

The Self-redemption of a Pessimistic Life: First Reading of the World as a Will and an Appearance

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Abstract: The modern German philosopher Altu Schopenhauer's philosophy mainly took root and germinated from the Indian Buddhist thoughts of Plato and Kant, and his philosophical thoughts were mainly condensed in his work *The World as Will and Appearance*. As the first book to understand Schopenhauer, the book is mainly divided into four parts: the world as the appearance of the beginning, the world as the will, the world as the representation, the world as the will. This article is mainly to organize some of the author's feelings after reading the book. Because of the limitation of his own knowledge and Schopenhauer's works tend to be academic obscure, if there is any deficiency, thank the teacher for his criticism and correction.

Keywords: Schopenhauer; Will; Performance; The World.

1. Introduction

Schopenhauer, the first philosopher to rise against Hegel, was the first person in the history of philosophy to openly oppose the rationalist philosophy and pioneered the irrationalist philosophy. He was also one of the founders and main representatives of the volism, believing that the will of life is the power that dominates the operation of the world. He graduated from the University of Jena in 1813 and had developed a mature and socialist ideology in his doctoral thesis, "The Four Roots of the Law of Sufficient Reason". After 1820, he was a lecturer at the University of Berlin, and he chose to start classes at the same time as Hegel. But at that time, Hegel's philosophy was in its prime, and the students in each class were full. Schopenhauer's classroom contained only three people, and then even one student disappeared. He taught for 24 semesters at the University of Berlin, less than a semester ago. After he left teaching, he wrote alone, as his representative of "The World as Will and Appearance."

Schopenhauer's philosophy was once criticized by Engels as "a shallow thought suitable for the mediocre" and "the scraps of outdated philosophy". Schopenhauer's thought was unknown for a long time until the failure of the revolution in 1848, when Schopenhauer's last book, *Supplementary Supplement and Addendum*, became popular among the pessimistic and disappointed German citizens. Schopenhauer dared to resist when Hegel's philosophy was in its prime, and pointed out that German philosophy is the product of bragging and impersoncheaters. At the same time, he gave a high evaluation of Kant, regarded himself as the faithful heir of Kant, and was committed himself to transforming Kant's ethics of "good will" into a good will of socialist ontology.

2. The Understanding of Each Part of The Philosophy

This paragraph is actually the beginning of Schopenhauer's thought, and is a general introduction of his thoughts. We must first understand the concept of "the world as a will and a representation". What we must admit is that the world is an objective existence, which can be seen by the naked eye and touched by the hands, but Kant subverts people's understanding of the world in *The Criticism of Pure Reason*.

Kant believes that we have no way to understand the world. Because in Kant's view, our knowledge is first acquired through vision, taste, and other feelings. Feeling can only give us some representation. For example, the milk is white, with a milk fragrance, and then our thinking will process this representation, to get the overall understanding of the milk. As for what stimulates our thinking, we are not clear. We can only say that the bottle of milk in front of me made me produce color, smell and other appearances. Further, we can use scientific tools to observe the milk, but no matter how much we observe, we still obtain some appearances, and there is no way to understand the essence of things through these representations. Kant defines the essence of things as "things by themselves", which means things by themselves. Strictly speaking, our understanding is not in the objective understanding of the world, but from the subjective perspective, to the world legislation. If we follow Kant's thinking, we will find that there is no so-called objective world, and there is no way to determine that those representations are caused by objective objects. All we are sure of is those appearances.

Kant's above thought is called the "Copernican Revolution", and the Schopenhauer thought in this book is based on the "Copernican Revolution". He inherited Kant's theory of representation and limited our understanding to the scope of representation. We think that the world is existing, orderly, all because we accept these representations, all of which are related to our ability to perceive time and space. But in Schopenhauer's view, Kant's revolution was not thorough enough. The concept of "object itself" proposed by Kant is still an objective thing in a practical sense, but we do not recognize it.[1] Kant said that representation is not produced for no reason, certainly because of something, led to the emergence of representation. In Schopenhauer's view, Kant's presupposition was wrong. He proposed a new understanding of "the world as a will and a representation". The will here can be understood as the impulse to want something. For living things, the will is the will of life. Every cell and every organization in an organism wants to live, and they all want to preserve life and give birth to life. Schopenhauer believed that not only people are conscious, but also animals and plants are conscious. The will exists in everything, and is a primitive instinct and impulse that drives and creates the whole world.

As a primitive noumenon, the will transcends time and space, not as an individual, but as a whole.[2] All the appearance in this world is created by the will and the objective is illusory. Schopenhauer believed that the essence of the world is the will.

