

Freedom, Passion, and Resistance: On the Intention of the "Absurd Man" in Sisyphus Myth

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Abstract. Sisyphus Myth is the most important of Albert Camus's three early representative works on absurdity, which embodies his existentialism and absurd philosophy. This book takes "absurd man" as its core, mainly with the help of the elucidation of the meaning of the image of "Sisyphus", through the analysis of a series of problems such as suicide, freedom and hope, gives a new connotation of "absurdity", and considers its significance to human life and the living situation that human beings are facing generally. The literary level of image description has been upgraded to the philosophical level of logical speculation and has provided a unique spiritual guide for human beings to face absurd problems. Through this work, the author re-examines the value and significance of our life from a new angle and way of thinking. The Sisyphean Myth redefines the principles that we regard as truth. It is the meaning and belief of our life to penetrate the absurd nature of the world while maintaining the spirit of resistance.

Keywords: *Sisyphus Myth, absurd consciousness, Albert Camus, absurd resistance, life meaning*

1. Introduction

"Now, I see. The world, in its present state, is intolerable. Therefore, I hope that the moon, or happiness, or immortality, may need something absurd because there is no world."

In Camus's early drama Caligula, Camus talks about the eternal contradiction between the metaphysical ideal impulse of human beings and the uncertainty that the world does not satisfy its aspirations. For absurdity, the way out is not suicide. Camus uses the concept of "absurd man" to describe another way out: "freedom", "passion" and "resistance".

2. Albert Camus and Sisyphus Myth

The collection of philosophical essays, Sisyphus Myth, was completed in 1943. Its ideological background of writing is the rational suffering and the collapse of beliefs that occurred in the modern and contemporary Western world, and its realistic background of writing is the Second World War, which brought unprecedented devastating disaster to all mankind. In the face of the spread of war, devastated cities and countryside, horrible brutality, disaster and death at any time, pessimistic despair and so on, an unprecedented strong "absurd" experience pervades all over Europe. Camus writes that absurdity arises from the confrontation between the call of man and the unreasonable silence of the world; absurdity lies not only in man but also in the world. It is the only link between human beings and the world so far; suicide, or judging whether life is worth experiencing, has become a "truly serious" and "unique" philosophical issue. How to face such an absurd real-life situation and such a strong absurd life experience was sharply placed in front of every thinker at that time, especially the Westerners with dual identities of sensitive poet and profound thinker like Camus.

First of all, it should be emphasized that the elaboration of absurdity is not Camus's ultimate goal in writing this book. In Sisyphus Myth, he repeatedly emphasized that "absurdity has been regarded as a conclusion so far, but in Bensan theory it is the starting point." In Camus's view, "absurdity" is needless to be elaborated. It is an experience that everyone may have in this era of extreme spiritual scarcity. "Absurdity... He'll hit anyone in the face. Therefore, the real question to be explored is not whether or how absurd the living conditions of human beings are in the present age, but how human beings should face such absurd situations which seem to be inescapable. "I don't know if life is vulgar or disgusting, elegant or regrettable," he said. "Understanding whether people can live

without hesitation is all I want to discuss." Faced with this absurd life situation, Camus's response plan is to first understand that life "is not about living the best, but living the most". Therefore, we should not "voluntarily die" (physical or ideological suicide), but "desperately hope" and "resolutely live". In a word, like Sisyphus, who has endured the hardships of life tenaciously and bravely and conquered his destiny, he has become a "hero against absurdity" with a full and happy heart. In short, Camus's real purpose in writing this book is to lead mankind to learn to face the absurd life situation correctly, and thus to gain the courage, strength, and happiness of a tenacious life.

3. Absurd Intentions

Camus has an interesting description in the Sisyphean Myth: "Sometimes, backgrounds collapse... Four hours of work, eating, sleeping... It's always a rhythm... Once... The question of why was raised, and everything began with a little bit of surprising boredom... It awakens consciousness and stimulates subsequent activities... It's the unconscious rearrangement of the shackles or the final awakening. Camus thought, "Before meeting absurdity, all living beings lived for some purpose." In this case, all people's thoughts are pinned on their opportunities, their future lives and the work of future generations. Human beings act as if they were free, "and after (realizing) the absurdity, everything is shaken passively". The mechanical and tedious life, from the beginning to the end, is shrouded in the shadow of "absurdity", "why" becomes the beginning of "absurd consciousness". The consciousness aroused by it and the subsequent actions aroused constitute the real core of Camus' thought.

The absurd intention is an incongruity, which refers to the disharmony in music. The concept of absurdity was not first proposed by Garmer. Pascal, a seventeenth-century essayist, had already mentioned it in his Book of Thoughts, but it did not arouse widespread concern until the nineteenth century. The first meaning of absurdity is the separation and conflict between man and the world, man and life. Simply put, we want the world to be reasonable, but the opposite is true. The second meaning of absurdity is sin without God. It's how we live after God's death. Camus's teacher once pointed out that most of Camus's ideas came from Nietzsche. People are always eager to have a reasonable explanation for everything. The curtain woven around God was torn to reveal the true face of life. The loss of religious beliefs produces a sense of absurdity in life and the world. Camus said that this was the most heartbreaking passion: passion means conscious consciousness; heartbreak means the situation after the realization of absurdity.

