TIME, TRANSCENDENCE AND REALITY IN THE FIRST VOLUME OF SCHOPENHAUER'S *THE WORLD AS WILLE AND REPRESENTATION*

A dissertation submitted to the Caspersen School of Graduate Studies

Drew University in partial fulfillment of

the requirements for the degree,

Doctor of Letters

Eugene R. Nasser

Drew University

Madison, New Jersey

May 2015

ABSTRACT

Time, Transcendence and Reality in the First Volume of Schopenhauer's *The World as Wille and Representation*

Doctor of Letters Dissertation by

Eugene R. Nasser

The Caspersen School of Graduate Studies
Drew University May 2015

The first volume of Arthur Schopenhauer's (1788-1860) *The World as Will and Representation* (1818, WWR) contains the heart of his philosophical theory. It alone provides an exposition of his theoretical system. The genesis of all his later works can be traced back to here, his magnum opus. Intended to be a complete system, Schopenhauer's exposition spans the range of the discipline: epistemology, metaphysics, aesthetics and ethics.

This dissertation examines the significant role Schopenhauer assigns time in the WWR. To explain inner and outer experience, he maintains two distinct senses of temporality. On the objective side, understanding is limited to causality where it is tied to perception. Subjectively the recurring present can be accessed, where observation is optional. This general divide is examined over the four books and appendix of the WWR. His earlier works written before the WWR are also taken into account, *On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason* (1813), *On Visions and Colors* (1816).

Over the course of discussion, I argue Schopenhauer carries existential value through his system using the Eternal Now (EN). The Now traces itself back to the first

book of the WWR, where he claims there can be no object without a subject. This provides Schopenhauer's Now with an Eastern quality, in addition to the Platonic and Kantian ones. Behind the Now is the life-force and singular reality of the universe, the *Wille-zum-Leben*. Schopenhauer claims what gives us life can also destroys us if we are not careful. Transcendence from temporal violence is possible through the temporal faculty. Recognizing the Wille in other objects as the felt Now within themselves, the subject can leave causal understanding behind in what I frame as the Aesthetic Now (AN). I close by arguing modern science has demonstrated Schopenhauer's placement of the subject before the object to be fundamentally correct.

For my Sara

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My deepest thanks go to Professor Corrington. A true mentor in every sense. This project could not have been completed without Professor Lawler. I am forever grateful she jumped on board. I am indebted to Ken Stunkel, whose years of insightful friendship have left a lasting impression. Finally, to my parents for their unwavering support over the years, I am eternally grateful.

INTRODUCTION

Schopenhauer as a Philosopher of Time, Influences
and Secondary Sources

1. Schopenhauer's Philosophy of Time

Today, there are two distinct approaches concerning the relationship between temporality and ontology. The divide is over what sense of time should be included in ontological understanding. The first is the presentist or tensed view. Time is broken into past, present and future. The present is given ontological priority since it changes over time. Contrary to this view, the eternalist side proposes that the metaphysical value of objects does not change, neither can they be seen. What is needed is a "moving Now" to explain temporal phenomena. I agree with Doley, this is a narrower definition, restricting the future to the way things are right now.[1]

Under these presentist-eternalist parameters, in this essay I examine Arthur Schopenhauer's use of time in the first volume of *The World as Will and Representation* (1818). He maintains two separate notions of time over four hierarchically understood and interconnected books that span the discipline of philosophy, beginning with epistemology, followed by metaphysics, aesthetics and ethics. The first is causal, where duration is linked to perception. The second is the Now. Here the recurring present is linked to feeling the *Wille-zum-Leben*, extending into the sphere of non-representation.

To resolve the ultimate question of where reality exists, Schopenhauer claims knowledge of the world, and oneself, rests on the subject's existence. Being *alive* is

[1] Yuval Dolev, *Time and Realism*; *Metaphysical and Antimetaphysical Perspectives* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2007) viii, 5-8.

the necessary condition for *everything* else. When the Now of being stops rolling, so does the recurring present behind our phenomenal knowledge. Knowledge, to be created, flows from the subject who perceives the object over the causal gap. With reality of the world held as causal representations in the mind, consciousness is of a twofold nature. As it turns out, current scientific discoveries strengthen Schopenhauer's starting position, directing toward new areas of possibilities inquiry into ultimate reality if it is not the Wille.

Schopenhauer calls his chief work the "unfolding of a single thought."[2] The title expresses his belief in the twofold nature of consciousness: that the world *is* Wille and is *known* as representation. Written at thirty years of age, the 1819 edition of the WWR stood on its own for twenty-five years before Schopenhauer added a second volume in 1844. This accompanying volume does not bring with it a complete overhaul of the first edition. Even with further revisions to the second volume in 1859, of the first volume he says, "I have altered nothing. This I have done because I wanted to guard against spoiling the work of my earlier years by the carping criticism of old age. What might need correction in this respect will set itself right in the reader's mind with the aid of the second volume."[3]

As the genesis for all his later works, I have chosen to focus on the first edition of the WWR. Among his works, it alone possesses this foundational character. Sustained focus here greatly assists in exposing the temporal depth behind his following, more popular works. Along with the second volume, this includes *On the Will in Nature* (1836, second and revised edition, 1854), *On the Freedom of the Will* (1839)

[2] Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, trans. E.F.J. Payne (Indian Hills, Colorado: The Falcon's Wing Press, 1958), 285; §54. (WWRI henceforth)
[3] WWRI, xxii.

and *On the Basis of Morality* (1840), *Parerga and Paralipomena* ("Appendices and Omissions," 1851).

Nothing I directly attribute to Schopenhauer has been purposely italicized. If there is emphasis in a passage he wanted it so. I analyze the temporal interconnectedness among the purposeful construction of the four books that makeup the WWR. This is performed in conjunction with the spirit of Schopenhauer's pedagogical advice in the preface to the first edition for understanding the WWR. This requires some discussion of the philosophy of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), the Upanishads, his preceding doctoral dissertation *On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason* (1813), and *On Visions and Colours* (1816).

I agree with Young that Schopenhauer should be regarded as the first existential philosopher.[4] He espouses a system of dual consciousness with different notions of time, where the existential Now presupposes causal time. The Now carries value on the side of the subject, opposed to causal knowledge of an object held by the subject. Causality explains the *how*, in contrast to the Now or *why* of life. E.F.J. Payne, the heroic translator of Schopenhauer's works into English, remarks in the introduction to the WWR is it, "an organically consistent structure of thought based on inner and outer *experience*, and culminating in three towers, in the metaphysics of nature, of art or aesthetics, and of morality."[5] I am using his translation, as it has become the standard go-to over the years.

[4] Julian Young, *Schopenhauer* (London: Routledge, 2005), 228.
[5] WWRI, xv; in the *Translator's Introduction*.

Time's Blueprint in the WWR

Schopenhauer begins Book I by proclaiming he is a radical idealist, one that fully admits the realities of the outside world. Our intuitive, causal understanding of the world understands objects as interacting in time and space (i.e., Kantian *a priori*). Given that his philosophy is founded on the existence of the subject, Schopenhauer does not assume an absolute sense of time outside of the subject. This means casual knowledge cannot be teased apart from causal time in from the subject's perception of the world.

In Book II he employs another inductive argument, focusing on the side of the subject. This sense of time is not causal-visual but independent of perception and recurring, what I call the Eternal Now (EN). This Now refers to the singular *Wille-zum-Leben*, the pulsating energy across the universe everywhere at the same time. One of the results of the inherent strife in nature is the hierarchy of nature or Chain of Wille. I maintain Schopenhauer understands an objective manifestation of the Wille in four distinct ways, the most important as consciousness. For this reason humans sit at the summit of the Wille's objectification.

In Books III and IV, aesthetics and ethics, Schopenhauer deductively argues from the positions established in the first and second books. In book three, he offers a contemplative way briefly to escape the pressures of living. Unlike Plato's thoroughly idealistic meaning of an Idea, Schopenhauer works from intuitive causality then back to the inner EN. After acceptance of *everything* as a *single* Wille, the always present becomes replaced by the ontological Now in consciousness. He appropriates another

Platonic term, the *better consciousness*, to describe this inner change in the awareness of an object from representation to Idea.

