

阿波羅與戴奧尼索斯共舞

——探討尼采哲學中的身體概念

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摘要

近年來，身體成為學術研究上的熱門話題。在日常生活中，身體修飾、健康管理等身體活動成為一種生活風格，運動也因此成為提升生活品質的流行趨勢。然而，在二元論 (Dualism) 的觀點下，意識是人類理性的展現，而身體則是人類慾望的泉源。這樣的存有學預設使「運動」的價值淪於慾望滿足。從對二元論身體概念產生的質疑出發，本文將藉由尼采 (Nietzsche, F. W., 1884-1900) 哲學中有關身體的論述，以相對於哲學傳統上視意識為理性表達的觀點來為身體做平反，進而重新檢視運動。

論述分為兩部分：

第一部分探討尼采哲學。首先，說明《悲劇的誕生》裡阿波羅與戴奧尼索斯的形象隱喻，兩者分別象徵著精神與秩序性以及官能與創造性；其次，探討《查拉圖斯特拉如是說》〈論身體的蔑視者〉一節，說明尼采提出「身體是一個大理性」此一命題，使身體取代意識作為人的存有論預設；第三，結合前兩部分，闡述尼采定義下的身體概念，提出大理性乃阿波羅精神與戴奧尼索斯精神的共舞，但象徵創造性的戴奧尼索斯精神在尼采的身體概念中扮演著更重的角色。

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第二部分透過運動經驗的探討與尼采身體論述進行對話。提出運動並非純粹的官能活動，而是「身」、「心」俱在的身體活動，是人類的「體知」(embodied thoughts) 表達。運動的體知表達和人們的身體操作具有密切關係，人們透過運動技藝 (sport skill) 學習與訓練的身體操作即可加深，進而掌握體知。體知有兩部分，一是人們較能掌握的具邏輯性合理推論的部分，此即阿波羅精神下的小理性發揮。然而，體知實有其不易掌握的部分，此即造就出身體創造性經驗的戴奧尼索斯精神。運動技藝的展現是阿波羅精神與戴奧尼索斯精神的結合，亦即大理性的運作，而最完美的運動技藝必然是兩者的和諧共舞。

研究結論：人類主動能動性之展現的最高價值是蘊含精神與官能的「身體」理性，即尼采的「大理性」。由於運動是人類「身心俱在」的體知表達，更由於身體的優先性，使運動經驗具豐富的創造性，更能展現人類「大理性」的最高價值。尼采的身體論述在運動經驗本質的揭露下獲得完滿體現，而運動在尼采哲學的闡釋下亦有了更積極的價值。

關鍵詞：阿波羅精神、戴奧尼索斯精神、大理性、體知

The Dance of Apollo and Dionysus - Inquiry into Concept of Body in Nietzsche's Philosophy

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Abstract

The body issue has become a trendy topic in academia. Physical activities such as body modification and health management have turned into a kind of life style in our everyday life. Sport as physical activity thus becomes the popular trend of improving life quality. Nevertheless, when it comes to mind and body, people have conventionally accepted the dualism. Under the ontological assumption of the dualism, the greatest value of sport is to satisfy human desire. The purpose of this paper is to discuss ontological assumption via the concept of body in Nietzsche's philosophy and search the positive meaning of sport.

This paper is divided into two parts. In the first part, I focus on the discussion of Nietzsche's philosophy. I probe into the metaphor of Apollo and Dionysus in Nietzsche's writing, *The Birth of Tragedy*, which suggests that the Apollonian reveals the spirit and the order, and the Dionysian reveals the sensualism and the creativity. Then with the discussion of "The Despiser of Body" in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, I try to illustrate that Nietzsche's discourse of "the body is a great reason" is to take body as ontological assumption instead of conventional concept of mind. With the elaboration of *The Birth of*

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Tragedy and *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, I argue that Nietzsche's discourse of great reason roots from the coexistence of the Apollonian and the Dionysian. Although both are essential to the understanding of Nietzsche's discourse of body, the Dionysian, with its living creativity, plays a more important role in Nietzsche's discourse.

