

Original Paper

Understanding Life Will from Schopenhauer and Nietzsche

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Received: December 17, 2017 Accepted: January 31, 2018 Online Published: February 12, 2018

doi:10.22158/wjssr.v5n1p54

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22158/wjssr.v5n1p54>

Abstract

Schopenhauer and Nietzsche are the founders of philosophy of life. They criticize traditional rationalism and replace “reason” with “will”, which becomes the essence of the world and enhances the human subjectivity. Philosophy from the cold “logical thinking” to the search for the meaning of life, but Schopenhauer and Nietzsche’s idea of “life will” have huge difference. So they formed different attitudes towards the meaning of life.

Keywords

Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, life will

1. Introduction

The traditional rationalist, with Descartes’ “I think, therefore I am”, is a representative view of the self, with “thinking” and “reason” as the distinguishing feature of human and animal. But the dominant position of rationalism killing people in the world, people are no longer active and creativity, but a passive recipients, who became the carrier of the concept. Schopenhauer, with its keen insight, points out the people’s subjectivity to overthrow the came into being from Plato to the body, points out that “everything is just the external form, the underlying ontology is will”. Then influenced by Schopenhauer, Nietzsche think will can free everything, because the exercise of will is an act of creation, two of them to turn the irrational Lord and life philosophy.

Schopenhauer and Nietzsche’s theory of life will essentially live up to the “know yourself” that Socrates puts forward, but Nietzsche also has more dimensions of “being yourself” on this basis. Nietzsche is going to talk about the tension of life, rather than a silence and no waves of life, we use self life in this tension will create a new self, complete self transcendence, breaking the established, upon our value system, creating the value system of the self. Therefore, there is a fundamental difference between Nietzsche and Schopenhauer’s theory of life.

2. The Difference between Schopenhauer and Nietzsche's Life Will

2.1 Theoretical Basis: Pessimism and Tragedy

Schopenhauer thought "everything in the world is my appearance, I will", he borrowed from Kant's "the thing itself", think "will" is the essence of the world, will is "self", so the meaning of life should be in the "will", rather than the "rational" to look for. Every action of the human being, like life in nature, is the result of will. This will is the will of life, a blind, persistent, involuntary impulse. The essence of man lies in the constant pursuit of the will of life. The will of life is more precisely a kind of "intention", which is the desire, demand and pursuit of human beings. The desire of man comes from the need, and the demand indicates lack, which is the pain which cannot be satisfied. Human desire is infinite, life is infinite, even a desire and creates a new desire, so a life without happiness, even if have also just meet at the moment of the desire, transient. Pain is the root of life, and what remains after suffering is the great void. Therefore, life swings between boredom and pain, never ending. We can see that Schopenhauer's theory of pessimism has laid the pessimistic tone of his philosophical theory.

Nietzsche in the original is recognition of Schopenhauer's pessimism, because early Nietzsche hate people generally satisfied with the existing blind at that time, thought, and not progress, know only to pursue happiness in material, not the spirit of the noble life laborious, type of optimism (Note 1). But it wasn't long before Nietzsche felt that Schopenhauer's strong pessimism was not what he wanted. In a letter to his sister, "if you want peace and happiness in your soul, you choose to believe; If you are a believer in truth, then you choose to question. Nietzsche is a kind of tragedy, is a kind of is not limited to pure pessimistic and there is a kind of spirit of transcendence, he does not agree to the tragedy Schopenhauer as a conflict between the finiteness of life and desire of unlimited, and regard the tragedy comes from dithyrambs of Dionysus spirit and Apollo spirit blunt. The world was supposed to allow for the possibility of diversity, but under the impetus of the traditional rationalists, on behalf of the rational spirit of Apollo pressed even cancelled the dionysian spirit, there was a tragedy, the tragedy art so Nietzsche begin to explore the meaning of life. This kind of tragedy art represented by dionysian spirit, wine god represents the Bohemian original state and no contain life impulse, it is a sign of personal will against fate, is a kind of "life is very difficult to bear, but don't act like a very delicate" (Note 2). It is in this tragic destruction that Nietzsche feels the fullness of the will of life and the indestructibility of it, which breeds pleasure. There is a time when personal life is dead, but human life is endless. Nietzsche stands in the world rather than the individual's standpoint to see his own pain and destruction.

In a word, tragedy is the pursuit of pain, which is lofty and constructive, and pessimism has nothing but the destruction of the impulse of life.

2.2 Understanding of the Connotation of "Life": Survival and Life

We refer to Schopenhauer's life will as "The will to live", while Nietzsche's theory is "The will to power", and we can see The difference between them only in terms of words. Schopenhauer thought life is essentially the pain, the best way to get rid of the pain is to end life, but people have a strong

survival instinct, so we can only willing to pain, to accept fate, Schopenhauer claims to commit suicide, but lived for 78 years, I think the best explanation is people's survival instinct. Therefore, the final resting point of Schopenhauer's theory is survival, which is a survival of the lack of vitality.

Nietzsche has an uninhibited soul, and Nietzsche cannot identify with the preservation and reproduction of life as the first principle of life, which is the fundamental meaning of Schopenhauer's life will. He tried to subvert everything with his hammer and become "superman". We are not satisfied with the survival of the trend, we are the only animals that can pursue their own existence, and we want to live our own life. Nietzsche pointed out that Europe was full of nihilism at that time, and civilization created more and better material conditions for people's survival, far beyond the need to sustain life. Beyond that part of the world is providing us with enjoyment while making our way of life more complex and far away from the natural state of life. On the other hand, it also allows people to indulge in comfort, lose the courage and strength to face great danger, and become mediocre in spirit. People have neither the endurance of want nor the explosive power of danger, but the comfort zone in the middle, which is becoming more and more numb. Rebels of the era of Nietzsche's of course not willing to under this false "comfortable" chaotic through life, he declared war on god, declare war on time, to establish the meaning of life itself, the pursuit of real life. At that time Europe full of nihilism, Nietzsche's theory of social and human development is certainly valuable, at the same time, I think his attitude to pursue "life" in any society, any human condition is meaningful, because even the best things are hard to avoid can have some boring impurities, so it is also should be transcended.

