



# RUINS

An essay by The.Goth.Teacher

We reassure ourselves with the words, everything will be fine again – but deep down we know: nothing will ever be the same again. And yet, driven by hope, we reach for the last spark at the bottom of Pandora's box and despair of our own hopes. But *die Hölle, sie ist leer und alle Teufel sind hier*<sup>[1]</sup>. A look at our times reveals how they appear in the guise of feigned humanity – and how willingly we allow ourselves to be deceived, because often our understanding of the chaos remains impenetrable. More than ever before, we do not understand *den Tumult*<sup>[2]</sup>, which surrounds us.

Our social systems have reached their end; soon they will be 'broken' – this is also predicted in the song of the Swiss band Metallspürhunde. The question posed in the chorus is how long it will take for the state of limbo to be resolved (*alles auf Halt*). The song was released in 2021. Anyone who believes this is purely a pandemic-related statement is missing the point. Rather, the song addresses

mechanisms that are deeper and more comprehensive: the band paints a picture of devils, collapse, disease and war. The outlook is bleak:

*Wir haben uns geirrt  
Hier hört die Strasse auf.*

There is no denying that we have been wrong more than once in human history. Even a cursory glance at recent years reveals that it is not only the loss of fundamental human and empathetic ways of interacting that is to be lamented, but also the fact that we are heading straight for our own abyss. We rely on a navigation system that has long since lost satellite reception. We follow a road that we assume will lead us to paradise. But the supposed dream turns out to be an apocalypse. Only in our dystopian awakening does it become clear: we have never been on a path to salvation.

We live in a world that must once have been healthy at some unknown point in time. A world that is no longer so. We ourselves are the cause; humans as a whole are focused on destruction, not on healing: «Wir nehmen uns die Welt/Und legen sie in Schutt!»<sup>[13]</sup> What we often fail to realise is that we are part of this world that we are so irrevocably destroying. And this destruction encompasses all areas and levels. Ultimately, our presence is leading to the destruction of all life. Even though we are aware of this, we are running blindly towards our doom, because:

*Wir waren unbeschwert  
In unserem Palast  
Kein Unrecht, keine Schuld  
Viel zu lang  
Vom Überdruss seditert.*

Although these verses could refer to almost any era, the criticism can be interpreted directly in relation to society in the 2020s. Discouraged by the fact that the dominant powers did not allow any reshaping of political, social or personal scenarios anyway, many withdrew into their private lives and gradually began to isolate themselves from the outside world. How often have I heard students say with a strange sense of relief in recent years: ‘I don't consume news. It just makes me sad, and I can't do anything about the trends of the times anyway.’

Those who know me realise that this attitude fills me with horror that I can hardly control. A powerlessness that we can no longer overcome because we are bound in rigid chains that make us forget all about playing. There is no doubt that we have been *vom Überdruss seditert* we have built up over the past few years. We drift sluggishly through our lives, having long since forgotten how to steer. We continue to follow this road into the abyss. We see no fault in ourselves; others built the palaces in which we celebrate our feasts on the ruins of the dead. Wealth and prosperity, but at the expense of those whose names now stand on stone slabs as a reminder that the world is reeling. We stagger along with it, drunk with a weariness that we did not earn – and which weighs heavily on others. Nature in particular suffers. And we no longer see ourselves as part of this nature.

The alienation from nature is also described by the novel *Wolfsage*: «Und Schiriki sah im Hügelland eine große Zahl von Läufern mit den schnellen Beinen umherirren, ziellos, als hätte eine große Verwirrung sie erfaßt, als wüßten sie nicht mehr, wohin sie sich wenden sollten. [...] Und er sah, wie einer nach dem anderen der Schnellen Läufer sich auf den Hinterbeinen erhob, wie der Pelz von ihnen abfiel und wie sie zu nackten, aufrecht auf zwei Beinen gehenden Geschöpfen wurden.»<sup>[14]</sup> The wolves,

who join together to form the pack *Zahllos*, become estranged from their world – just as we as a society did long ago. As in the novel, powerlessness always arises when we remain inactive for too long and stay in a situation that we are eventually no longer able to cope with.