4. Absurd Resistance

At the beginning of Sisyphus Myth, Camus pointed out that "there is only one real philosophical problem, that is, suicide." He concluded that the meaning of life was the most pressing issue, which was decomposed into the problem of death and the problem of strong a desire to survive. Camus's appeal in Sisyphus Myth is "to reveal the way of thinking, how to proceed from a philosophy of the world's meaningless, and finally find meaning and depth for the world".

In seeking answers to the meaning of life, Camus believed that reason was too rash to answer such questions. A rational person, or a person with the same appearance, will put into practice what he believes to be true. The sense of absurdity governs its liberation from life in an incomprehensible state. Then, as a rational person, he would regard suicide as the only way to get rid of absurdity. The reason's answer to suicide is yes or no, which is too rash. Similarly, Camus criticized those who "live not for life itself, but a great idea". By putting the meaning of life above life itself, it essentially means that life is meaningless. "Pretending to believe that life has a certain meaning will inevitably lead to claiming that life is worthless." So when discussing the meaning of life, Camus chose to analyze it from the perspective of human beings. At this time, the "rational man" perspective was transformed into the "absurd man" perspective of human reasoning terminal from "rational man" looking for "ethical norms" to "absurd man" for "the image and breath of life" pursuit. The intention of "rational man" is replaced by the intention of "absurd man".

From "rational man" to "absurd man", it is determined that "absurd man" has freedom of action in a sense. The "freedom" of "absurd man" originates from the "absurd feeling" derived from reason. This "absurdity" comes from the rational consciousness of the opposition and contradiction between man and the world. People pursue certainty and unity, while the world may be full of uncertainty. For example, Oedipus was eager to get rid of the bondage of fate and rewrite it through human power. However, he was ultimately bound by fate and did not get rid of the tragic fate of paternity and motherhood. Instead of being a tool for people to achieve their goals, the world makes people a link in the world's mechanical chain, and thus a tool for satisfying the causal relationship between machines. Absurdity marks a perpetual divorce between the world and man's conception of the world.

However, this fate is also a humanized interpretation of the relationship between man and the world. This right of interpretation also means that the absurd person can determine his freedom of action according to his interpretation of fate. Camus interprets Oedipus's tragic fate as "a deep spiritual desire, even in the most revolutionary activities, which depends on the unconscious sense of human beings facing their heaven and earth." And this unconscious sense is the desire to "be kind and clear", and "to understand the world is to force the world to be human". Therefore, from the human point of view, out of the intrinsic metaphysical impulse of human reason, people will understand the world as a whole with relevance. This determines the free intention of "absurd man" from the absurd understanding of the world. The "absurd man" does not doubt that the world itself is not inherent to satisfy human needs, but this rationally determined "the world has nothing to do with human beings" has unexpectedly become the rational basis of absurd man's free intention. At this time, the emotion of "absurd man" is precise through reason, and the "passion" of "absurd man" is released with the precise of this emotion. Sisyphus saw pushing rocks up the hill as the ultimate picture that could be reached, and pushing rocks up the hill as a manifestation of his ability. This restriction on the ultimate picture brings about the determination of the ultimate picture and the determination of the limit of freedom. These "certainties" mean that disappointment with the world picture translates into satisfaction with the identified capabilities of oneself. Man's value arises from his recognition to his ability rather than his current condition. With the happiness brought about by this sense of satisfaction determined by reason, Sisyphus's process of pushing the rocks up the hill was repeated because it was rational and could bring emotional satisfaction, and the passion intention of the "absurd man" was then determined. Therefore, in the face of the opposition and contradiction between man and the world, "absurd man" not only does not commit suicide because of despair (The absurd does not commit suicide because of despair. Nietzsche mentioned a kind of "practical pessimism" in *The Birth of Tragedy*. Suicide, as a means of eliminating emptiness and pain, will feel a kind of "practical pessimism" at the end of life. Ironically, when trying to end life, we often believe in the meaning of life. Both Nietzsche and Camus were influenced by Schopenhauer's view that the essence of life is emptiness (boredom) and pain. Similar to Nietzsche, Camus believed that "there is something more powerful in an attachment to human life than all human suffering." Physical judgment is hardly equal to spiritual judgment, and in the face of destruction, the body will retreat. This is an instinctive response to suicide. In a deeper analysis, for Camus, suicide is an acknowledgment of his limitations. The process of suicide is that people return to their essence. However, absurd people will not take suicide as a way to fight against absurdity. For the absurd, "Rebellion gives life its value, runs through the whole life, and restores the greatness of life." Absurd people's rebellion against the irrationality of the world will recast the meaning of humanity itself, and suicide, in Camus's words, is to "impoverish human beings". The absurd man's way is not to flee from the future, but to throw himself into it. The absurd rebellion is to inspire people's consciousness and rebellion by pointing to the opposite side of life all the uncontrollable and passionate things in people's hearts.), but also rises a passion for despair. The "absurd man" is sure that he has found a way to determine the meaning of life.