In the second part of this paper, I discuss the experience of sports, and try to reflect what I have suggested theoretically in the first part. I argue that sport is more than absolute sense activity but an activity combination of "body" and "mind". It's an expression of embodied thought. There are two parts of embodied thought. One is logically inference part that people can control easier, and it's the amplification of small reason under Apollonian. However, embodied thought itself receives an uneasily-control part. It's the Dionysian that contributes the creative experience for body. The performance of sports skill is the combination of Apollonian and Dionysian, the operation of great reason. Due to the harmonious duet of the Dionysus and the Apollo, a perfect sports skill performance is thus presented.

Conclusion: The highest value performed by movable activeness of human is the "body" reason which contains spirit and sense, that is, so called great reason by Nietzsche. Owing to sports as the expression of embodiment thought of human, it makes the life world of sports filled with creativity, and showing the highest value of "great reason" of human. The arguments of body arose by Nietzsche gain completeness under disclosure of the nature of sports experience. And sports itself get a more positive value in the way expressed by Nietzsche.

Key words: Apollonian, Dionysian, great reason, embodied thought

I. Preface

The body issue has become a trendy topic in academia. The revelation of body by feminism stimulates the thinking of the social “existence” of body; the consumer culture of capitalism’s appropriation of “body” makes us aware of the issue of “body,”¹ which elevates the visibility of “body.” Moreover, Foucault’s critique of “bio-power” also makes people pay attention to the importance of “body” issue in contemporary social culture.

In addition, scholars’ claim of “bringing back body to sociology”² also makes scholars to further reflect the agency and subjectivity of body. In everyday life, all kinds of body experiences and related adjustment and decoration become a sort of life style. Drinking and eating, medical issue, fashion, leisure...all appeals for the contentment of body, as a result, sports as physical activities thus become the popular trend of improving life quality. Nevertheless, does it mean that body and sports issue have been fully understood and treated with appropriate manners?

The discourse of body in Philosophy has been influencing our viewpoint and perception of body. Traditionally, “body” is regarded as an “object” which is separated from mind yet dominated by mind. Mind, being the subject of

¹ Huang Jing-Lan, *History, Body, Nation- The Body Formation of Modern China (1895-193)*(Taipei: Lan Jin, 2000), 11-12.

² Shinning firstly proposes the idea of “Bring back body to Sociology,” Please see C. Shilling, *The Body and Social Theory* (London: SAGE, 1993); C. L. Cole, “Body Studies in the Sociology of Sports: a Review of the Field,” Ed. J. Oakley, and E. Dunning, *Handbook of Sport’s Studies*, (London: SAGE, 2000): 439-460.; Su-Ko Ye, *Souchow University’s Course outline of Body Sociology*, 2004.

human existence, is logical, spiritual and rational, while body is sensual, lustful and non-rational. Since Socrates worshiped mind as the highest value of life, body has been categorizing to the mysticism which can not be understood by mind or investigated by the third party.³ The thought of “mind only” summits when Descartes announced the famous saying of “I think therefore I am” in the 17th century.

Under the concept of body and mind of dualism, mind is the presentation of human reason and body is the fountain of human desire. In modern society, “reason” is regarded as the highest value of human agency and it shows while dealing with contentment of irrational desire of body.⁴ Hence, body is not only for the service of mind but also the burden of mind. Under such assumption, the significance of “sport” as contemporary popular culture of emphasized body intimacy is fulfilling desire. When asking what can sport offers us, the most common reply would be: the physical function of health, leisure and entertainment support or the nourishment of psychological desire. However, is there no reason at all in body? From the doubt of body concept of dualism, this article will take related body discourse in Nietzsche’s philosophy to compare the concept of regarding mind as rational expression in philosophical tradition, and further reexamine sport. This article mainly revolved the philosophical issue of “body is a great reason.” First, it takes the allegory of Apollo and Dionysus in *The Birth of Tragedy* to explain the characteristics of mind and sense. Secondly, it discusses Nietzsche’s narration of body as a great reason in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Thirdly, with abovementioned two parts, it narrates the meaning of body in Nietzsche’s definition. Finally, it proceeds to the text of

³ Gong Zhou-Jun, *The Dialectics of Body and Imagination- Nietzsche, Husserl and Merleau-Ponty* (Diss. of National Taiwan University, 1998), 53.