Since the Wille is recognized as an eternal archetype based on the form, matter is left behind for the eternal source of the object located in the viewer. Here is the Schopenhauerian Idea, shedding the perceptual-material of causality. This places the viewer in a state of contemplation, what I call the Aesthetic Now (AN). The medium used by the artistic genius limits how close the AN brings us to the EN. Through its formlessness, music stands apart from the visual arts as the closest to the EN. With no directly accompanying object, Schopenhauer does not consider music an Idea but a direct copy of the Wille itself.

The Now is preferred because it temporarily disables behavior motivated by the Wille. For all intensive purposes, this is what he considers it to be *thinking*. How do we know when a person is thinking? Schopenhauer's identification in the second book, that an act of Wille corresponds with perceived bodily movement,[6] prompts me to emphasize *The Thinker* by Auguste Rodin (1840-1917). This is a visual representation of the Wille restrained for a short time with the intellect.

It is this same higher consciousness that informs action. Ethical action is achieved by recognition of the eternal behind all objects in nature. Between the extremes of asceticism and egoism, salvation is a hard won ally from the pressure of the Wille's unending wants. This gives the morality of Wille a negative character, producing a view of action endowed with a sense of karma distinctly Schopenhauer's own. Eternal justice always to cause no further harm to the already inherent

[6] See Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 192.

suffering of existence. This explains the establishment of civil society through the evolution of Wille, where the bureaucracy of State is the temporal enforcement of a universal measure. From this live and let live approach, he understands virtuous behavior as acting in accordance with one's unchanging character.

At the end of the essay, Schopenhauer's solution to the problem of realism is addressed with respect to modern scientific findings. As it turns out, his twofold nature of consciousness is directly on the mark. The experimental conclusions of quantum physics have demonstrated the veracity of his general epistemic starting point to be correct. Hammer, who accuses him of embracing a pessimistic conception of time, but Schopenhauer's cognitive duality avoids his charge of a radical form of nihilism.[7] Superseding any argument to the contrary, without a knowing subject there is no objective reality to be had.

The three major philosophical influences on Schopenhauer while writing the WWR were Platonic, Kantian and the Upanishads of Hinduism. He openly borrows from all three, independently reaching conclusions of self-denial strikingly similar to Buddhism. Until recently, there has been less attention paid to the equally important Eastern ideas in the WWR. A comprehensive understanding of the WWR is not possible without taking the Indiological influences into account. Focusing on time, I am happy to report, naturally mends this oversight. Schopenhauer owes his account of the sublime, the feeling of life, on the Hindu conception of it, traceable to the position of no object without subject.

[7] Espen Hammer, *Philosophy and Temporality from Kant to Critical Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 2011), 110.

2. Appendix on Kant

One of Schopenhauer's tips for understanding the WWR is to read the appendix first, *Criticism of the Kantian Philosophy.* While Schopenhauer did not change the content when he issued the second volume, he added a pedagogical appendix to the first volume. It critically outlines the two editions of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781, 1787).

In the history of philosophy, Schopenhauer considers Kant the second master after Plato. It was not Rene Descartes (1596-1650) but Kant who marks the arrival of modern philosophy. Kant defied his age, Descartes did not. "Speculative theology and the rational psychology connected with it received from him their death-blow,"[8] nothing short of the overthrow of the scholastic philosophy.[9] The *Appendix* opens with a quotation from Voltaire: "It is the privilege of true genius, and especially of the genius who opens up a new path, to make great mistakes with impunity."[10]

The Thing-in-Itself and the Transcendental Aesthetic

Schopenhauer locates two places where Kant's insights are deepest. The first is the notion of an object's thing-in-itself or ultimate reality. The second is Kant's Transcendental Aesthetic, demonstrating time as the avenue to transcendence. These are discussed in turn, followed by Schopenhauer's criticisms.

Kant invents the famous distinction between *a priori* and *a posteriori* knowledge to achieve this usurpation of an ideological era. Before any experience, we have a priori knowledge of space and time. Then there is *a posteriori* knowledge constructed through experience, along the *a priori* parameters. The predetermined

[8] WWRI, 423; *Appendix: Criticism of the Kantian Philosophy*.
[9] WWRI, 422; *Appendix.*
[10] WWRI, 413; *Appendix.*

construct of the brain holds back our ability to determine an objective reality outside the observer. As a result, there will always remain something about an object we can never understand, the noumena behind the phenomena, the thing-in-itself (*Ding an sich*). Schopenhauer proclaims: "*Kant's greatest is the distinction of the phenomenon from the thing-in-itself*...there always stands the *intellect*, and that on this account they can not be known according to what they may be in themselves."[11]

Schopenhauer believes, at base, that the ultimate limiting factor preventing us from experiencing ultimate reality is our inescapable knowledge of the temporal. He considers Kant's *a priori* placement of time in the subject as the highest achievement in human thought.[12] Before Kant "we were *in* time; now time is in us."[13]

Schopenhauer considers Kant's Transcendental Aesthetic (TA) section of the *Critique* to be no less important.[14] By itself, it "is a work of such merit that it alone would be sufficient to immortalize the name of Kant."[15] The incontestable truth the TA exposes is that we "are *a priori* conscious of a part of our knowledge."[16] We are aware there is something about an object we do not know. This opens up a way for Schopenhauer to maintain a dual understanding using differing senses of time.

---

[11] WWRI, 417-8; *Appendix*.
[12] WWRI, 448; *Appendix.*
[13] WWRI, 424; *Appendix*.
[14] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965). 65-91. For the TA in the first edition see A17-49. In the second, B31-73; subsections II, II and IV, and Conclusion the Transcendental Aesthetic are added to B.
[15] WWRI, 437; *Appendix*.
[16] WWRI, 437; *Appendix.* Schopenhauer goes on to explain that "Kant did not pursue his thought to the very end, especially in not rejecting the whole of the Euclidean method of demonstration."(438) This is interesting because, as we will see in the first chapter, Schopenhauer is highly attuned to the fact that geometrical proofs on paper do not coincide with empirical realities in three dimensional space.

Kant's Missteps

Schopenhauer's indebtedness does not prevent him from holding back stinging criticism of Kant. He locates Kant's major mistake as the suppression of the unavoidable idealism that created major inconsistencies, exposed by comparing the first (1781) and second (1787) editions of the *Critique*.[17] Beginning from the subject, Schopenhauer thinks the first edition of the *Critique* is the only valuable one. To achieve an architectonic symmetry in his philosophy, Kant reverses the normal order of thinking in the second edition. This results in the obscure impenetrability surrounding the second issuing of the *Critique*.

Kant's new position in the second *Critique* suffers from the inescapable collapse into idealism. This is done by the creation of twelve categories of the understanding that drive perceptual understanding. This not only failed to reconcile contradictions between observation and abstract concepts,[18] but created a "strange and complicated"[19] faculty of knowledge. In addition to the twelve categories, this includes the transcendental synthesis of imagination, of the inner sense, the transcendental unity of apperception, and also the schematism of the pure concepts of the understanding.

How do the categories, that exist simultaneously with experience, combine to explain all future possibilities? How exactly do the twelve categories account for all previous experiences? How do the categories make the unknown known? How do the categories configure in order to explain an instant? What is the relationship between

[17] WWRI, 435; *Appendix.* Wicks, 11.
[18] WWRI, 442; *Appendix.*
[19] WWRI, 442; *Appendix.*

the abstract and the concrete? Why does reason separate us from all other life? These questions remain unanswered.[20]

Not demonstrating the difference between the representation in the mind and the object producing the representation, Kant's distinction is unfounded.[21] Preferring logical relationships to the truths of perception, this causes Kant to accept, rather than to reject, the Euclidian method of demonstration.[22] Schopenhauer's criticism here against Kant applies to Plato's use of geometry as evidence that Forms exist. This takes place in the *Republic* (510-511, right before sustained discussion of the allegory of the cave in Book VII), *Meno* (80-1; 97) and *Phaedo* (106e). The "doctrine of the categories as concepts *a priori* also falls to the ground; for they contribute nothing to perception."[23] Kant has the process backwards. Outside of general cause and effect, concepts are not to be considered in some concrete before experience.[24] Despite this great apparatus, no attempt is made to explain perception of the external world.[25]

Kant was never fully able to propel the ideal over the empirical using his twelve categories of understanding.[26] So, why exactly was Kant looking for epistemic symmetry between the subject and object? Schopenhauer alleges Kant wanted to distance himself from the idealism of Ireland's greatest philosopher, George Berkeley (1685-1753).[27] He thinks Kant owes Berkeley more credit than he would like to admit.

