity, and her search for meaning is one of the main threads of her trajectory. This search is mediated by the voice of the narrator, Rodrigo, who, little by little, unveils the figure of Macabéa through his own questions about life and literature. The narrator's simple language emerges as a counterpoint to the stereotypes of the Northeast, giving shape to a character whose identity is gradually built, reflecting the search for recognition and belonging in a reality full of uncertainties and contradictions.

In the work *The Hour of the Star*, Clarice Lispector presents the character Macabéa, whose trajectory is marked by a deep existential complexity, revealing cruel and touching aspects of the human condition. Through Macabéa, the author leads us to reflect on the interpenetration between reality and fiction, especially when addressing pain as a central element of human experience. A character personifies the anguish of an existence that escapes, revealing that, in life, there are no winners or losers, but only existential constructions that, day after day, try to resist the inevitability of death. Macabéa's identity is distorted, her existence is questioned and she herself is undefined, immersed in an existential void that makes her a deeply vulnerable and lonely figure.

In a moment of intimate reflection, after receiving a warning, Macabéa retreats to the bathroom, seeking a space of solitude. In front of the cracked and dirty mirror, she watches herself mechanically, and the reflected image seems unrecognizable to her. The deformation of his appearance, such as the exaggerated and distorted nose, represents the feeling of disintegration of his own identity. The author describes:

"He looked mechanically at the mirror that topped the filthy and cracked sink, full of hair, which was so close to his life. It seemed to him that the dull and darkened mirror reflected no image. Had the existence of his physics disappeared by chance? Soon after, the illusion passed and he saw his face all deformed by the ordinary mirror, his nose made huge like that of a paper clown. It looked at itself and faintly appeared: so young and already rusty" (LISPECTOR, 1984, p. 25).

This passage reflects the forceful existential emptiness of Macabéa, whose vision of herself is fragmented and disfigured, revealing the internal struggle for the search for an identity that always seems to escape her.

The human being is, by his nature, a "being-towards-death". In his existential anguish, man sees in front of him a gateway, an alternative that invites him to escape from the deep dimension of his humanity. Death, in this context, is not only the biological end, but the door to transcendence; It is through death that man exerts power over himself and the world around him. Death, therefore, does not present itself as something to be feared or denied, but as the key to giving meaning to existence. By understanding his finitude, man finds the reason for his life, becoming aware that living is, in fact, a continuous walk towards

death. The philosopher Marilena Chauí, reflecting on this dialectic between life and death, states: "Living and dying are the discovery of human finitude, of our temporality and our identity: a life is mine and mine, death. This, and only it, completes what we are, saying what we were" (Chauí, 2000, p. 365).

In line with Heidegger's philosophy, man is not a finished being, but a being in constant potentiality, always facing possibilities that project him into the future. Human existence, therefore, is marked by a permanent tension between what man is in the present and what he could become. This tension is the source of his anguish and existential restlessness, feelings essential for his understanding of himself. Anguish, according to Heidegger, is the only feeling capable of reconnecting man to his true essence, because it is what leads him to self-knowledge, drives him to transcend a petty and tedious life and, above all, allows him to face the continuity of life and death. As Heidegger himself states in *Being and Time*: "Death is the scrinium of nothingness, of what never, at any level, is something that simply is and is being" (Heidegger, 1927, p. 234).

The human being is essentially a finite being, and it is precisely through this finitude that his true greatness is revealed. Death, in this context, is not an isolated event or an evil that affects us, but a force that permeates the very structure of human existence. It is not something that happens in a one-off way, but a continuous and relentless movement, which affects not only human beings, but the entire cosmos. Everything that exists is subject to death: everything dries up, collapses and disappears, in an irreversible and inevitable cycle. Death, therefore, is not only a biological phenomenon, but the ontological condition of the being, something intrinsic to its existence. The dialectic between life and death, always present, constitutes the basis of human existential anguish, because, in the confrontation with finitude, the being is challenged to seek a meaning that transcends his own mortality. In the nihilistic perspective, death represents the absolute end, in which the being disappears completely, without any possibility of continuity or transcendence. This view reduces human existence to pure matter, ignoring the existential dimension that transcends the flesh (Costa, 1989, p. 89).

At death, the individual is forced to interpret himself, to question himself about his own existence. The question of death is not limited to a causal explanation, as medicine tries to provide; it involves, above all, a search for the deepest meaning of life and the end of it. Why do we die? Why that person, and not another? Why now, and not later? Death, therefore, challenges us to confront the meaning of our finitude. In his words, Leonardo Boff states: "To host death within life is to be able to welcome the expiration of existence not as a biological fatality, but as a chance for the freedom to give the life that is being taken from

me" (Boff, 2000, p. 116). Each Dasein, in its existential journey, will reach the end of its journey, whether it wants to or not, because it is through death that the Being completes its existence. In Clarice Lispector's work, Macabéa's death is already anticipated in the first words of the narrative, as a prediction: "... she who did not seem to have blood, unless one day she spilled it" (Lispector, 1984).