⁴ Ye Chi-Zheng, *The Fighting Game of Tradition and Modern* (Taipei: Jyului, 2001), 7-10.

sports experience and discusses how the text of sport experience has realized Nietzsche's body discourse. Hence, the values of sport will be evaluated.

II. Nietzsche's Body Discourse

A. *Apollo and Dionysus*

In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche applies the symbol of Apollo and Dionysus from Greek mythology to explicate the rise of Greek art and culture. Nietzsche thinks that Greek people have very sensitive feeling towards the darkness, contradiction and misery of life. They feel that the world is full of horror and disaster and the reason that Greek people can conquer pessimism and express vitality is due to tragic spirit. The so-called tragic spirit is original from Greek's two natural art spirits' orientation,⁵ that is, Apollonian and Dionysian. In Greek mythology, both Apollo and Dionysus are the sons of Zeus, but the two brothers descending from different mothers have distinctive oppositional characters.

Apollo is the bright Sun God, the symbol of external and modeling ability. He represents himself by individual image. The presentation of his individualization theory is to divide the visional and unsteady world elements into units and put them into an order and understandable interrelation, so people can locate themselves accordingly.⁶ In the world of Apollo, everything has its image and order, people get to know the nature via "images," yet these

⁵ Chen Gu-Yen, *On Nietzsche* (Taipei: Tang Shan, 1989), 71.

⁶ Du Li-Yen, *Nietzsche: The philosophy who reevaluates Everything* (Taipei: Mercury, 2002), 105.

images or orders have the power of restriction. Thus, people's behaviors have to be moderate and they have to know themselves. "Dream" is the essential element of Apollo's world, in the dream, people enjoy the dreamlike yet somehow true joyfulness, the tragic essence of life has been weakened, and the real world's cruel faces of darkness, ugliness and contradiction have also been temporarily neglected.

Dionysus symbolizes the adventurous vitality. Unlike Apollo, the function of Dionysus is to destroy all images and orders in the world and makes the world return to an unsteady state so the universal truth can be revealed. In the carnival of Dionysus, as much as the drunken state of the human beings, he is in the undivided state without images. In Dionysus's world, everything is about chaos and is without order; people feel the true nature with overdone and self-forgetful behaviors that are without restriction. "Drunken state" is the essence of Dionysus world. In the drunken state, people feel as if being granted with magic. No matter how cruel and miserable the world is, the harmony can be found. The wall standing between people also dissolves in the drunken state, and leaves nothing but the understanding after seeing through the world.

From the development of Greek art culture, Apollo "expresses all the joyfulness, intelligence and its beauty of the external world"⁷ Apollo always makes people feel the vision of dream with profound pleasure. It is shown on how the "individualized man" confirms its ego by the illusion of external image, and hence has the aesthetic function of "beauty," which is embodied in ancient Greek and Roman's decoration art and Homer's epic. As for Dionysus, he is "the natural joy that arises from a human's foremost inner basis at the

⁷ Zhou Gou-Peng, *Nietzsche at the Turning Point of Twentieth Century* (Taipei: Linyu, 1992), 36.