---

[20] WWRI, 439, 476; *Appendix.*
[21] WWRI, 444; *Appendix.*
[22] WWRI, 438; *Appendix.*
[23] WWRI, 444. Schopenhauer traces this "Procrustean bed" of Kant's to the third section of the Analysis of Principles in the Critique and the mixing up of quantity and quality (469); *Appendix.*
[24] WWRI, 508-9; *Appendix.*
[25] WWRI, 442; *Appendix.*
[26] WWRI, 175; §32.
[27] George Berkeley, *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous*, ed. Robert Merrihew Adams (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1985). See especially Berkeley's argument for immaterialism against skepticism that opens the first dialogue.

While Kant "does not use the formula 'No object without subject,' he nevertheless, with just as much emphasis as do Berkeley and I, declares the external world lying before us in space and time to be mere representation of the subject that knows it."[28] Not afraid to embrace Berkeley, the first book of the WWR starts with the world as representation.

3. Indiological Thought

During the nineteenth century, the Romantic movement that swept across the European continent brought intense interest in Eastern cultures, especially in Germany.[29] Schopenhauer's experience attests to resources on Hinduism arriving before Buddhism. His interest was not in passing. He cultivated a lifelong interest in Hinduism and Buddhism, keeping up with the latest discoveries and translations.

It is near impossible to grasp Schopenhauer's system without accounting for the basics he uses from Indiological thinking: 1. an absolute subject first starting point that mandates a consciousness is the duality between subject and object, 2. metaphysical singleness of reality, and 3. desires are equivalent to the transitory nature of existence. Furthermore, his notion of *māyā*, the illusion of the perceived world with respect to the representation in consciousness, combines Eastern spiritual philosophy with Kantian epistemology.

Hinduism

Schopenhauer's search for a *philosophia perennis* made the Upanishads a powerful influence on the development of the WWR.[30] The Upanishads are the

[28] WWRI, 434-5; *Appendix.*
[29] Stephen Cross, *Schopenhauer's Encounter with Indian Thought,* Representation *and* Will *and Their Indian Parallels* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2013) 20-24.
[30] Cross, 23, 32.

philosophical ties that keep the Vedas together. These are the oldest Indo-Aryan documentation written in Sanskrit, during the Vedic Age in India, ca. 1750-500 BCE, commonly described as the general equivalent of the New Testament for Christians.

The term Upanishad describes the process by which Brahma-knowledge by which ignorance is loosened or destroyed through reflection. An *upādhi* is a limiting property that creates the world as illusion; it prevents us from seeing that all is Brahman, the single reality behind the observed differences. To assist in separating the real from the unreal, the Upanishads contrast philosophical with spiritual insight. This active process to *see through* the illusion of observable differences is known as Vedanta; it is the end goal of wisdom.[31] There are four Vedas, with each one divided into four principle sections: the Rig, the Sama, the Yajur and the Atharva, all containing a mantra, ritualistic teaching, theological and philosophical components.[32]

Although he was introduced to the *Bhagavad-Gītā* first, the most important Hindu text for Schopenhauer was the *Upanishads*, known to him as the *Oupnek'hat*,[33] a Latin translation from the Persian, which was taken from the Sanskrit.[34] When he borrowed the *Oupnek'hat* on March 26, 1814, it started the beginning of Schopenhauer's lifelong relationship with Hinduism.[35] By 1816 he equated the insights with Plato and Kant, eventually characterizing the *Upanishads* as "the consolation of my life and will be of my death."[36] It is well-known he read the

---

[31] Neal Delmonico, trans., *First Steps in Vedānta; Vedantic Texts for Beginners: Sadānanda's* Vedānta-sāra; *Baladeva's* Prameya-ratnāvalī; *A Brief Overview Advaita Vedānta by Dinesh Chandra Bhattacharya Shastri* (New York: Global Scholarly Publications, 2003), 199.
[32] For an exhaustive study on the origins of Hindu belief see Gavin Flood, *An Introduction to Hinduism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
[33] Cross, 23, 25.
[34] Cartwright, *Schopenhauer, A Biography*, 269.
[35] Cross, 25; Cartwright, *Schopenhauer, A Biography*, 268.
[36] Cartwright, 269. For Schopenhauer see *Parerga and Paralipomena*, Vol. 2, 397.

Oupnek'hat every night before bed. Additionally, since his early student days, he owned a string of poodles named Atma. Arising from Brahman, it is the universal and supreme soul responsible for other individual souls.[37]

Cross points out, despite the double translation, that the *Oupnek'hat* manages to retain the non-dualist content of ultimate reality according to Śaṃkara (b. 700 CE) and the Advaita Vedānta.[38] The core belief is in Brahma (Self) as the One reality; a non-temporal, infinite and undifferentiated ultimate reality behind all phenomena. Underneath, everything is the *same single thing*. Perceptual reality gives an illusion of metaphysical separateness called *māyā*. For Schopenhauer, this dissection is the role of human reason.

How is Brahman known? The most important Upanishad Schopenhauer uses in the WWR is the Chandogya Upanishad. As a whole, the Chandogya is considered to be the most widely referenced of all the Upanishads, notably the sixth chapter. The phenomenal world is not created *ex nihlo*; instead it is related to the preexisting cause of existence, Brahman.[39] It is the teaching of how to attain spiritual insight into the Oneness of reality through the perceived differences.

The Self is everywhere, but we cannot see it. "There is nothing that does not come from him. Of Everything he is the inmost Self. He is the truth: he is the Self supreme. You are that."[40] Retreating back into the individual's awareness to access

---

[37] David E. Cartwright, *Historical Dictionary of Schopenhauer's Philosophy* (Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2004), 136-7. See also Wilhelm Busch's sketch of Schopenhauer and his poodle in Peter B. Lewis, *Arthur Schopenhauer*, (London: Reaktion Books, 2012) 128.
[38] Cross, *Schopenhauer's Encounter with Indian Thought,* Representation *and* Will *and Their Indian Parallels*, 23, 32, 35.
[39] Eliot Deutsch and J.A.B. van Buitenen, *A Source Book of Advaita Vedānta* (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1971), 9. For See Śaṃkara see chapter 8, 122-222.
[40] Eknath Easwaran, *The Upanishads* (Tomales, CA: Nilgiri Press: 2007), 137.

the One consciousness, space and time are transcended, the single reality behind Brahma's visible differences overcome.

Buddhism

While adopting the view of reality as singular, by 1815 Schopenhauer noted approvingly of Buddhism's lack of a Creator, denying the singular consciousness of Brahman.[41] There might be one reality, but it is not a conscious Self.

The tale of how the historical Siddhartha Gautama became the Buddha, or the Enlightened One, during the sixth century BCE remains well-known. In the West the Buddha's story has been popularly handed down through Hesse's *Siddhartha* (1922). Living in extravagant wealth his entire life, it was only after the young prince ventured outside the palace walls did he witness the visceral suffering associated with life. Renouncing his privilege for the ascetic life, eventually Gautama meditated under the Bodhi Tree (Tree of Awakening). After a prolonged fast, it dawned on Gautama that the path to *nirvānā*, a state without suffering, is achievable through Four Noble Truths: 1. Life means suffering; 2. The origin of suffering is attachment to material things; 3. The cessation of suffering is possible; and 4. There exists a path to end the cycle of suffering.[42] From these insights, the Enlightened One began preaching a path of moderation known as the Middle Way. This is more commonly known as the Eightfold Path: 1. Right Understanding, 2. Right Thought, 3. Right Speech, 4. Right Action, 5. Right Livelihood, 6. Right Effort, 7. Right Mindfulness, and 8. Right Concentration.[43]

Over time two distinct Buddhist canons developed, Therevada and Mahāyāna.