The passion of "absurd man" can be accurately refined with the help of reason. The "absurd man" therefore prefers his courage and his reasoning. "Courage makes him content with what he has; reasoning makes him aware of his limitations. He affirmed his freedom for a certain period

time, no sense of future rebellion and extinction, and continued his adventures while he was alive." Therefore, the "absurd man" does not place his hopes on the "future". For the absurd, "Real generosity toward the future lies in giving all to the present". Nevertheless, the "absurd man" has not given up looking for "the image and the breath of life". Take Don Juan as an example, when the world declares that all kinds of morals are not carried out or even recited, the absurd people "return the equivalent of behavior to the result of behavior". And for Don Juan, this is the "number of pursuits of joy". Absurd people like Don Juan realize the limitations of time, so he pursues opportunities in limited time with women in his life. For the absurd, "effectiveness is the most important". While pursuing quantitative ethics, Tang Juan rejected the fetters brought by love, hatred, and hatred. When ordinary people are bound by "collective view", Tang Juan uses his own experience to give different definitions of love and liberate himself. In Camus's eyes, "Sex and possession, conquest and exhaustion are his cognitive style". Don Juan created absurd freedom for himself with his absurd passion and absurd resistance. Even if we "affirm our freedom for a certain period time, have no sense of future resistance and perish", the absurd man can still use his ideas to create hope for himself. "It is an illusion of another world that sustains people at this time. People's thoughts and destinies are no longer self-abandonment but are transformed into images and revitalized.

However, the passion for "absurd man" has not been able to get rid of the shackles of absurdity. "Despair" and "Confidence in the Meaning of Life" coexist in the "absurd man". These two conflicting tasks are reconciled in the "absurd man". It is not suicide that leaves the absurd, but Sisyphean revolt. "Rebellion" thus becomes the third "intention" of "absurd man". Regarding "resistance", the desperate situation faced by "absurd people" and "the desire to believe in the meaning of life" will continue to exist as the constituent elements of forming "resistance". In James E. Caraway's Albert Camus and the Ethics of Rebellion, the absurd situation is analogized to marriage and divorce: 'On the one hand, man is wed to the world; if he has been, he is required to experience in the world. There is no other arena. If the relationship between man and the world were rational, then the world in which man had to live would fulfill his basic needs'. However, in Sisyphus myth, Camus embodied the desperate situation faced by absurd people as a fence. Camus transformed the metaphysical concept of "absurdity" into an accessible scene and visual impact. The "fence" further embodies the absurd world picture. What is the "absurd fence"? At this time of discussion, Camus introduced the concept of "thick". Human reason, for things that it can not judge, "is to bring its consequences into the category of intelligence, to capture and record all aspects of irrational emotions, and to redefine its world." Through Camus's writing, we can realize that reason can't attempt a comprehensive understanding of things. The richness of the world completely separates what reason instinctively tends to fully understand from its conviction of such understanding. It is a futile effort to try to understand the whole picture of oneself: in Camus's writings, the efforts of these rationalities are "to depict one by one the various faces that the 'I' will assume, to depict the various faces that others give to the 'I', including its origin, education, enthusiasm or silence, greatness or inferiority". You can never grasp the whole picture of yourself. As Camus said, "I will never fill the gap between my belief in my existence and what I try to give to it." Isn't this example a good illustration of the absurd scenes in Sisyphus' mythology? Sisyphus pushed the boulders up to the top of the mountain again and again in vain. Is that not the same as what human reason has done? Thus Camus visualized the great absurdity as a fence. "Only by refusing to recognize and abandon life can I achieve peace, and the desire to win always runs against the fence that despises its impact."

5. Concluding Remarks

The myth of Sisyphus depicts a picture of Sisyphus, who was bruised all over the world and had to push the boulder to the top of the mountain because he was punished by the gods. But the boulder rolled down the mountain again and again before Sisyphus reached the top, and Sisyphus had no choice but to repeat the same behavior. The gods rejoiced in such cruel punishment, but Sisyphus

had already realized his absurd destiny. His efforts and ceaseless efforts were precisely the resistance to absurdity and the contempt for gods, which were the manifestation of human resistance to suffering and the absurd world.

It should be noted that although life is full of various tragedies, it is illogical and wrong to say goodbye to this ruthless absurd world with "suicide". Based on this, Camus opposed putting hope in the future, believing that the most important thing in life is not the quality of life, but learning to get more from life. For in Camus's view, to say "yes" to life is to give this absurd world a new meaning.

To sum up, Camus's questions in Sisyphus Mythology are still of great practical significance to the world where material wealth is extremely abundant and many people's spirits are very poor. They deserve our deep consideration.

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