3. The World as a Will Beginning -- Concept is Fixed, Consciousness is Changing

This piece is illustrated by Schopenhauer in the abstract representation (namely viewpoint), pointing out that without the intuitive concept has no meaning, and the concept is formed on the basis of intuition. Schopenhauer proposed that rationality is only not self-sufficient in some special situations, on the contrary, in these situations, Schopenhauer's so-called intuition is only better competent. Schopenhauer think some used to depict skills of knowledge, not abstract knowledge, the knowledge more as a internalized in human practice of practice wisdom, its use without analysis, criticism, if excessive analysis, will interrupt the fluency in the process of practice, so the practice knowledge or "knowledge in action" in an action cannot clear, because of its cannot clearly identify, so the "action of knowledge" nature.[3]

Schopenhauer opposed that the abstract rational knowledge advocated by scholars included all the knowledge mastered by human beings. He believed that some human knowledge was internalized in the process of human practice and reflected as a kind of ability or "practical wisdom". Schopenhauer argued that the non-intuitive knowledge possessed by some African aborigines could not be classified as abstract or rational knowledge."African indigenous people can steadily and quickly perform some physical activities, such as fighting with beasts, and archery can accurately hit the bull's eye."Schopenhauer believes that although Europeans can skillfully use propositional and logical knowledge, their accurate and propositional knowledge is useless here.

"The lines and ups and downs of the face are clearly felt; but there is no abstract conceptualization. Anyone has his own intuitive system of psychological and pathological syndrome knowledge, but some people know the feeling of these things better.[4] "Schopenhauer believed that the knowledge of ability is not a clear knowledge, but a kind of silent knowledge, and this silent intuitive knowledge is more effective in practice than conceptual knowledge in practice.

The world as a representation of the theory -- Art is the objectification of ideas, is the representative of general ideas

This one is actually further deepened by Schopenhauer in his first essay, and presents his views on art. He said that the most fundamental root of knowledge is intuition rather than rationality, and only intuition can achieve the unity of will and representation.

Plato's philosophy explains that some of the things we encounter are so similar to others that they can hardly tell, if not for their individuality. Then there is a question of unity and unity. In Plato's view, only ideas are eternal, and the world of experience is in constant change. Schopenhauer believed that Plato's philosophy was similar to Kant's philosophy. Kant believes that knowledge lies in understanding the appearance rather than the things at ease. Plato believes that the empirical world we know is not really the object of knowledge, and only ideas are meaningful.

Schopenhauer drew on both of them. Kant's self cannot be

thoroughly recognized, at least not directly recognized. As a matter of freedom, the will cannot be subordinate to time, space, and causality, and therefore is not recognized individually. Plato's idea can be found as the objectification of the will in the object of the objective. So all art is a direct grasp of the idea, is a concrete reality of the idea. This control and display also has an absolute universality and the essence of exceeding time or space, so it has the energy to free human beings from their endless desires. So the beauty also has a very high value. As a genius, an artist can grasp the unity of the different phases and separate the phenomenon from the will through the idea. The value of this ability is self-evident.

Schopenhauer believes that works of art have a quality beyond time, while music also has the quality of super space beyond time, so music is not only a copy of the idea, but also closer to the will itself, so it also has a higher value. Schopenhauer believed that music and the appearance world exist almost side by side. But this kind of beauty can only make people get temporary relief from the will side, because this kind of appeal for beauty can only make people fall into the trap of the will itself, so it still has certain limitations.[5]

4. The World is the Will of Life is the Individual Object Itself

This chapter is the last part of the book and a summary of Schopenhauer's philosophy of the previous books. In this article, Schopenhauer's pessimistic outlook on life has been deeply reflected.

Schopenhauer believed that the essence of the world is the will without thought and reason, the will that drives everything, the root of all suffering, not only the root of suffering in life, but also the root of various disasters in the world.[6] "Life in the world is just a swing between pain and boredom, under the control of both, all the way to death."We feel that we want something, but when we don't get it, we have anxiety. Even if we put in a lot of effort to get such a thing, our happiness is only in a short moment or a few minutes. To maintain this pleasure, we search for the next goal and get into a cycle of anxiety. This is the inevitable state of human survival under the rule of the will. Schopenhauer concluded that the world is like hell, where everyone is the devil and tortured by other demons. The fundamental state of life is like this, with no purpose, no meaning, and everyone is dragged into the whirlpool of struggle, and so is the whole world. There is no development from disorder to order, from low to high, from simple to complex, the whole world, in the final analysis, is an abyss of nothingness, whether it is life or the whole world, is a dream dominated by the will, and it is a nightmare mixed with pain and boredom. Schopenhauer opposed the idea represented by Hegel that the world was rational, he thought that the world in the final analysis is a wild game. Those seemingly beautiful things in our life are actually just a kind of appearance. Each of us is sent out by the will. Schopenhauer's worldview is extremely pessimistic. He even overturned the traditional western philosophy that "existence is higher than nothingness". Existence is not in any sense higher than nothingness. Birth is not a beautiful thing for people. Because birth means suffering. If never born, but is the happiest. For the world, the world we live in is the worst of anything possible.

