

Cambridge Elements

Elements in the Philosophy of Søren Kierkegaard

edited by
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KIERKEGAARD, SOCRATES, AND THE MEANING OF LIFE

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Abstract: Kierkegaard's lifelong fascination with the figure of Socrates has many aspects, but prominent among them is his admiration for the way Socrates was devoted to his divinely ordained mission as a philosopher. To have such a destiny, revealed through what one loves and is passionate about as well as through a feeling of vocation, is a necessary condition of leading a meaningful life, according to Kierkegaard. Examining what Kierkegaard has to say about the meaning of life requires looking at his conception of "subjective truth," as well as how he understands the ancient ideal of "amor fati," a notion that Nietzsche would subsequently take up, but that Kierkegaard understands in a manner that is distinctly his own, and that he sought to put into practice in his own existence. Our life is a work of art, but we are not the artist.

Keywords: meaning, truth, socrates, faith, existentialism

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