The revelation of inner and unknown worlds in Clarice Lispector's *The Hour of the Star* is intensely expressed in Macabéa's existential thought, moments before her death. She clings to a thread of consciousness and repeats to herself, "I am, I am, I am. Who he was, he did not know" (Lispector, 1984, p. 95). This fragment reveals the uncertainty of her identity and her inner struggle to weigh herself, immersed in an existential emptiness. Unaware of herself, Macabéa presents herself as a being who seeks one that escapes her, reflecting the constant search of the human being for a purpose.

Macabéa lives without thinking about the future, until, unexpectedly, she is confronted with a revelation by the fortune teller: she is "pregnant" with an unknown future. This moment, marked by the epiphany, represents a break with the reality of his daily life. However, this revelation also brings frustration, as she finds herself unable to make her dreams come true and to deal with the expectations of a future that seems unattainable. Her life, until then marked by a lack of direction, clashes with the vision of something greater, something she would never have existed.

Epiphany, therefore, is a moment of fusion between the Self and the World, a sudden flash of consciousness that illuminates, for an instant, the possibility of a future. However, this possibility is abruptly interrupted by death, when the expectation of a new beginning dissolves. Macabéa, when faced with the imminence of her finitude, has her search for meaning interrupted, showing the existential tragedy of the impossibility of realizing her dreams and escaping the death that defines her.

Clarice Lispector's character, Macabéa, when faced with her imminent death, is confronted with the depths of this experience, which are revealed in her description of an organic and almost erotic connection with the end of life. Death, for her, is experienced as an opening to something essential, a return to the earth, as the text says: "the land of Alagoas had opened in a crack". This moment of imminent death is not simply an annihilation, but an experience fraught with paradoxical tensions.

Death, here, is intertwined with a sensation of almost erotic pleasure, revealing an eroticization of one's own finitude. Macabéa experiences a "supreme moist happiness", as if, when facing death, she was finally embraced by something that, until then, had eluded her. Lispector inserts a sensuality in the moment of death: "There was a certain sensuality

in the way of shrinking. Or is it because pre-death looks like intense sensual craving?" Macabéa's face, "a sneer of desire", reflects the fusion between desire and death. Death, in this sense, approaches the experience of an unconsummated desire, a taste that is "soft, chilling, icy and sharp as in love". This moment of transition, where Macabéa passes from the virginity of life to the "woman" of death, reveals the complex intertwining between finitude and sensuality, abandonment and fulfillment, pain and pleasure. (Lispector, 1984, p. 103)

Death, as a natural manifestation of existence, has been widely approached from various perspectives, whether metaphysical, ontological or religious, and is often treated as a resulting evil, something to be feared and rejected. However, there is a more mysterious and enigmatic aspect associated with death, which, when experienced, can reveal deep layers of being, giving meaning to life in unforeseen ways. Death, therefore, is not just an end, but a concept loaded with complex meanings that echo in the mysteries of human existence.

Under a phenomenological and existential approach, death is initially presented as the death of others. However, this experience of death is never fully ours until we are faced with the imminence of our own finitude. The experience of death, like that of birth, is a solitary experience, since, as much as the dying person is surrounded by loved ones and their condolences, the true experience of death is unique and solitary. Death, in its deepest sense, is an experience that, like birth, is already inscribed in our being from the moment of conception. Solitude at death is therefore one of the constitutive aspects of this experience, and this loneliness is what makes death even more impenetrable and unique.

In everyday life, we are constantly confronted with the idea of death, which often leads us to be "reborn", like the phoenix, to new ways of living. However, both birth and death involve pain. The pain of birth is something that precedes us, something that we passively experience, but the pain of death is something that touches us deeply and that we must face. As Clarice Lispector observes in *The Passion According to GH*: "dying is the greatest risk, I will not know how to pass to death and put my first foot in the first absence of myself" (Lispector, 1984, p. 128). The experience of death, in fact, puts us in front of our intimates, stripping us bare and revealing the pains and sorrows that we carry throughout life, making us confront our own vulnerability and finitude.