But facing the "miserable world", Schopenhauer opposed suicide and encouraged people to accept death calmly. He believes that the futile of suicide, suicide is a disguised wild

game of the will of life. There is a way to escape the terrible cycle between pain and boredom.

Since we can't change the miserable world. Mr. Schopenhauer thinks. The best solution is to deny the self-will and not try to find meaning in the pursuit of these illusory goals. Because pain is directly proportional to our emphasis on individuals. The more we want to realize ourselves and get what we want, the more painful it will be. There are two ways to deny the will of the self. One is achieved indirectly through aesthetic experience. The other is through a more direct self-denial that is religious.[7] How do we understand the first statement. Schopenhauer believes that when we appreciate a certain painting or calligraphy work, we are completely immersed in it and get complete peace of body and mind. We can go beyond the limitations of time and space and thinking, and shift our attention from desires and interests to the art work itself. At this time, we can get rid of the individual will and appearance, and enter the world of ideas. Plato thinks there is a world of ideas beyond the world we live in. There are ideas of beauty, justice, all of which are essential, eternal and unchanging. Schopenhauer accepted Plato's theory, believing that when we integrate with the work, we see no longer the concrete work in front, but the recognition of the universal and eternal side. Therefore, those rare and talented artists can live in aesthetic art beyond themselves, and use creative techniques to create works that have more eternal ideas than reality. But for the vast majority of people, we can only appreciate the works of these geniuses, indirectly get rid of these self and will troubles, and get temporary relief. Then we understand the second, the so-called higher than aesthetic art realm, is directly deny the will of the individual, he thought that if we recognize the nature of the world is the will, recognize the source of pain is the will of the individual, so we fight with him, the final battle is to give up. If we want to really get rid of the cycle of pain and boredom, we can only give up our will, do not pursue anything, and live a life of moderation and abstinence, which is the opposite state of suicide. This is not for pain, but for happiness. Everything in the world is the inevitable result of the best use of the will. We can not change anything, we can only accept it calmly, give up our will, and we can be one with the will that drives the world. This combination of two can transcend the temporary relief in the aesthetic experience, allowing people into a lasting peace and serenity.

"We see peace beyond all reason, and the sea of mind in complete peace, a boundless peace, confidence and pleasure without any disturbance." Schopenhauer believes that this stage of life is closer to a religious mystery experience. This is Schopenhauer's antidote to the pessimistic world.

5. Conclusion

Schopenhauer was a precocious philosopher, written about when he was about thirty. The book contains much of his philosophical thoughts. As a snoop at the gate of philosophy, I don't know much about Schopenhauer's thoughts. What impressed me most in this reading experience was Schopenhauer's pessimistic cosmopolitanism.

Schopenhauer said that life is like a pendulum, swinging between pain and boredom. Since people turn all the painful torture into the concept of hell, all left to heaven is boredom. Schopenhauer believed that the real essence of man is the consciousness of survival, and man is only the objective product of the will to survive to the highest class. The will to survive has no purpose, it blindly desperate for self-

preservation, self-satisfaction. However, in the real world, as a specific individual, everyone should be restricted by the object conditions under the background of time and space. Simply put, people's desire is infinite, while the conditions to satisfy the desire are limited, so it is difficult to see that people's desire can be satisfied, and people's life is doomed to be full of pain. Even if the desire is fortunately satisfied, but happiness is only a flash in the pan, soon is to feel boring, or to chase a new desire, so most people's life is like a pendulum, wandering between pain and boredom.

"Happiness is but a temporary stop of desire, we are like lambs in the field, happy under the butcher's gaze."

Some people say that Schopenhauer's books are pessimistic, telling us that the struggle in this world is hopeless. But I think in fact, many people have understood Schopenhauer's thoughts wrong. As mentioned above, Schopenhauer does not mean that in the pessimistic world is pessimistic, we have to commit suicide and face the world negatively, but guide us to actively seek ways to relieve the pain.

In fact, Schopenhauer can be divided into objective idealism. Although Marx said in Feuerbach's outline that "the whole social life is practical in nature. All the mystery that leads the theory to the mysticism can be reasonably solved in the human practice and in the understanding of this practice." Marx, an atheist, believed that the creation of religion itself was the product of social polarization, and that the birth of religion would further accelerate the polarization.

A philosopher says that existence is reasonable, and the existence of religion itself is reasonable. As the old Chinese saying goes, "do the best, listen to the destiny", "heaven has reincarnation" and so on, which can give people a kind of spiritual redemption after failure.

If we want to get a moment of peace of life in a dream-like life, rational activities are full of transcendence, and understanding and intuition can get rid of the bondage of the will and turn into pure understanding, so that we can liberate us from the drive of the will. It is a journey home.[8]

Although this is the cruel, competition of the world, or to use a fashionable saying, this is a serious society, but this does not prevent us from being full of enthusiasm and hope for life, does not hinder our courage to look up at the stars and down-to-earth efforts.

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