[41] Cross, 39.
[42] Dwight Goddard, *A Buddhist Bible* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), 3-60.
[43] Goddard, 33.

Theravada is represented by the Pali canon, and dates back to earlier orthodox positions. As the religion began to spread out from India along the Silk Road (first and second centuries CE), it became more liberal. This was the version of Buddhism introduced to Schopenhauer, Mahāyāna. Using mainly Tibetan sources, Mahāyāna is also known as the Greater Vehicle, promoting balance over austerity.[44]

More than any other person, Nāgārjuna secured the canonical authority of Mahāyāna. Considered by some to be the second Buddha, he outlines the practical middle way in the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*. Concerned with being and action, "Self-restraint as well as benefiting others--this is the friendly way and it constitutes the seed that bears fruit here as well as in the next life." Emptiness is not annihilation but the lack of desire, "A sentient being, beclouded by ignorance, is also fettered by craving."[45]

It used to be assumed by scholars, such as Arthur Hübscher, that Schopenhauer's knowledge of Buddhism was imperfect and incomplete. The fact that it was knowledge was of Mahāyāna rather than Pāli tradition in no way invalidates this claim. Schopenhauer was exposed to Buddhism in 1811, much earlier than is commonly recognized.[46] His next encounter with Buddhism came two years after Heeren's lectures while he was staying in Weimer. In the WWR Schopenhauer references a German version of a Chinese Buddhist text known as The Forty-two Chapter Sūtra, which shows he had access to at least one Buddhist text. Cross claims

[44] Cross, 49.
[45] David J. Kalupahana, *Nāgārjuna, The Philosophy of the Middle Way* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1986), 2, 243, 254, 259.
[46] Cross, 37-8.

it was a Ch'an (i.e., Zen) text composed in fifteenth century China, providing a Zen flavored Buddhism.[47]

Abelsen concludes that there are some conceptually equivalent positions shared by both Schopenhauer and Buddhism: "at least one parallel that surpasses mere atmosphere and must be considered truly philosophical: Schopenhauer's concepts of Wille and Representation are related in the same way as *Nirvana* and *Samsara* (or *paramartha* and *samvrti*) are related in the Prajnaparamita and Nagarjuna's verses: namely, as a dual perspective on reality, which in itself remains unknowable."[48]

Nicholls' argument, that Schopenhauer increasingly turns East over the years to get a grip on inconsistencies, overlooks some of these fundamental similarities. Especially the shared subject before the object, on which the whole WWR rests. If Schopenhauer shifted his view toward Buddhism over his life, to solve difficulties surrounding the noumenon as is charged,[49] it is because some conceptual preconditions exist that make it possible. This is especially true with regard to his embrace of the orthodox concept of *māyā* in the Lankavatara sutra, one of the nine principle sutras of Mahāyāna Buddhism. The sensible world is an illusion created by the twofold nature of knowing.[50]

---

[47] Cross, 37-8.
[48] Peter Abelson, "Schopenhauer and Buddhism," *Philosophy East and West*, (Volume 43, Number 2, April), 1993; 255-278; 273.
[49] Moira Nicholls, "The Influences of Eastern Thought on Schopenhauer's Doctrine of the Thing-in-itself," in *The Cambridge Companion to Schopenhauer*, Ed. Christopher Janaway (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge), 2000; 171; 173.
[50] See Florn Hiripescu Sutton, *Existence and Enlightenment in the Lankāvatāra-sūtra; A Study in the Ontology and Epistemology of the Yogācāra School of Mahāyāna Buddhism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991).

Joining his evening readings of the Upanishads, in the last decade of his life he referred to himself as a Buddhist, in connecting to the Eastern influence. Schopenhauer purchased a black-lacquered bronze Buddha that he gilded in 1856, placing it on a console in the corner to greet visitors into his Frankfurt apartment.[51]

4. Overview of Secondary Sources

Over his life, Schopenhauer attacked the university establishment he felt shunned him. Nonetheless, there has been an ironic resurgence of interest in Schopenhauer's thought by professional philosophers. This renewed interest has resulted in rich secondary sources on Schopenhauer by some of the best scholarship and names in the business. Recent scholarship has become increasingly sensitive to his Eastern views. Next, major resources from each perspective are briefly considered, including biographies and translations, starting with the Western perspective of his thought.

In *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy* (1989), Christopher Janaway focuses on the differences he sees between the Wille and the self. Janaway's main argument is that there simultaneously exists the Wille, as willing, and the self, the apperception of consciousness. His argument assists in explaining how Schopenhauer was able to change his mind later in life that the Wille was not Kant's thing-in-itself, but rather another aspect of it. This makes Janaway's discussion in *Self and World* heavily Kantian, causing his discussion in spots to overshadow Schopenhauer's originality. The reader unfamiliar with Kant will likely find Janaway's book confusing in places; it is a dense philosophical slog. Schopenhauer's Eastern resemblances are

[51] Cartwright, *Schopenhauer, A Biography*, 273-4, 547.

not gone into in-depth, nor does Janaway deal seriously with Schopenhauer's aesthetics, how the self comes to know itself. The end result is an analytical sounding Schopenhauer. This is not the impression one walks away with after reading the WWR, especially in light of his distaste for Hegel. Nevertheless, I do agree with Janaway's assessment that Schopenhauer's connection between willing and embodiment is one of the greatest philosophical achievement, an aspect I develop in chapter three concerning art.[52]

John E. Atwell's two books, *Schopenhauer, The Human Character* (1990) and *Schopenhauer on the Character of the World, The Metaphysics of the Will* (1995), are connotative of Schopenhauer's belief in the duality of all objects as representation and Wille, including us. Atwell is sympathetic, conceding inconsistencies but arguing that Schopenhauer's framework should be preserved. It might be that understanding human activity is not possible, something directly considered near the end of the fourth chapter. In the *Metaphysics of Will* he focuses on the microcosm-macrocosm aspect of Wille; since all objects are Wille, the entire world is also the Wille, what is commonly referred to as Gaia theory. Atwell call this the concept of macanthropos. It opens up the self-understanding angle of Wille across the objects in nature. While both books are highly readable, Atwell is all but indifferent to Schopenhauer's Eastern influences. Despite this, I agree with his position in the *Character of the World* that the overall trajectory of the Wille, at every level of objectivity, is toward self-awareness. I use this to develop four different ways Schopenhauer understands the

[52] Christopher Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989). See pp. 191-2 for the Wille and its connection to embodiment.

meaning of objectification of the Wille, with self-awareness the most complete of them.[53]

In *Schopenhauer* (2005) Julian Young stresses the evolutionary psychology aspect of Schopenhauer's system, tying it to Plato's better consciousness. The result is a detailed analysis of Schopenhauer's salvation from the Wille through the aesthetic. What makes a work of art truly great is authentic transcendence of the nature and normal limitation of the human mind. This requirement of a superior state of consciousness for great art Young links to disinterested perception. Developed over evolution, the impetus of superior art is not to provoke the Wille but to escape its violent clutches. That art is nothing less than the Wille coming to terms with its inherent violence assists my claim that self-awareness is the overarching telos of the Wille. Following Janaway and Atwell, Young makes some references to the Buddhism and Hinduism but nothing sustained.[54]

There is no more sympathetic exposition of Schopenhauer than Bryan Magee's *The Philosophy of Schopenhauer* (1983; revised 1997). Magee is a public intellectual by trade, and the book is highly readable and wide ranging. Divided into two main sections, the first is an exegesis of Schopenhauer's views, the second an overview of their reception, especially among artists. It is the single most comprehensive book on the influence Schopenhauer's aesthetics of Wille. Magee also offers details on the profound influence Schopenhauer exerted on Richard Wagner (1813-1883), undoubtedly one of the greatest musical composers ever. Magee has an