time when individualized theory collapses.”⁸ That is, the pleasure comes from the integration of all things when an individualized man returns to the reality by self negation. It produces the aesthetic function of magnificent beauty and realizes in music and dance. While Apollo finds solace from splendid image making, Dionysus thrusts the illusion of external beauty in order to get close to the reality of the thing itself and look into the tragic life. Thus, the enhancement of Apollonian is the establishment of self image and world order. People have to properly restrain their behaviors, preventing violent stimulation in order to keep the gentle outline of dream. Such sublime divinity makes people yearn for the eternal spirit and presents the ideal sublime spirituality and order. On the contrary, Dionysian means the destruction of image and order, the wild and indulgent lust, which can not produce the holy feeling of respect. However, the presentation of God’s “humanity” makes people seize the momentary body sense and press close to the life. In addition, the logic without order also makes the world have more possibilities and thus be near to existence and shows the embodiment and creativity of human world. (See **figure 1**)

	Dionysian	Apollonian
The symbolic of the spirit	Embodiment	Spirituality
	Creativity	Order
The function of the spirit	Body awareness	Image thought

figure 1

⁸ Zhou Gou-Peng, *Nietzsche at the Turning Point of Twentieth Century*, 36.

B. Body Reason

Nietzsche brought up that the concept of the world is originally unknown chaos. People set an anchor point of knowing the world. It fabricates the term “subject,” to state consolidated faith from the highest feeling of reality at several different times. The unity is formed by highlighting one of the factors and it excludes others in the process.⁹ This kind of narration made for comprehension of mind and spiritual activity and the subject of reason is what Descartes means by “cogito” and ego is formed by “cogito.” In the logic of reason, ego is an eternal existence that does not disappear with the diversity of variations.

Nevertheless, Nietzsche proposes that subject is a multiply unit that constantly changes, moves, and splits and integrates. This multiply unit is our body. In “On the Discontent of Body” of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche speaks via Zarathustra:

“The body is a great reason, a plurality with one sense, a war and a peace, a herd and a shepherd. An instrument of your body is also your little reason, my brother, which you call “spirit”--a little instrument and toy of your great reason.”

“I,” you say, and are proud of the word. But greater is that in which you do not wish to have faith--your body and its great reason: that does not say “I,” but does “I.”¹⁰

Nietzsche states that, the fallacy of traditional philosophy is to see the

⁹ F. Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, Trans. Guo Peng Zhou, (Taipei: Owl, 2000), 374.

¹⁰ F. Nietzsche, “Thus Spoke Zarathustra,” *The Portable Nietzsche*, Ed. W. Kaufmann (New York: The Viking Press, 1954), 145 °

reality of “think” as the reality of “in itself,” and consider mind as the “the highest-value state of life.” Human beings deconstruct to be spiritual, and the body has no necessary to be existent. However, in the form of “think”, what people gain is more than the reality of a false front, and mind is just a little part of reasoning evidence of the highest-value state of life.

Here, Nietzsche reverses the subjectivity between mind and body, the body not only construct the thought, but the spiritual activities, thus language, idea, or several “spiritual” expressions are the attached phenomena.¹¹ Secondly, he rewrote the reason by body, because that only when the reason acts as the reasoning role of body is the living reason.¹² Compared with mind, “The phenomenon of the body is the richer, more distinct, more graspable phenomenon... thus, we ask the body, refuse the deposition from the allergic brain.”¹³

Under such meaning, the subject is no longer a changeless mind, but constantly appear or destroy body. The highest-value of life, and the most complete reason shows up by body. Of course, the body Nietzsche mentioned is not the sense under the meaning of empiricism:

*“Instruments and toys are sense and spirit: behind them still lies the self. The self also seeks with the eyes of the senses; it also listens with the ears of the spirit....It controls, and it is in control of the ego too. Behind your thought and feelings, my brother, there stands a mighty ruler, and unknown sage--whose name is self. In your body he dwells; he is your body.”*¹⁴

¹¹ Zhou-Jun Gong, *The Dialectics of Body and Imagination - Nietzsche, Husserl and Merleau-Ponty*, 27.

¹² Martin Heidegger, “The Metaphysics of Nietzsche,” Trans. Wang Ji-Hong, *The Phantom of Nietzsche*, (Beijing: Social Science Paper, 2001), 219.

¹³ F. Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 379-380.

¹⁴ F. Nietzsche, “Thus Spoke Zarathustra,” 146.

