

Superman from the perspectives of Nietzsche and Shamloo

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Abstract: Among the key concepts in the philosophy of Nietzsche is the concept of "Superman". Superman is considered a superior entity both in terms of its characteristics and its function in Nietzsche's thought. Regarding this concept, Shamloo, as a thinker and poet, has ideas similar to Nietzsche's philosophy and states them in his poetry. His poetry narrates freemen, not the players of power, in each time and place. It narrates a human who if deconstructs the rules dominant on a society and does not accept them over history of human beings, he is condemned to be silent. But, Shamloo creates a particular value for him by "saying no to what has been considered as sacred". The Supermen in Nietzsche and Shamloo both have such characteristics. The present study is to criticize and investigate the similarities and differences of the mentioned supermen considered by these two thinkers.

Key words: Human; Superior human; Superman; Nietzsche; Shamloo

1. Introduction

Rearing the concepts of heroes and myths among different nations indicates that humans want myths and heroes as tools for attaining their own ideals. However, these symbolic concepts can have abstract and imaginative forms which have never been represented as we have thought of (by our own criteria), and sometimes, they can be those we have been interested in and hoped of.

Among these concepts, the concept of "superman" or "Übermensch" deserves to be investigated because on the one hand, in Nietzsche's philosophy it has a key role, and on the other hand, in works and poems of Ahmad Shamloo, it has significantly been paid attention to as if what these two thinkers consider as sacred in their thoughts and works is the transcendental concept of humanity and drawing of a transcended human being called superman and take it as sacred. Although their supermen fight with accepted foundations of a society, both thinkers have persisted on founding the concept of superman as a fundamental concept.

2. Nietzsche's anthropology and the concept of superman

Principally Nietzsche founds the basis of knowledge and definition of "human" on "superior human". Although in a more initial way, there are descriptions of the existence of humanity. Different sociological figures such as merchants, politicians, priests, etc. are classified in the book *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. But, the reality is that all classes are dissatisfied and are in search a superior human. To

Nietzsche, this issue that what definition humanity has by nature. Even seeing human realized classes has no value for him. He thinks of that potential human who "should be", i.e. he views the ultimate humanity.

Nietzsche founds his main belief on the theory of superior human. He, before rearing the concept of superman, the superior human is an aim for him for attaining a completeness on which he has put the hypothesis. In his definition of the superior human is the person who has torn all chains, particularly those chains which human beings have fastened around themselves. Therefore, the superior human have always been threatened and imposed to sadness because he has torn the cliché of a society. Life is not something valuable for him and he have to spend his lifetime in isolation because his actions and behaviors is not compatible to those of others. He always hopes to see the day when he can do something and that day is very far reaching.

Maybe the first distinctive aspects of this superman is his awareness of his power, and this issue is directly related to the issue of Nietzsche's will to power and the issue that all actions and becoming are revolving around the axis of power. However, Nietzsche believes that "the superior human values his own internal power, praises that entity which has the power of being dominated over itself and knows the secrets of speaking and being silent, enjoys being strict to itself and being serious, as well as every serious and difficult matter" (Nietzsche, 2011).

The other issue is that valuing is conducted via the superior human (Nietzsche, 2008). But, this does not mean that he is very far from egocentrism "among those matters which the superior human cannot understand is egocentrism and in cases

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which a human of other kind touches such a things with his own hands, he will be tempted to deny its existence because it is difficult for him to imagine the entities which exert efforts to attract the good attention of others to themselves" (Nietzsche, 2008).

This superior human is in the heart of Nietzsche's Zarathustra and produces affection and hope (Nietzsche, 2010). But the reality is that his dissatisfaction with the incompleteness of the superior human is available. However, apparently, it can be such that superior humans understand the words of Zarathustra and seek for him. But, each of them has strengths and weaknesses in some aspects. The foundation of their lives is nothing. Therefore, in all wants of them, there is a fear which prevents them from taking risks in the path of the firm action and the risk of defeat and failure. At last, they are drawn to failure and their way of failure is ruthlessly declared via misunderstanding in the form of a symbolic song, but Zarathustra has not observed any superior man (Jaspers, 2004).

3. The concept of superman for Nietzsche

As observed, Zarathustra is hopeless of all human kinds because in every type, that completeness considered by Nietzsche cannot be observed. As a result, Nietzsche rears the concept of superman and quotes from Zarathustra that "superman is in my heart. He is the first and the only interest and attachment, not human, not the closest person to me, not the poorest one, not the most suffered one, and not the best one" (Nietzsche, 2010).

