



From: *Transcendental Speculation on Apparent Design in the Fate of the Individual* by Arthur Schopenhauer

“All developments in the life of a human being would accordingly stand in two fundamentally different types of connections: first, in the objective, causal connection of the course of nature; second, in a subjective connection which exists only in relationship to the individual who experiences it and which is thus just as subjective as his own dreams, in which however, the succession and content are just as necessarily determined and in the same manner as the succession of scenes of a drama cast by a poet.

That both types of connections exist simultaneously and the same occurrence, as a link in two quite different chains, which nevertheless have aligned perfectly in the consequence of which each time the fate of one matches the fate of another, and each is made the hero of his own drama while simultaneously figuring in an alien drama.

This is freely also something that exceeds our powers of comprehension and can only be conceived as possible through the most fabulous preordained harmony.”



BEING SPHERICAL

Schopenhauer and the Global Transit of a Human Life

In his mid-nineteenth century essay, *Transcendental Speculation on Apparent Design in the Fate of the Individual*, Arthur Schopenhauer metaphorically depicts the observable causalities that delineate the course of a human life as a **meridian on a globe**—a life path.

In his depiction, the **longitudinal lines** that cross the meridian represent the ineffable connections and interactions between an individual and others during one’s lifetime.

The track of a human life, Schopenhauer speculates, though it might appear a linear succession of causes and effects, is a string of objective connections intersected by subjective relationships.

In addressing the physical and metaphysical nature of the human experience, a more than casual pastime for him, Schopenhauer picked the right shape, but the wrong metaphor.

Life is not a voyage. There are no maps. There is no road, no course. No one owns a life compass.

For purposes of location and navigation the globe was long ago divided into a system of latitudes and longitudes. First using the stars and planets, then in conjunction with a timekeeping device, the positioning system uses a defined number of degrees (°), minutes (') and seconds (") to allow us to literally get around in the world.

In fact, though, the globe has an incalculable number of latitudes and longitudes—imagine so many horizontal and vertical lines that no separation between the lines is visible. The resulting form appears as a seamless, undissected ball.

The shape of a human life is like that—a multidimensional, omnidirectional profusion of connections and relationships that encircle and transect. Life is not a static, neatly scribed shell with straight lines and fixed positions. It has a rich, roiling, lava-like interior that forms continuously changing patterns on the surface and beneath. Relationships, interactions and influences shape our lives like physics shapes globules of liquid floating in Zero-G.

Life has surface and subsurface. It undulates. It vibrates. It burbles. It has bumps and dents. Life forms, deforms and reforms. No life is ever perfectly *in shape*.

As Schopenhauer poetically observes, the transcription of a human life is both written and dreamt.

The dynamic patterns depict life as we see it, as it is, as it is becoming, and as it was.

Metaphorically speaking, **life is spherical**.