Nietzsche referred “self” to “body subject”, to distinct from the ego under mind subject. Self relates closely to ego, but it’s over ego. Not the same as in the tradition, which sees body as a simple sense, Nietzsche brought out that physical sense and spiritual mind are involved in the body. While Heidegger analyzed the aesthetic thought, he mentioned, “When Nietzsche talked about physiology, despite that he put stress on the physical state. However physical state is somehow kind of spiritual level, and also something psychology.”¹⁵ The body is, a war and a peace, a herd and a shepherd, a spiritual and a sense, and several level of “thinking” came from the living “life experience” by the “body”. We discovered that, due to the intimate relations in the same experienced world, the body contacts with reality in a complicated and complete way, which is closer to the original existence of human being.¹⁶

C. The Body Concept of Nietzsche

Combine the metaphors of “Apollonian ” and “Dionysian ” in *The Birth of Tragedy*, and the argument of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, we can discover that Apollonian shows as image thought in human body, while Dionysian recognizes the sense awareness of human. The traditional mind philosophy considers that the subject of human about the mind is the enhancement of Apollonian. However, the thinking activity processed by ego for Nietzsche is merely the small reason revealing, that the real great reason, or the whole reason is the straightforward “non-mind” operation within a self. The ultimate media to reveal the great reason is body. (See **figure 2**)

¹⁵ Gou-Peng Zhou, *Nietzsche at the Turning Point of Twentieth Century*, 202.

¹⁶ Zhou-Jun Gong, *The Dialectics of Body and Imagination - Nietzsche, Husserl and Merleau-Ponty*, 30.

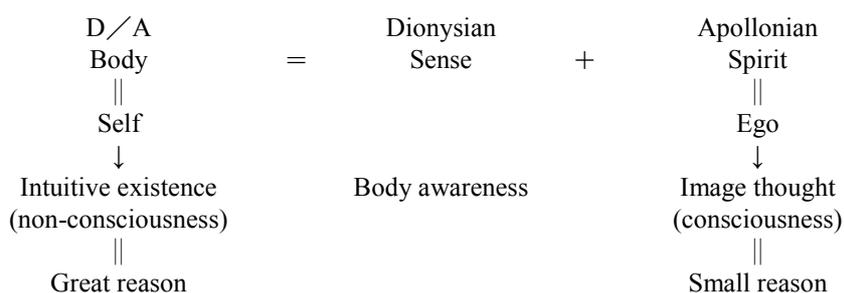


figure 2

In the view of Nietzsche, the body contains Apollonian and Dionysian simultaneously. And the operation of great reason depends on the amplification of these two spirit. They are so close to each other and live by each other. However, the Dionysian plays a more important role. Because that “Apollo is a transcending genius of individualized principle, only through him, we could get away from the illusion. And the mysterious hooray of Dionysus penetrates the barrier of individualization, open up an avenue back to the parent.”¹⁷ We people form our image and convey ourselves, communicate with others through Apollonian. And we are aware that the concrete life situation through Dionysian, the figure and law constructed by human beings can innovate all the time and free from ossification. Lacking of the image formation of Apollonian, we are going to lose the media to communicate with others and thus get into lonely-self confusion. While without the Dionysian, the overall image, language and other mechanism of expression are going to lose the function of interaction and the ultimate sense of existence.

Therefore, when Nietzsche said, “god is dead.” he put the spiritual mind supremacy to an end, he also announced,¹⁸ “I only embrace the God who can

¹⁷ F. Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 99.

¹⁸ F. Nietzsche, “Thus Spoke Zarathustra,” 153.

dance.” Only when we offer the body as the material, the mind reason can make out the law and order.¹⁹ They depend on each other, and finally present by body.²⁰

Previous demonstration turned over the pre-set of traditional idea about existence, the human subject is body, not the Descartes “think” subject. The body under Nietzsche’s idea is also more than absolute sense; it includes both sense and mind, physical and spiritual body. The absolute mind reason is part of the human reason, the body, is the overall “great reason” for human beings.