---

[53] John E. Atwell, *Schopenhauer on the Character of the World, The Metaphysics of the Will* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), x, 101-3.; see chapter 6 for Atwell's discussion of the Idea and art.
[54] Julian Young, *Schopenhauer* (London: Routledge, 2005), 106. 114, 150; chapter 5 discusses aesthetics, chapter 6 discusses Platonic transcendence. See also WWI, 235: §49.

excellent discussion of Schopenhauer opening up new creative doors for Wagner, considered in my third chapter with respect to Wagner's *Beethoven* (1870) essay. There is also a broad comparison between Schopenhauer and Buddhism where Magee leaves open the opportunity for further inquiry, settling for a broad comparison in the meantime.[55]

If the reader is pressed for time, S*chopenhauer* (2008) by Robert Wicks is the single best resource for an introduction to Schopenhauer's thought. Wicks provides a concise, balanced West-East, taking into account Hinduism and Buddhism. On the issue of influence, Wicks says Schopenhauer is closer to Buddhism than to Hinduism, mainly because his prescriptions for achieving salvation are to always want less.[56] I consider this shared asceticism between Schopenhauer and Buddhism in the fourth chapter concerning ethics. Wicks other book, *Schopenhauer's* The World as Will and Representation, *A Reader's Guide* (2011) is a section by section exposition of the first volume. Additionally, it contains a short but informational chapter on Schopenhauer's pervasive influence outside the philosophical discipline.

Finally arriving is an overdue analysis of Schopenhauer's Eastern roots in the WWR. The classic essay by Dorothea Daner, *Schopenhauer as Transmitter of Buddhist Ideas* (1969), contains direct conceptual correspondences that have been more fully vetted by recent scholarship. Douglas L. Berger's *The Veil of Māyā: Schopenhauer's System and Early Indian Thought* (2004) is thoughtfully cautious toward the hermeneutics of cross cultural comparisons of literature, examining Schopenhauer's

---

[55] Bryan Magee, *The Philosophy of Schopenhauer* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997). Magee discusses Schopenhauer's connection to Buddhism in chapter 15. Wagner in chapter 17.
[56] Robert Wicks, *Schopenhauer* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), for Hinduism refer to chapter 5, 7, Buddhism chapter 10.

deployment of m*āyā* and *karma* from the point of view of a Romantic Orientialist, rather than true to the Indiological meanings of those terms.[57] Understanding the world as Wille, I agree that Schopenhauer develops his own distinct notions of m*āyā*, and *karma*. The former in connection to Kant's *a priori* and the use of reason, the latter on the Wille's metaphysics.

Friendlier than Berger's account, Stephen Cross's *Schopenhauer's Encounter with Indian Thought,* Representation *and* Will *and Their Indian Parallels* (2013) is an in-depth look into the conceptual similarities and differences. Berger's hardcore analysis of parallel concepts in Schopenhauer and Indian leads him to pronounce more work should be done searching for a Schopenhaurian version of *nirvana*.[58] To assist this effort slightly, I have included in the third chapter some overall relatability of Schopenhauer's aesthetics to the Perfect Wisdom texts of Buddhism. Safe to say here, there is an all-around agreement that a fundamental transformation must first take place in the mind.

This organized effort to explore his thought, which resulted in the Schopenhauer Society in Frankfurt (1911), continues with the compilation *Better Consciousness, Schopenhauer's Philosophy of Value* (2009) and *Schopenhauer, philosophy, and the arts,* both edited by Dale Jacquette (1996). *Understanding Schopenhauer Through the Prism of Indian Culture* (2012), edited by Arati Barmam represents renewed concentration on the Indiological strain of his thought.

Most of the secondary sources bring Schopenhauer's personal life to bear on the development of his ideas during his life. Two popular biographies, differing

---

[57] Douglas L. Berger, *The Veil of Māyā: Schopenhauer's System and Early Indian Thought* (Binghamton, New York: Global Academic Publishing, 2004), ix, 39.
[58] Cross, 6.

widely in style, are the romping Rüdiger Safranski's *Schopenhauer and the Wild Years of Philosophy* (1990) and the more serious *Schopenhauer, A Biography* (2010) by Cartwright. Not academically trained, the beginner approaching Schopenhauer will find Safranski's book more accessible than Cartwright's.

Translations of Schopenhauer's works from the German conclude our discussion of secondary sources. I use E. F. J. Payne's (1905-1983) version of the WWR, going through three editions since 1958, as it has become the preferred interpretation over the years. Payne translated not only Schopenhauer's major works but also his manuscript remains from German into English. The University of Iowa currently holds a collection of Payne's papers for ongoing research.

5. The Nemesis: Hegel

Every hero needs a villain. Schopenhauer's was Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831). Believing that Kant dealt a mortal blow to any metaphysical system in *The Critique* and *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics* (1783), Schopenhauer contends the claims of pure academic philosophy is fraudulent from the outset.

After being awarded a position at the University of Berlin in 1820, Schopenhauer scheduled his lecture to coincide with Hegel, who was at the height of his fame. An unknown Schopenhauer stood little chance scheduling his lectures simultaneously against Hegel. The result is easily predictable: poor student attendance and personal bitterness. Combined with the cholera outbreak that Hegel did not live through, this lack of appreciation for the insights contained in the WWR caused Schopenhauer to pack up and retire in Frankfurt am Main. For the next

twenty-eight years of his life Schopenhauer remained in Frankfurt living the life of scholarly leisure.

For the rest of his life, Schopenhauer continued to rail against what he saw as the entire false footing of the whole analytic enterprise, fashionable thought uninterested in truth but wholly concerned with image. At sixty years of age, in the preface of the 1847 reissuing of his 1813 doctoral dissertation *Fourfold Root*, his disdain for pure analytical philosophy can be found. Schopenhauer's criticism is quite colorful. Marked above all else by professional advancement, the academy lacks all philosophical integrity: "like a prostitute who for shameful remuneration sold herself yesterday to one man, today to another."[59]

He calls Hegel's philosophy "a monstrous amplification of the ontological proof."[60] The entire enterprise is inauthentic, because like a weasel, the source of the claims is always to remain secret. This disorganized Hegelian nonsense is an intellectual house of cards, corrupting the minds of the present generation. It has rendered them, "incapable of thinking, coarse and stupefied, they become the prey to the shallow materialism that has crept out of the basilisk's egg."[61] Schopenhauer's mythological reference is telling. The basilisk, king of all snakes, was hatched from an egg sat on by a toad. Part lizard, rooster and snake, it is extremely venomous, with the ability to kill itself by its own reflection.

---

[59] Schopenhauer, *On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason*, trans. E.F.J. Payne (LaSalle Illinois: Open Court Press), xxviii.
[60] *Fourfold Root*, 16.
[61] *Fourfold Root*, xxviii.

6. Schopenhauer's Widespread Influence

All things considered, no other figure wields a similar influence outside pure philosophy as does Schopenhauer.[62] Offering a vision of human experience, his influence is more pervasive outside strict analytical walls. For instance, that music *is* the Wille[63] was openly embraced by Richard Wagner (1813-1883). The greatest composer of the nineteenth century went on to develop some of his greatest masterpieces, notably *The Ring of the Niebelungs* (1876), through Schopenhauerian inspiration.

Nietzsche, Wittgenstein and Freud

Where he has influenced other thinkers, they have been transformative figures within the discipline. These include Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) and Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951). The reader will find easy access in the secondary sources already reviewed.[64]

In the WWR, even those with an introductory knowledge of psychoanalytic theory will quickly infer the beliefs of another thinker from Vienna. There is little question that Schopenhauer influenced Sigmund Freud (1856-1939). Between their views of the world, roughly eighty years apart, the similarities are quite striking.

In the WWR Schopenhauer clearly outlines what are commonly thought of as Freudian insights.[65] The most obvious similarity between them is the belief in the overwhelming power of the sex drive. The second most obvious shared feature is a

---

[62] For more on Schopenhauer's influence Magee and Wicks should be consulted. See Magee, *The Philosophy of Schopenhauer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), chapters 13, 18 and 19; for Wicks see chapter 4 in *A Reader's Guide*.