"Anguish is the typical and proper character of life. Life is anguished. And why is life anguished? The anguish of life has two facets. On the one hand, it is the need to live, it is the desire to be, to continue being, so that the future is present. But, on the other hand, this longing to be carries within it the fear of not being, the fear of ceasing to be, the fear of

nothingness. Therefore, life is, on the one hand, a longing to be, and on the other, a fear of nothingness. This is the anguish. For nothingness frightens man." (Morente, 1998, p.311)

Macabéa, in the work *The Hour of the Star* by Clarice Lispector, represents the figure of the human being who finds himself entangled in his own marginality, seeking a meaning for his existence in the immediate present, without any concern for the future. His search for identity is ephemeral and desperate, as if he were trying to cling to life itself with an almost insane fervor, without truly understanding what it is to live. This existential impulse is clearly shown in one of the most symbolic gestures of the work: "kiss Madama on the cheek, with a cracked kiss and, never in a nascent introspection, will establish at the hour of death, what many living people become aware of in their short time on this planet: '... I am, I am, I am'" (Lispector, 1984, p. 103). Macabéa, then, finds herself with a revelation that transcends mere action, with a desire to affirm her own existence, but it is in death that she really finds herself. The act of "kissing Madama" represents her contact with something that transcends her ordinary life, an impulse of recognition, as if it were her only chance to be, through this act of illusion and an unattainable love.

His death, which is approaching in an evident way, does not occur only as a biological end, but as a moment of existential revelation. The "hour of the star," the moment of her enlightenment, comes to fruition in the final instant, when she frees herself from her own meaningless existence. When she dies, Macabéa achieves a consciousness that was previously alienated, a position on her life and her finitude. At the moment of her death, she affirms her freedom, not because she has lived fully, but because, finally, she ceases to fight for a meaning that she has never been able to find. As Lispector says: "She was finally free of herself and of us. Do not be alarmed, to die is an instant, it passes quickly, I know why I have just died with the girl. Excuse me for this death. It's just that I couldn't avoid it, we accept everything because we've already kissed the wall" (Lispector, 1984, p. 97). Death, for Macabéa, is not only the end of her existence, but the recognition of the impossibility of escaping her condition. He can no longer fight against what is already predestined, and freedom from death is the last form of freedom he achieves.

This moment of transition between life and death, between being and nothingness, is one of the greatest expressions of existential philosophy. For Macabéa, as for many of us, living is a constant struggle against the unknown, and dying becomes the only way to achieve a true form of liberation, even if it does not involve full fulfillment. Death frees her from a life that was never hers, marked by the absence of meaning and the annulment of her identity. In her last experience, Macabéa perceives the transience of life, the fragility of

human existence, and thus surrenders to the unknown, to death that, in a way, finally provides her with what life could not offer: freedom.

The reflection on death, presented by Lispector, leads us to question our own existence and what it really means. What is living, after all, not a constant search, an attempt to fill the void that inhabits us? What is dying, if not the inevitability of all human beings? In her last moments, Macabéa is not only facing her physical death, but an existential anguish of having lived without ever having met. Death then becomes the great revealer, not only of the finitude of life, but of the deep meaning that human existence incessantly seeks, even without ever being able to find it completely.

In this way, Macabéa's death cannot be seen as something isolated, but as the culmination of a constant search for meaning, a search that was never able to be fully realized. And, as Heidegger teaches us, it is only in the accessible area of our finitude, in the recognition of our beingness-towards-death, that we are able to truly understand what it means to live. Macabéa, therefore, in her simplicity and in her final surrender, teaches us that to live is, ultimately, to live in expectation of death, and that death, however tragic it may be, is the only truth capable of giving meaning to what we are.

Macabéa's death is, in fact, a crucial moment of philosophical transition, in which her existence is intertwined with the concepts of finitude and self-knowledge. As Heidegger states, "Dasein always understands itself, from its existence, that is, from its possibility of being itself or not being itself" (HEIDEGGER, 2012, p. 61). Macabéa, until the moment of her death, lived in a kind of unconsciousness of herself, something that made her unable to project herself as a being. His death, however, comes to reveal his being in an abrupt, albeit belated, way. A character did not have the chance to fully experience his own existence, and death thus appears as the only moment in which he really understands himself, albeit in a tragic way.

It is important to note that Macabéa's death is not a simple biological end. As Heidegger puts it, "if the interpretation of the meaning of being is a task to be accomplished, Dasein is not only the entity to be questioned in the first place, it is also the entity that already behaves each time in its being in relation to what it asks, the question, in that question..." (HEIDEGGER, 2012, p. 69). Macabéa, when she dies, not only reaches the end of her existential journey, but also places herself in a condition of question that transcends her being: who was she, after all? In the final instant, a character is confronted with nothingness, with the absence that is always habitual and that now manifests itself physically. The act of dying is a revelation, albeit an incomplete one, of what his life might have been, if he had had the opportunity to inhabit his own existence more consciously.

The "instant" of his death, described in an almost poetic way by Lispector, illustrates the transience of human life, this "moment of time" that is extinguished and restarts continuously, as if nothing really had weight or substance. "Was the ending quite grandiloquent for your need? Dying, she turned to air. Is it energetic? I don't know. He died in an instant. The instant is that instant of time when the tire of the car running at high speed touches the ground and then it doesn't touch anymore and then it touches again. Etc., etc., etc. Basically, it is nothing more than a half-out music box" (LISPECTOR, 1984, p. 84). This metaphysical reflection, with its emphasis on the ephemeral character of human existence, resonates with the anguish of Macabéa, a being who, at the moment of her death, realizes the total meaninglessness of her life, but also the profound liberation that the end of existence brings.