III. Apollo Dances with Dionysus

Experience is about“ the image, imagination, sense, feeling... between subject and object.” If you want to make sure that the experienced introspect is not absolute concept description or research on idealism, then you need to clarify, that all the nature of sport experience is about body, and based on body. It makes the sports imply the mental meaning, because that“the body is also spiritual and physical.”²¹ “Body” is not only the middle of human and sports world, but the origin of sport experience.

The life world of sport is multidimensional. People under such a multi-existent world, are usually making a deep operation into all kinds of

¹⁹ M. Onfray, *The Art of Enjoyment - On Materialism of Enjoyment*. Trans. Lui Han-Qyun (Beijing: Sanlian, 2003), 21.

²⁰ Zhou-Jun Gong, *The Dialectics of Body and Imagination - Nietzsche, Husserl and Merleau-Ponty*, 31.

²¹ I-Ming Lui has clarified abovementioned statement while discussing research of sports experience, that is, under the assumption that the essence of experience is body, the discussion of sports experience can be initiated. Please see I-Ming Lui, *On Philosophy of Sports* (Taipei: Shida Book, 2005), 104.

sense. It amplified the dynamic and static side of body totally; to arise the perceptual ring, going through “happiness” and “bitterness,” to know well about concrete body struggle under transformation between “mind” and “non-mind,” to strongly feel the interflow of noise and loneliness over “other” and “I”. People being thrown to the sports world, we always stand at the moment, to go from “virtual” to “real” with a living body, immerse ourselves in the tremendous time flow within retention and protention.²² This abundant experience reminds us of that sport is more than absolute sense activity but an activity combination of “body” and “mind” under meaning given by Nietzsche.

Sport is the way of expression by a sportsperson implanted in a body. It’s an expression of embodied thought²³. A certain part of embodied thought is logically inference one that people can gain in mind. It’s the amplification of small reason under Apollonian. The academic knowledge of sports for example are the logically inference part of embodied thought. However, the logical inference is only a part of embodied thought. Embodied thought itself got an uncertain part. It’s the Dionysian that contributes the creative experience for body. The performance of sports skill is the combination of Apollonian and Dionysian, the operation of great reason. (See **figure 3**) We can see the ultimate amplification of absolute sense in sports, or the careful inference of absolute mind. But an amazing turn, a critical smash, an invulnerable passing, and a clever tactic practicing, a perfect sports skill performance must be the accommodation of Apollonian and Dionysian. Due to the harmonious duet of the Dionysus and the Apollo, a perfect sports skill performance is thus presented.

²² I-Ming Lui, *On Philosophy of Sports*, 113-115.

²³ I-Ming Lui, *On Philosophy of Sports*, 113-115.

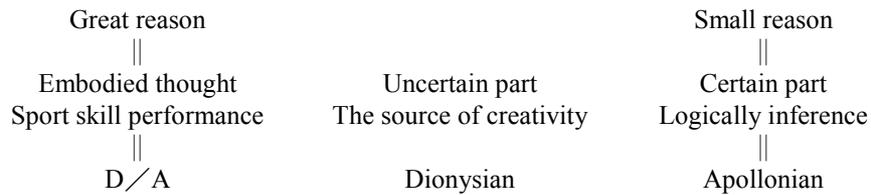


figure 3

IV. Conclusion

After discussing the body concept of Nietzsche, it is brought out that if the reason can be seen as the highest value performed by movable activeness of human, then the reason is more than absolute mind reason. But the “body” reason contains body and mind, that is, so called great reason by Nietzsche.

After discussing the experience of sport, the researcher finds that, owing to sports as the expression of embodiment thought of human, it makes the life world of sports filled with creativity, and showing the highest value of “great reason” of human.

Due to this confrontation between philosophical statement and experience, researcher concludes that, the arguments of body arose by Nietzsche gain completeness under disclosure of the nature of sports experience. And sports itself get a more positive value in the way expressed by Nietzsche.

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