However superman is Zarathustra's point of attention, he remains the declaration of its characteristic vague and it can be said that superman is a range of ideal and transcendental presented as the ultimate human desire in this work. The desire to attain greatness and becoming far from minimalism and cultural poverty, however its particular forms is different in different people, the uncertainty of the pressure of the characteristics of superman provides this possibility that we search ourselves in his face. Maybe what Zarathustra states, the meaning of Earth is the meaning of superman. It means that the ultimate of the Earth. To attain the future, humans should go beyond of the current stage and for going from this home, he should "go deep" and sacrifice them. Zarathustra states that superman have not been available previously because humans should first learn how to sacrifice themselves. They should learn what is beyond them and sacrifice themselves in this path. Here, the concept of superman or as Nietzsche called it *Urbemensch*, appears: this word in fact indicates the meaning of super, beyond, high, and other side (Zamiran, 2011).

According to Heidegger, superman should not be considered as a creature like a human, he is the one who appears beyond the late human beings. Superhuman appears to fill the place of the dead god. Nietzsche states this issue as "previously, when they looked at far seas, they said God! But now, I have taught you to say superhuman. God is an

imagination. But, I do not want that your imagination of your creator go beyond. Can you create god? So tell nothing of gods. But superhuman can be created" (Nietzsche, 2005).

But, for the advent of a superman, some conditions are required and some grounds should be created. One of the grounds is too created and accepts self-confidence. "Self-confidence is the most powerful commitment and the most severe lash and the strongest wing" (Nietzsche, 2005).

And Zarathustra, on the one hand, rears this superman himself and warns them to be hateful of those who prefer those good things which are higher than those of themselves (Steiner, 2011). On the other hand, the superhuman is the man of danger. For attaining values which he wants, he should be a man of danger, and here, the "real philosopher" is at the same status where the superhuman is.

4. Characteristics of the superhuman

Now, it should be seen that what characteristics the superhuman should have. Surely, the superhuman is the developed type of the concept of the superior human discussed earlier in the present article. The superhuman has more transcendental characteristics; the characteristics some of which are positive and some are negative.

Nietzsche rejects kindness and mercy. Copleston states its reasons: "he rejects mercy not due to the fact that he prevents brutality, but due to the fact that he believes that it is contrary to with powerful life and energy. When a person shows mercy, he will lose his power; therefore, there is a kind of rejection of life in showing mercy. The mother reason which is more important than the previous one. In general, it can neutralize the Evolution Rule which is the Selection Rule, and it retains what deserves for death" (Copleston, 2009). The point is that the disabled will be disabled all time, although they want to make some part of smarts as their own fans (Nietzsche, 2009), but, at last, according to Nietzsche "human beings deserve their rights to the extent of their power" (Nietzsche, 2012). Another feature of the superman is his freedom; freedom from common commitments. "In such an age, being high and being for oneself as well as being separated and being responsible for one's own life are parts of the concept of "grandeur" and a philosopher reveals a part of his ideals when he declares "the greatest one is that who is the loneliest, the most hidden and deviant one; beyond goodness and badness, dominant over his virtues, filled with will. The meaning of grandeur is this" (Nietzsche, 2008: 180). However these all are characteristics of the superhuman which Nietzsche considers as the meaning of the earth.

5. Superman from Shamloo's point of view

Shamloo's view towards the superhuman is similar to that of Nietzsche and sometimes it is different from it. Shamloo's superhuman is shaped

during some stages. It means that this theory, as observed in his poetry, is the result of different processes. One of these processes is the statement of the rise of gods by Shamloo. By the rise of gods, he means the rise of values. Human beings have considered for themselves values by accepting god, and by neglecting gods, those values are neglected and gone with the wind: "Alas! Human beings, Alas/who have been accustomed to their pains for centuries/Alas! / I did not know/ and side by side/in the lanes of wars/we cried/gods have been removed and/there was only the name of humanity/the instrument of the seduction which/the most beautiful hero/by denuding his blood/ was motivated/Alas humanity who has been accustomed with his pain of centuries" (Shamloo, 2012).

Alas to the state of humanity! While it has been tried to save the name of humanity, in the battleships, human beings cry for the revival of human rights. But, alas, previously, gods and human values (which in fact are the meaning of humanity) have been removed and from humanity, only a name has been remained. In the next stage, it is necessary that the status of this neglected god and its related values be owned by somebody, i.e. human beings, by the force of the time, should follow some values. Here, Shamloo replaced the concept of humanity instead of god "humanity, is god/this is my words/ if disbelief or truth, this is my words'/humanity is god/yes! This is my words!" (ibid). However, it should be considered that "humanity" is a general term and every human being cannot be the case of Shamloo because otherwise, all human beings criticized by Shamloo would be among those qualified to be a superhuman considered by Shamloo (Shamloo should have a concept beyond this concepts, such as a superman). Regarding "god in the poetry of Shamloo", some believe that "god in Shamloo's poetry is a bizarre concept with a considerable presences which the poet have a binary treatment with it, a treatment consists of two elements of rejection and acceptance; rejection in its common form and acceptance at the presence of a unique power which challenges poet. This power sometimes is represented in the form of a human being and other time it is an independent concept" (Salajagheh, 2008). But, this article believes that if the poetry and thought of Shamloo be viewed periodically and in an evolutionary way, as discussed in this article, we will obtain a systematic view and integrated ideology. However, since the superman is instead of god; therefore, he has the power of creating: "who has created the world? /the universe/I/ who created it! / I have miraculous fingers/by which I can create the world/ I created the world/the Universe/how you created it? /how? / by childish mercy of emotions/ I have the power of seeing/the tiny balance of an impossible in the tiny particle of possibility/ who can say this word/by emotion I created the world/ as I did will/I have no prayer place/ adoring me is all "enjoying" (Shamloo, 2012). Here, the power of creating of the superhuman is substituted by god. Except the