The phrase "What is the weight of light?" (LISPECTOR, 1984, p. 84) becomes a metaphor for what Macabéa experiences in her last breath: a lightness that is not of a full realization or of a finally "complete" being, but the realization of her intrinsic limitation while being human. This existential emptiness, which runs through his trajectory, finally reveals itself in his death, an event that is simultaneously desolating and liberating. The light, the out-of-tune music box, the unrepeatable instant — all this becomes a representation of what finitude and the condition of being are, which is only understood as Dasein when confronted with its own mortality.

Death, for Heidegger, is a possibility of being that Dasein must assume continuously, since, when faced with it, he becomes responsible for his own existential destiny. In this sense, death is not only the end of existence, but rather the condition by which Dasein attains its deepest understanding of itself. As Heidegger puts it, "death is a possibility of the cannot-longer-be-'there'". Thus, death unveils itself as the most proper, irsener and insurmountable possibility. As such, death is a marked where whose existential possibility has its foundation in the fact that Dasein is itself essentially open to itself and is so in the mode of being-advanced-in-relation-to-itself. This structural moment of preoccupation is not to be-advanced-in-relation-to-itself. death, its most original concretion" (HEIDEGGER, 2012, p. 691). Death, therefore, cannot be understood simply as the end of the body, but as the ultimate possibility that reveals the being in a profound and definitive way.

In relation to Macabéa, his death appears as the materialization of this Heideggerian concept. She, who lived passively and almost devoid of self-knowledge, is, at the moment of her death, confronted with her purest and most naked existence. She never had the chance to understand herself as Dasein, but as she dies, she finds one last moment of tragic enlightenment. "Dead, the bells rang but without their bronzes giving them sound"

(LISPECTOR, 1984, p. 97). Here, a reference to Macabéa's death evokes the notion that death is a contemporary in the void, an event that transcends being and that resonates in the absence of meaning and perception, a melody without sound, an echo of non-being that approaches everyone.

At this moment, Macabéa seems to become aware of her finitude and her impotence in the face of life. Death then becomes the only moment in which he experiences the totality of his existence, albeit in a tragic and brief way. As Heidegger says, "with death, Dasein is imminent itself for itself in its most proper power-being" (HEIDEGGER, 2012, p. 691). In Macabéa's case, death represents the culmination of a being who, throughout her life, was unable to perceive herself as a being for herself. Her death is the chance for a last glimpse of that possibility, but as Lispector's narrative suggests, she will never achieve full self-realization. In its end, what remains is a confirmation of its existential condition, an "I am" that, paradoxically, arises at the moment when it can no longer be.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of death and existence, mediated by the work of Clarice Lispector and Heidegger's philosophical contributions, reveals a profoundly human and complex view of finitude. The character Macabéa, in her life trajectory marked by alienation and lack of self-knowledge, represents the constant struggle of the human being to deal with death and existential anguish. Through her early death and her epiphanic moment, she experiences, albeit tragically, the revelation of her deepest being, questioning her own identity and her relationship with the world.

Throughout her narrative, Clarice Lispector offers us a reflection on existential emptiness and the search for meaning, themes dear to existentialist philosophy. Macabéa's death, far from being a clean physical end, symbolized the confrontation of one's own finitude, as well as the moment of a true inner revelation. A character, like Heidegger's Dasein, is immersed in the dilemma of his existence, never reaching a full understanding of himself, but being carried away by the inevitability of his destiny.

On the other hand, Heidegger's work provides a theoretical framework for understanding this experience. The concept of being-towards-death makes explicit that death is not simply an event, but a possibility that crosses and defines being. Death is the key to understanding ourselves, because it is in it that Dasein confronts its finitude and finds the meaning of its existence. Death, in this sense, is not an evil to be avoided, but a necessary condition for life to acquire.

By reflecting on death in "The Hour of the Star", Clarice Lispector provokes us to confront our own existence, our deepest fears and desires. Death, far from being a simple end, thus becomes an opportunity for understanding, enlightenment and liberation. Ultimately, Macabéa, when dying, symbolizes the greatness of human finitude, where, paradoxically, death reveals the possibility of being in its totality, making life and death inseparable in the incessant search for meaning.

This philosophical and literary analysis invites reflection on our relationship with death, with existential anguish and with our own being in the world. And, as Heidegger concludes, "Dasein always understands itself, from its existence, that is, from its possibility of being itself or not being itself" (HEIDEGGER, 2012, p. 61). Death is the most radical possibility, from which we can, in fact, understand ourselves as finite beings and, therefore, fully human.

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