[63] Young, *Schopenhauer*, 234

[64] See especially the works of Magee and Wicks, as well as the biographies.

[65] Wicks, *Schopenhauer*, 153-4.
R. K. Gupta, "Freud and Schopenhauer," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 36, no. 4 (Oct. - Dec., 1975): 721-728.

general division between the irrational and rational, Freud's id/ego distinction corresponding to the Schopenhauerian Wille/intellect. The third clearest commonality is the issue of repression, where Schopenhauer and Freud both agree that an individual causes great harm to themselves by leaving harmful past events unresolved. Gupta's explanation of their relationship is helpful: Schopenhauer psychologized philosophy, while Freud philosophized psychology.[66]

Freud's assimilative power and wide reading make it impossible to pinpoint with accuracy the level of Schopenhauer's impact, but there is no doubt as to the similarities regarding their general attitude toward life and major ideas. The literature agrees that Freud was less than candid regarding the level of influence he owes to the philosopher, likely owing more to Schopenhauer than he cared to admit.[67]

The Arts

Across languages and culture Schopenhauer's philosophy has provided refinement to these authors already formed intuition of the world. His emphasis on the fleeting nature of our existence finds a home with the creative writers because temporality lies at the heart of his philosophy and of the novel.

Schopenhauer had a very deep influence on the Russian novelist Ivan Turgenev (1818-1883), most visibly in *Spring Torrents* and *Song of Triumphant Love*. Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910) started an intensive study of Schopenhauer after finishing *War*

[66] Gupta, 728.
[67] Wicks, *A Reader's Guide*, 154. Magee, 307-309.

and Peace in 1869 and starting his work on *Anna Karenina* from 1873-1877. Following Wagner's lead, he hung a picture of Schopenhauer on the wall of his study.[68]

In France, Emile Zola (1840-1902) wrote a novel dedicated to Schopenhauer with the tongue in cheek title *The Joy of Living* (1888), capturing his metaphysical sorrows and obsession with death.[69] While Guy de Maupassant (1850-1853) bears casual influence, Marcel Proust (1871-1922) was an open admirer. His seven volume series *In Search of Lost Time* (1913-1927) draws explicitly on the strength of temporality in Schopenhauer's philosophy.

Off the continent, after the translation of the WWR into English in 1883, Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) wrote his two most distinguished works immediately after reading it in 1887, *Tess of the D'Urbevilles* (1891) and *Jude the Obscure* (1895). Schopenhauer also had direct influence on D.H. Lawrence (1885-1930), Samuel Beckett (1906-89), and to a lesser extent on the Polish-English writer Joseph Conrad (1857-1924). [70]

In Germany Thomas Mann (1875-1955) discovered Schopenhauer, like Nietzsche, in his early twenties. Mann weaved into his first novel *Buddenbrooks* (1901) the experience of reading Schopenhauer. Their personal lives sharing a similar trajectory, Mann sought the university as opposed to the family business. Late in his life Mann spoke of Schopenhauer as a philosopher whose insights have yet to be fully appreciated.[71] His influence on major German thinkers is something I examine

[68] Magee, 403.
[69] Magee, 405
[70] Wicks, *A Reader's Guide*, 155-6
[71] Magee, 411-2.

throughout this essay, including Albert Einstein (1879-1955), Max Planck (1858-1947) and Erwin Schrödinger (1887-1961).

In the Americas the Argentinean writer Jorge Louis Borges (1899-1986) said the reason he did not attempt a systematic exposition of the world was because Schopenhauer had already done it.[72] In the United States Herman Melville's (1819-91) *Moby Dick* (1851) exhibits a certain amount of influence too.[73]

Eventually in his early sixties, the fame Schopenhauer believed he earned found him toward the end of his life.[74] This was helped along with the publication of *Parerga and Paralipomena*, Wagner's assistance, and an anonymous review in *Westminster Review* called *Iconoclasm in German Philosophy* in April 1852 by John Oxenford.[75] He died on September 21, 1860, at seventy-two years of age. He was found slumped in his study after suffering from ill health, suffering a blow to the head a day before. [76]He is buried in Frankfurt am Main, where a stone bearing his name contains no dates, only his name.

Reflecting on his life in his private diary a few years before his death, Schopenhauer identifies the contemplative life with heroic character. "Instead of going out amid the nonsense and foolishness calculated for the impoverished capacity of human bipeds, I will end joyfully conscious of returning to the place where I started out so highly endowed and of having fulfilled my mission."[77]

---

[72] Magee, 413.
[73] Wicks, *Schopenhauer's* The World as Will and Representation, *A Reader's Guide*, 154-55.
[74] Wicks, *Schopenhauer's The World as Will and Representation*, *A Reader's Guide*, (London; New York: Continuum), 2011; 148.
[75] Cartwright, *Historical Dictionary of Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 119.
[76] Cartwright, 547
[77] Cartwright, 548

7. The Unyielding Pessimist?

Using temporality as the guidepost through the WWR naturally brings out the optimism in it. Despite current efforts, Schopenhauer's Achilles heal still remains his public image. Bertrand Russell's (1872-1970) picture of him in the *History of Western Philosophy* (1945). With his brilliance unquestionable, in addition to being a public intellectual, the book gave him financial independence. With a wide audience served Russell's views portrayal of Schopenhauer, it deserves a short look.

In *History of Western Philosophy* Russell dismisses Schopenhauer's entire thought as hopeless pessimism. Given the contrast between his moral preference for asceticism versus his bourgeois lifestyle, Russell also charges that Schopenhauer is disingenuous. He says "Schopenhauer's gospel of resignation is not very consistent and not very sincere," especially if "we may judge by Schopenhauer's life."[78] To ensure any admiration is qualified, Russell adds "in spite of inconsistency and a certain shallowness, his philosophy has considerable importance as a stage in historical development."[79]

Adding to Russell's treatment, Frederick Copleston's *Arthur Schopenhauer: Philosopher of Pessimism* (1975) investigates and criticizes Schopenhauer on optimistic grounds through religion, in this case Christianity and the promise of eternal life after death. On these grounds Copleston is a particularly tough critic of Schopenhauer. He does not like Schopenhauer's position that death of the body also means the dying of individual consciousness. Schopenhauer's philosophy is called

[78] Bertrand Russell's *A History of Western Philosophy*; A Touchstone Book, (Simon and Schuster: New York), 1972, 757-8.
[79] Russell, 759.

"consistently pessimistic"[80] and Copleston finds redemption in the Crucified Redeemer who circumvents the wickedness of the Wille. If we are discontented with material goods, suffer from ennui, boredom, weariness or disillusionment, the constant invitation of God is always there and "He would lead men to realize their vocation and to seek complete happiness in Him."[81]

In the *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* (2008), Simon Blackburn updates Russell's treatment of Schopenhauer: "In spite of his famous pessimism, Schopenhauer himself lived a moderately selfish and not altogether reclusive life, and seems to have indulged his share of the passions: he dined well at the Englischer Hof, had affairs, was reputed a brilliant and witty conversationalist, and read *The Times* of London every day."[82] Blackburn further claims that in Schopenhauer's pessimistic view suicide is the best way to deal with life as suffering. Adding to these loud voices is *Studies in Pessimism: A Series of Essays* (1970) edited by T. Bailey Saunders.

As one works through the WWR, it soon becomes clear that criticisms along these lines are way off target. For a philosopher pegged as hopelessly melancholy, Schopenhauer's use of the term 'pessimism' is rare and he never uses it in the 1818 edition of WWR; it is not until the second, complementary edition in that the word 1844 appears. He describes his own philosophical system as “pessimistic” a handful of times.[83] Nietzsche picked up on this lack of darkness in *Schopenhauer as Educator*

---

[80] Frederick Copleston, *Arthur Schopenhauer, Philosopher of Pessimism* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1975), 212,
[81] Copleston, 104.
[82] Simon Blackburn, *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*, second edition (Oxford University Press: New York), 2008; 329.
[83] See Janaway, *Schopenhauer's Pessimism* in the *Cambridge Companion to Schopenhauer* (1999).