Another literary example is George Orwell's fable. In his work *Animal Farm*, the animals live in prosperity after taking over the farm because they help each other. Power corrupts the individual, and as in the previous example, the pigs eventually turn into what they never wanted to be: humans. The imbalance of the world is restored. While *Wolfsaga* offers a conciliatory ending, Orwell's work leaves only hopelessness. Dreams are shattered by reality, by the cynicism of the powerful. The animals, who had previously believed in a changed reality, stand outside the window and watch their dream dissolve into cynical despair.

The song talks about everything becoming *neu und unbekannt*, and also about all the guarantees that may have existed up to now becoming null and void. The end of the familiar is linked to the dawn of a new day and the end of the party: the world after the turning point is so different from what it was before (*So anders, als es war*). The song criticises the celebrating society, because although we see what has happened, [...] we do not understand the turmoil (*wir sehen, was passiert ist, [...] verstehen [wir] den Tumult nicht*). This observation of our world is accurate, because far too often we wait far too long before we take action. By the time we finally awaken from our lethargy, it is usually too late.

If we contextualise the song on the EP *Oh, Hamlet*, 'Kaputt' forms the third of four acts. On the homepage, this EP is introduced with the following words: Hat das aktuelle Zeitgeschehen nicht etwas von einem shakespeare'schen Drama?»<sup>[5]</sup> Released in 2021, it reveals itself to be just as full of inner and perhaps also outer chaos as in the play *Hamlet*. Already in the opening track, 'Der König' it is mentioned: *die Welt, wie sie war, Erinnerung nur*<sup>[6]</sup>. Shakespeare's *Hamlet* has to deal with the death of his father and numerous other losses. In 2021, the world seemed so out of joint to all of us that uncertainty, fear and anger mixed into something from which recovery seemed almost impossible. We stood before the ruins of a world that would soon be forgotten. Selfishness stretched its clammy fingers back out to the majority of people just as quickly as it had disappeared in the face of the pandemic, when people offered to do other people's shopping and support them. People would much rather turn their attention back to celebrating, and so the last track on the EP invites us to join in a «Totentanz» – in Leipzig, of course, as befits the scene.

*Und wir trauern um die Toten*

*Und wir glauben an Gebete.*

The two verses that follow the collapse and the reference to poisoned air are presented in alliterative and parallel form. The question arises as to whether grief and faith are genuine in view of current world events. For as we listen further, we learn: *Alle Teufel sind hier*. Following the Christian tradition of a multitude of devils (and hells), the play unceremoniously places them in the world – who they are remains unnamed. It can be assumed that they are all those forces that drive collapse and war. The Revelation of John could easily be cited here: struggle and victory, war, death and hunger – fear, decline. Four horsemen who bring about the end of us and our abundance. A grim prognosis.

But the song 'Kaputt' takes a different stance. Actually, *Die Teufel erwartet ein böses Erwachen*. Here, humanity frees itself from the sword of Damocles that is war, and everything becomes new. For even if evil haunts us in many forms, there is still hope in the box of the all-gifted – and if we can muster it, we will be able to try to repair our world and rebuild the ruins. Our task now, however, is not simply to

mourn the ruins of the world, but to actively put them back together again – without hurting ourselves in the process.

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<sup>[1]</sup> Shakespeare, William: *The Tempest*. 1610. Translated/Transferred by: Metallspürhunde.

<sup>[2]</sup> If not stated otherwise, all of the following quotes are taken from: Metallspürhunde: «Kaputt». In: *Oh, Hamlet*. Trisol, 2021

<sup>[3]</sup> Grausame Töchter: «Alles kaputt». In: *Zyklus*. Dark Dimensions: 2021.

<sup>[4]</sup> Recheis, Käthe: *Wolfsage*. Munich, Vienna: Kerle: 1994: S. 384. Remark: Schiriki is the protagonist who is a slight wolf but his true strength lies in his ability to change the world with his words.

<sup>[5]</sup> Homepage Metallspürhunde: [mshunde.de](https://mshunde.de) [20. November 2025]

<sup>[6]</sup> Metallspürhunde: «Der König». In: *Oh, Hamlet*. Trisol, 2021.