superhuman who has the power of seizing the world, nobody can be creator. He even has many miracles for this issue and has been able to do something which is impossible in the world; i.e. creating. He is that one who will own the world (free and active will), but it should be seen that what are the characteristics of such a human?

6. Characteristics of Shamloo's superhuman

6.1. Superhuman as a powerful creator and enjoyer of will against dominant foundations

The Shamloo's narration of the superhuman is the narration of a free human who considers his crime in saying "no", and this "no" is very grandeur because saying no to what is sacred and absolute can distinct the dead in the form of living people with mountainous abiding people "not/one not/ be enough/who build my fate/ I cry lonely/ I speak of the digging my body into the earth" (ibid). Shamloo's superman in this poem is very similar to that of Nietzsche and his crime is saying no and cries of the digging of the body in the earth.

"I as a miserable slave, was deviant/and the path of Paradise/there was no funeral for goats/I need another kind of god/deserves a creator who is not abided to what is customized/I created another kind of god" (ibid). Shamloo's superhuman does not know the path of paradise and prosperity in funeral and considers it as the path of goats not a superman. The gods of superman are created by him.

I and you are one mouth/which with all its songs/can be sung in a beautiful way/I and you are one eye/which make the world more fresh every moment/a hate/ I have from everything which prevents us/limits us/and makes us to see/a hand which negates the wrong" (ibid). The union of the superman with his love can be represented in the most beautiful way and his view towards the world cover a beautiful color on the moment. He is who avoids everything which is negative and preventing. In fact, negative factors have no impact on him. Everything he wills is available for him. Everything he wants, he tries to negate it, and it is doomed to failure due to his will. "I and you are one passion/better than every flame/no failure can defeat us/because we are invulnerable" (ibid).

6.2. Miracle, justice, representative of resurrection and the love in the superman

"the beloved is in your life and soul part by part/you have believed in/and the resurrection is in your vision forever/ in the search/you stand firm and immortal/until your aimless travel will pass you/the earth is not without this kinds of shame/if a human timely/opened his amazed eyes/to live, to praise the high value of human beings/to live/to perform miracles/otherwise/your birth is not but a useless pain/it is a death/it is the passage of an unproductive train of your horses/it is far from the

desert of birth and death? / perform miracles/because it is your only manipulation/if you are just/which in this scope/wolfs are interested in tearing it unjustly/which tearing cannot/and justice is the final part of miracle" (ibid). The beloved and completeness is represented in the soul of the superhuman when he is in search of his desired thing. Life for the superiority of superhuman and his performing miracles, if not so, his birth is meaningless. Here, the superiority of human beings can be represented in his miracles; then, it is a waning for him to not forget the justice which indicates his power.

6.3. The companionship of the meaning of the world and superman

In Shamloo's view, the meaning of the world is accompanied with the superhuman and all demanders want him: " I came from the outside into the inside/from the landscape/from observed to observer/not in the form of a plant, not in the form of a butterfly/not in the form of a stone/not in the form of a lake/I was born in the form of "we"/ in the grandeur form of human in order that we can observe the beauty of spring and butterflies/can understand the pride of mountain and hear the grandeur of the sea/to extract the meaning of the world as much as we can/to give meanings to our actions/these major actions is outside of the power of trees, stones, and waterfalls" (ibid).

The superman transforms from a passive to an active one, to the form of a superior human being to see all parts of the world from the color of butterflies to the grandeur of mountains and seas in order that extract the meaning of the world with the opportunity he has been given. The grandeur is apparently is for mountains and seas, but, they cannot change affairs like the superior human; therefore, the active aspect is only for him.

Another place in his poetry, Shamloo describes the characteristics of the superman as:

Convincingly/it was slim/tall and narrow/like a difficult message/which in a word/with eyes/and questions/and honey/and an angry face/ from truth/wind/a man with the circulation of water/a brief man/who was his summary/earthly donkeys stare at your dead body.../ roads are awake with the memory of your steps/when you came to welcome the day/ however/the dawn/rose before you/when cocks/cried the morning cry" (ibid).