(1874), arguing that reading Schopenhauer is an exercise in optimism, not pessimism.[84]

To help explain how this false picture of Schopenhauer has been created, E.F.J. Payne says "we are struck by the psychological force and even fierceness with which he reveals the deepest recesses of the human heart." He adds that while many have complained that his philosophy is pessimistic, "an impartial examination will lead to the conclusion that it is neither more nor less pessimistic than the teachings of Brahmanism, Buddhism, and Christianity, all of which agree in preaching as the supreme goal deliverance from this earthly existence."[85] With no time to lose we turn to the first book of the WWR.

[84] Friedrich Nietzsche, "Schopenhauer as Educator," *Untimely Meditations*, trans. by R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press), 2007, 125-194.
[85] WWRI, vii-viii.

Chapter 1

The Necessary Limits of Causality

WWR First Book : The World as Representation. First Aspect

The Temporal Stamp on Phenomenal Knowledge

Schopenhauer follows Kant's *a priori* placement of space and time in Book I. Among the Kantian categories he saves only one: causality. We intuitively perceive the world's objects as operating under causes and effects. To understand how objects in the world are causally interconnected is the core of science. Our scientific interpretation is based on what Schopenhauer calls the Principle of Sufficient Reason (PSR). The perceived passage of time is the ground of all our knowledge, even mathematics. Perception, he claims, is intellectual.

Starting from the subject's observation, Schopenhauer insists time accompanies abstract concepts. Knowledge of the world might be understood in the abstract, but concepts are generated through watchful experience. Through perception, concepts have to be properly deduced from evidence in the world. Without an appeal to outside evidence, claims to knowledge are not considered legitimate. As the world passes us by, concepts pertaining to the objective world must be covered with a temporal sheath.

Maintaining a strict causal separation between the subject and object, Schopenhauer helped inspire the transformation from classical to relative mechanics. His version of the *principium individuationis* ("principle of individuation"),

where perceived time is inseparable from space and matter, prompted Einstein's theory of relativity.

1. *Fourfold Root*

Book I of the WWR carries the same convictions toward empirical knowledge found in his earlier doctoral thesis *The Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason* (1813, FR); a work he calls an introductory essay to his philosophical system. His mother Johanna Schopenhauer (1788-1838), in an example of their contentious relationship, proclaimed that the abstruse title made it destined for the dusty shelves of an apothecary. Quite the opposite has occurred. Over time the book has become a classical work on the formulation of the theory of knowledge.

The FR elicited praise from Germany's greatest poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), to whom Schopenhauer personally sent a copy. He not only admired Goethe, but defends him in the appendix *On Vision*: "All intuitive perception is intellectual, for without the *understanding* we could never achieve perception, the apprehension of *objects*."[1] From here the inference is that we have an *a priori* ability that allows for our perceptual ability to distinguish colors. That the differing color qualities of the world and all the objects it contains must reside in part within us separated Goethe from the scientific community. Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727) approached color like gravity and an objective matter independent of any such human consideration and subjectivity. In addition to the appendix, Schopenhauer also supports Goethe's position in *On Visions and Colors* (1816), written after discussing Goethe's *Theory of Colors* (1810) together with him.

[1] *Fourfold Root*, 237.

Grounds and Causes

Schopenhauer makes the critical distinction between a ground of knowledge (*Grund*) and causes. He believes immense confusion has resulted from previous philosophers mistaking causes as grounds to knowledge. Among the suspects he identifies are René Descartes (1596-1650) and Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677). What has been consistently overlooked, he claims, is Aristotle's distinction between definition and proof. They are "two different and eternally separate matters."[2]

Descartes posited God as a "*ground of knowledge* because such a ground does not, like a cause, at once lead to something further." Schopenhauer claims that Descartes' argument is disingenuous because of his intention to pave the way to the "*ontological proof* of the existence of God."[3] God is famously no deceiver[4] as a ground of knowledge (*Grund*) and this side-steps the problem of perpetual causality. If Descartes method is considered honestly and impartially, Schopenhauer asserts the conclusion is inevitable: "this famous ontological proof is really a most delightful farce."[5]

Spinoza takes up what Descartes thought in his head and applies it to the world. Spinoza argues for a pantheism and equates the totality of nature with God. Schopenhauer aptly states: "Thus Spinoza's pantheism is actually only the *realization* of Descartes ontological proof."[6] This further step makes God an actual cause that causes itself, a *causa sui*, a logical impossibility. The fact that objects exist in nature is not proof that they were caused and created in the mind of God.

---

[2] *Fourfold Root*, 16.
[3] *Fourfold Root*, 14.
[4] See the Third Meditation in Descartes *Meditations* (1641).
[5] *Fourfold Root*, 14-5.
[6] *Fourfold Root*, 20.

Schopenhauer's main problem with positing God as a first cause is that the question is still open, what caused God? According to the laws of causality, the dominant way we naturally understand the world, this is a perfectly legitimate question. God would have to be a *causa sui* and not possible as Schopenhauer charges: "The law of causality is therefore not so obliging as to allow itself to be used like a cab which we dismiss after we reach our destination."[7] He acknowledges Christian Wolff (1679-1754) as the first to heed Aristotle's distinction, the PSR differing from nature's causality. Schopenhauer admires Wolff's exposition of this separateness: "Nothing is without a ground or reason why it is."[8] This is an epistemic claim that applies equally to God.

Accounting for how we understand and reason about world causally, as well as resting on irreducible *a priori* categories, the PSR itself cannot be a *Grund*. We come to know *how* the world operates causally using the PSR, a path of inquiry diverging away from the *why* things occur. In general, the PSR cannot be proved:[9] "a firmly established a priori principle is also not *one* and everywhere the *same*, but a necessity just as manifold as are the sources of the principle itself."[10]

2. Subject-Object Distinction and the PSR

Looking for a *Grund* of knowledge to explain the *a priori* nature of the PSR, Schopenhauer claims the unbreakable causal bond between the subject and object means our knowledge of the world lies in our heads. In no way does he deny the reality of the outside world. Over the causal gap between the subject and object, the

[7] *Fourfold Root*, 58.
[8] *Fourfold Root*, 6.
[9] *Fourfold Root,* 32.
[10] *Fourfold Root*, 3-4.

PSR requests evidence for claims respecting the inborn aspect of our intellect: "the assumption, always made a priori by us, that everything has a reason or ground which justifies us in everywhere asking why, this why may be called the mother of all sciences."[11] The causal gap between the subject and object means perception gathers information of world, while the mind holds a representation of it.

Schopenhauer rightly starts a general theory of knowledge from perception. It is the dominant way we understand the world. When we view the world, we *instantaneously know* what we are seeing. At base our causal understanding of the world is found in our intuitions of time and space (*Anschauungen*). This intuition (*Anschauung*) refers to immediate awareness of objects through the senses.[12] It requires that we already possess some tools for understanding the phenomena around us, "so entirely independent of experience that, on the contrary, experience must be thought of as dependent on it."[13] He elaborates:

> To know causality is the sole function of the understanding, its only power...all matter, and consequently the whole of reality, is only for the understanding, through the understanding, in the understanding. The first, simplest, ever-present manifestation of the understanding is perception of the actual world. This is in every way knowledge of the cause from the effect, and therefore all perception is intellectual.[14]

In addition to intuitive knowledge, an object of representation (*Gegenstand der Vorstellung*) can be considered causally.[15] Not Kantian, this distinction between intuitive and abstract cognition (*anschauliche und abstrakte Erkenntnis*) is unique to

---

[11] *Fourfold Root*, 5-6; see also p. 33. Schopenhauer claims that a very nascent form of the PSR can be found in Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*, see pp. 9-11 in the *Fourfold Root*.
[12] Janaway, *Self and World,* 25.
[13] WWRI, 7; § 3.
[14] WWRI, 11; § 4.
[15] Janaway, *Self and World*, 79.