2.3 Attitude towards "Life": Negation and Affirmation

Destiny is not to change, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche agree that life is full of pain, is pessimistic, but they are the source of the pain and the attitude of fate, so Nietzsche to sure of life, and even beyond, and Schopenhauer to the negation of life. However, it is worth noting that the "affirmation" and "negation" do not contain the meaning of value judgment, nor are they proposed based on the starting point of a binary opposition. Schopenhauer is not for the negative and negative, he just wanted to melt by denying individuals, mixing the ego into self, because he thought that the contradiction between "will and representation" is from the individual cognitive biases and individual differences.

Schopenhauer thought that pain is the inevitable outcome of the will to life itself, so, to relief the pain is only negative life will, through the negation of life to overcome the passage of time, transient, to seek a state of nirvana, calm, make sense of a clear, liberated from the rejection form. In Schopenhauer's view, there are two ways to relieve the pain. One is to give up the liberation of his life will by the "view of the judge" of art. The first is to seek permanent relief through abstinence and outright denial of the will of life. We can't completely deny Schopenhauer's pessimism, which is full of positivity compared with traditional rationalists. Schopenhauer woke people up from the false sense that he had the courage to admit that life is a pain. Traditional rationalists realized the pain of life, but try to use to regulate of lavinia, bind ourselves to alleviate or blinded by the pain of life, or they turn to

science, or turn to religion or art.

Unlike Schopenhauer and the traditional rationalists, Nietzsche argues that since the end of life is death, it is nothingness, we cannot find meaning in the end, the meaning of life is in its process. A man love the life without perseverance, one insight into the life was not pessimistic, with Schopenhauer, persistent and pessimism with struggle, finally won, pessimistic to look at his life is a kind of means. But in Nietzsche's case, the intense conflict between persistence and pessimism has reached a reconciliation, which has reached the point of transcendence, which is the purpose of life. But his purpose is more to the process, to seek the meaning of life, the expensive person is not in the meaning itself, but in seeking, meaning is in the process of seeking. In other words, in Nietzsche's view, even if life is meaningless and empty, I have to give it meaning.

2.4 The Thoroughness of Critique of Plato's Theory

Traditional western philosophy has always been based on Plato's theory of "concept, will be the secular world and the concept world is divided into two parts, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche as the pioneer of irrationalism, on Plato the metaphysical idea strongly critical. But Schopenhauer still not out of the sea to shining sea binary pattern, he will and representation of this essence and phenomenon inherent to distinguish instead of Plato's concept of "secular-dichotomy", mainly manifested in his expounds on the relationship between art and life. Traditional western thought for understanding of realistic existence of pain and resistance, hope that through imitative art activities to a transcendental to seek comfort in the world, and the arts in the final analysis is imitation. Schopenhauer make art from the position of "imitation", he thinks that art is a reflection of as will complete objective way, is to get rid of the survival principle of individualization and one of the important path to real existence. However, Schopenhauer didn't break the basic mode of thinking of western philosophy, art is still in the idea of a beyond the real world outside the pursuit of the world means, just the idea of the world into metaphysical understanding of the whole world from life.

Nietzsche, on the contrary, life itself is a huge artistic activities, life itself is not a rationalist, is bound to like a permanent return good kingdom, but in the process of art creation significance, so art is not a means of comfort, natural survival itself is the same process and art activities. Nietzsche, Shouting "god is dead", will the other shore world completely overturn, people only live in the real world, and the world is based on we created for the "will to power, human need not be like machine is subject to the rules of the external force".

3. Conclusion

Schopenhauer and Nietzsche took the "man" to the center of the world stage, and the body of the man who had been spurned by the rationalist has entered the philosophical view. In this world, there is nothing but a living. There is no purpose in this world. People must set their own goals beyond survival. But to set up a goal means they may not be the same, Schopenhauer think we can get know through

inner review, so he chose to deny individual will, ablation, turned to art, he has finally returned to his own inner world. But Nietzsche thinks everyone from himself, as far as there is no direct knowledge of our set of main body just for the object with the subject of grammatical needs, so the self experience, beyond the self is the true life.

But in other ways, if we interpret Schopenhauer's "pain" differently, we may get rid of the pessimism that comes with it. Pain is a kind of happiness, happiness is a process rather than a result, and carefully thought, our happy memories will be mixed with sadness, painful memories will be mixed with sweetness. The opposite of happiness is disaster, not pain, and pain can be mixed with happiness, but there is no happiness at all. Pain is the catalyst of character. He makes the strong stronger and the weak weaker. Pain is a hindrance to life, and the need for creativity is stronger, and our lives are stronger, and the meaning of life is more profound. Conflict is the foundation of life, life is the obstacle to overcome, without hindering life, it loses its meaning. Therefore, the so-called pessimistic root cause of life is not the pain in life, but your attitude towards life. Life is a beautiful word, may we all don't get trivial daily life belies its beauty, numbness in tend to be materialized and media-oriented world at various levels, we do not live in order to machine without life, step by step, all obey the established rules, we should keep some experience of life.

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Notes

- Note 1. Chen, Q. (1936). From Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. *Journal of tsinghua university*, 11(2).
- Note 2. Nietzsche. *The Figure Stella Said Zarathustra*, p. 17. Harbin Publishing House.