The meaning of the existence of such a superman is not understandable by all people. He is the summary of the concept of humanity and evils cannot understand his intention (according to Molavei: that was the reason convincing the evils/I am the sun of grandeur). Roads are his attention and he the important thing whose existence cannot be understood by people because he is higher than his society or an "untimely figure".

6.4. The companionship of the superman and construction and freedom

"Alas! If freedom song a song/little/like the throat of a bird/nowhere devastated wall remains/ long years cannot be/understanding/ every ruin is the symbol of the absence of humanity/the presence of humanity/is constructing" (ibid). Freedom is like a bird which should sing a song in order that the ruins will be reconstructed. This sing of freedom cannot be heard but by humanity's mouth. Therefore, the existence of the superhuman results in reconstruction, if freedom is an introduction.

6.5. The companionship of the superhuman with the oppressed

The superhuman gets his power and energy from the oppressed while he has their sorrow and he is the factor of soothing them. "However I am not afraid of the storm of worms/and the invasion of winds/however like steel I am firm for fighting/or my faith has been built from steel/of a bird sings at night/drops of tear fall from my eyes" (ibid, 124). "there is no sadness of the badness of those who are not kind to me/it has been gone for long/ from the time when I be sorrow from these nonsenses/but, they fly like birds from the sea.../ I run with barefoot and follow them/I return to their clean rick/tear comes to my eyes/however I am like steel firm in difficulties" (ibid).

6.6. Poetry is the instrument of the superman for fighting

Today, poetry is the sword of people/because poets/are themselves a branch of the jungle of people/not the flowers of this or that/the poet of today is not a foreigner/with common pains of people/he smiles with people's lips/and connects the pain and hopes of people/ with his bones" (ibid). The sword of the poet (the superman) is the poetry sprung from the people and the poet who is one of them.

At last, "Poetry is freedom/ is saving and liberty/there is a doubt that/at last/it will be certain/and a bullet which/is shot/. A sigh is for the sake of satisfaction/due to convenience/and firmness is a chair/when at last be kicked aside/ in order that the load of the body/be broken under the pressure/ if you want freedom/ this is the last way" (ibid).

Shamloo considers poetry as freedom from battles, and it is a question that its ultimate affair is an answer is standing on a chair of hanging if there is the objective of freedom and the path of freedom is desired. However, poetry is a tool by which the superman can fight in the path of freedom.

7. Comparison and conclusion

In comparing Nietzsche with Shamloo regarding the concept of superman, the first issue is that for Shamloo the characteristics of superman have been mentioned with more descriptions and closely. But,

"neither Nietzsche nor Zarathustra cannot describe the superman as appropriately as possible" (Zamiran, 2011). But, Shamloo as a poet, consider the instrument of a superman as his poetry. The poetry which is not an extraction of the life, but in this regard, Nietzsche does not speak much. For example, what is the instrument of the superman for improving the state of his time or questions as such? On the other hand, because Nietzsche does not believe in the mass of people and the power of the oppressed and only is interested in the race and superiority, it cannot be expected that his superman be sorrowful for the oppressed classes. But, as observed, the will to power, for Shamloo, rises from among people (paragraph 5) and is interested in helping the oppressed. However, this is a part of Shamloo's definition which his poetry raises from the people. And his power whose confirmation is only depends on the oppressed. But, regarding the *rise of god*, they have similar ideas. For Nietzsche "the biggest event of the recent events is the absence of god, or in other words, the faith in the Christian god has been meaningless" (Nietzsche, 1998), and this is the issue that Shamloo states: "gods have been removed and the name of humanity is the case..." in the second stage, i.e. after believing in the rise of the concept of god, both thinkers consider the concept of the superhuman in the place of the concept of god. The superman who is the meaning of the earth and should take the responsibility of valuing resulting from the rise of god. Other similar aspects of Shamloo and Nietzsche regarding the superman is his *reviving and having will* and he has all superior characteristics in himself and nobody can prevent him.

Performing miracles in affairs is another characteristics of this superman to which both thinkers agree. And in the next stage, his characteristics of the meaning of the earth are another issue which both thinkers believe a superman should have.

Construction and freedom is another sign of the realization of the superman for both Shamloo and Nietzsche. Construction is the result of freedom and these two depend on the existence of the superman who enjoys the whole will and all powers are in practice by him.

However, as observed, the thoughts of Shamloo and Nietzsche- however there are some differences- there are similarities regarding the issue of superman. Concerning differences, some points should be mentioned that Shamloo as a poet, naturally believes that poetry is the instrument for the superman and this is a normal case. It is not otherwise that the poet always searches his ideals and life in poetry. The other point is that in the superman's way and source of power, Shamloo considers them from the people and oppressed and this issue a more objective issue than Nietzsche's superhuman who seems more abstract and one cannot define him accurately.

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