Schopenhauer.[16] The major difference between these is reflection, or a lack thereof. We are closer to the lower animals with our intuitive understanding of casualty but as humans our ability to reason is separate and "a cognitive faculty that has been added to man alone."[17]

As a result, Schopenhauer maintains that when we think about the world we are really thinking not about reality itself but using a conceptual representation disconnected and lying in the mind. Schopenhauer considers these types of knowing distinct: "The understanding, however, is inaccessible to the teaching of reason, since in its knowledge it precedes reason and so cannot be reached by that faculty."[18]

When we perceive the world in our minds we hold a re-presentation of reality. This representation (*Vorstellung*) of the world is conceptually immaterial and confers the ability to reason (*Vernunft)*.[19] To think about the world, then, is to reflect upon a copy of objective reality: "It then becomes clear and certain to him that he does not know a sun and an earth, but only an eye that sees a sun, a hand that feels an earth; that the world around him is there only as representation."[20] Reflection occurs with a copy or repetition of the perceptual world. Underneath conceptual generation is rational knowledge (*Wissen*) that allows a person to know in the generalized abstract what was known intuitively and in the concrete.[21] For these reasons concepts, "can quite appropriately be called representations of representations,"[22] he says.

---

[16] Janaway, *Self and World,* 48.
[17] WWRI, 25; §6.
[18] *Fourfold Root*, 104.
[19] WWRI, 6; §3.
[20] WWRI, 61 §1.
[21] WWRI, 53; §12.
[22] WWRI, 39-40; §9.

On either understanding, causally or abstractedly, Schopenhauer insists that the knowledge we have must start not with the base epistemic distinction between subject and object but from consciousness, "neither from the object nor from the subject, but from the *representation*, which contains and presupposes them both; for the division into object and subject is the first, universal, and essential form of the representation."[23] The subject possessing knowledge inhabits an empirical body, an "immediate object," with a special inner access.[24] Knowledge of our body begins in the brain: “only in the brain does our own body first present itself as an extended, articulate, organic thing.”[25]

To explain how an object becomes an abstract representation, Schopenhauer divides the PSR into four separate classes based on the subject-object distinction.[26] The four parts are: being, becoming, knowing, and willing.[27] Johannes Volkelt calls the claim of subject-object inseparability Schopenhauer's *correlativism*. It entails that representations in the mind are bipolar and need both a subject and an object.[28] He also appears committed to the existence of a non-temporal, non-spatial, non-causal subject.[29]

[23] WWRI, 25; §7.
[24] WWRI, 5; §2.
[25] WWRI, 20; §6.
[26] *Fourfold Root*, 41-2.
[27] WWRI, 5-6; §2.
[28] Janaway, *Self and World*, 136.
[29] Janaway, *Self and World*, 127-8.

The Principle of Sufficient Reason

Subject **Inner Experience** **The Causally Knowing Observer**	**Object** **Outer Experience** **The Realm of Causality**
➢ Being: *a priori* knowledge of time and space (*Gründe*); confer knowledge of cause and effect (logic and math) ➢ Willing-motivations over time; this includes the morality involved and a person's inner character (Wille)	➢ Knowing--*a posteriori* as cause and effect (*Vernunft*; mathematically demonstrated, such as physics and geometry) ➢ Becoming: empirical world in constant flux; never ending passage of time; explanation of physical change

The clear separation of the subject from the object ensures that our final judgments must ultimately reside on evidence as opposed to analytic schemes. There are tautological truths in the subject's mind, such as math and logic, but these conceptual schema stand firmly apart from objects. Rigor inside the mind does not provide empirical certainty, especially as the phenomenal world is in a state of continual change. By itself, rationality misses the necessary temporal stamp. Time resides in both inner and outer experience, spanning the subject-object divide in the PSR. For this reason Wicks calls time the thinnest veil in Schopenhauer's epistemology, the last diaphanous sheath between us and the thing-in-itself.[30]

3. Perceived Time

At this point, Schopenhauer's strong evolutionary leanings start to expose themselves. The world as representation originates: "only with the opening of the first eye, and without this medium of knowledge it cannot be, and hence before this it did not exist. But without that eye, in other words, outside of knowledge, there was

[30] Wicks, 77.

no before, no time. For this reason, time has no beginning, but all beginning is in time."[31] Bringing empirical change into the discussion he connects the beginning of sentient perception with the beginning of time in general:

> "And yet the existence of this whole world remains for ever dependent on that first eye that opened, were it even that of an insect. For such an eye necessarily brings about knowledge, for which and in which alone the whole world is, and without which it is not even conceivable. The world is entirely representation, and as such requires the knowing subject as the supporter of its existence. That long course of time itself, filled with innumerable changes, through which matter rose from form to form, till finally there came into existence the first knowing animal, the whole of this time itself is alone thinkable in the identity of a consciousness. This world is the succession of the representations of this consciousness...Thus we see, on the one hand, the existence of the whole world necessarily dependent on the first knowing being, however imperfect it be; on the other hand, this first knowing animal just as necessarily wholly dependent on a long chain of causes and effects which has preceded it, and in which it itself appears as a small link."[32]

Schopenhauer identifies the observation of succession with the form of the PSR in time, where "succession is the whole essence and nature of time."[33] This makes material objects out in the world, including our bodies, a "*ground of being*," the movements of which occur in time.[34]

Visual Math

Having connected perception with our knowledge of time Schopenhauer maintains that mathematics ultimately stem from our visual abilities. Time is the

[31] WWRI, 31; §7.
[32] WWRI, 30; §7.
[33] WWRI, 8; §4.
[34] WWRI, 6-7; §3.

prerequisite for the fact that we can differentiate and count disparate objects using the PSR. This also means that numbers proceed to infinity because time is endless.[35]

Of the three main theories concerning the origin of pure mathematics, logistic, formalistic or intuitionist, Schopenhauer falls into the last one. It is not from logic or the structure of symbols but from our basic intuition of the possibility of constructing an infinite series of numbers, all generated through the temporal aspect.[36] He argues that at the heart of mathematics lies the principle of succession: "this counting is nothing but intuition or perception a *priori*...pure intuition in time." This makes the whole content of arithmetic and algebra a method for the abbreviation of counting.[37]

Science has leveraged the power of mathematics to understand empirical causality, deducting reasonable causes from necessary-contingent truths and weighing evidence to make predictions and assess accuracy. Our understanding of the laws of nature have been accomplished using the language of mathematics. Because numbers can be expressed in the abstract, this allows for "certainty and definiteness of abstract knowledge." Concepts need a corresponding empirical element.[38] However, converting intuitive into abstract knowledge important for application purposes, numbers contain nothing more than what was already present in perception.[39]

---

[35] WWRI, 9; §4.
[36] Max Black, *The Nature of Mathematics, A Critical Survey* (Littlefield, Adams and Co.: Paterson, New Jersey, 1959), 7, 193.
[37] WWRI, 75; §15. See also 7-8; §3.
[38] WWRI, 54; §12.
[39] WWRI, 54; §12.

Different than math, where perception precedes counting, logic starts from general rules and then tests a specific case to determine the logical coherence. Logic has no regard for the empirical world; the rules remain the same everyday, but the world does not. As a result the logical method is narrow and impractical:

> Hence arises the strange fact that, whereas in other sciences we test truth of the particular case by the rule, in logic, on the contrary, the rule must always be tested by the particular case...It is just as if a man were to consult mechanics with regard to his movements, or physiology with regard to his digestion; and one who has learnt logic for practical purposes is like a man who should seek to train a beaver to build its lodge.[40]

Albeit impractical, pure logic does hold value for Schopenhauer in the consideration of knowledge as a whole. We have the ability to direct our abstract knowledge to what is practical and can use the faculty of reason to consider matters in greater detail using the PSR.[41] Logical rules transcend time in the mind of the subject. This is because new experiences in time are assessed according to logical rules that are always the same. This methodology is what distinguishes logic from science, which understands the world from general rules to the particular case. In this way scientific claims can be tested and verified under general concepts.

4. Perception, Euclid and Einstein

To expose the emptiness of pure mathematical and logical axioms when their content is not driven by perceptual knowledge, Schopenhauer considers Euclidean geometry. Schopenhauer has immense esteem for Euclid, but since it is not derived from perception, claims his assumption of the two-dimensionality of space is wrong.

---

[40] WWRI 46; §9.
[41] WWRI 46; §9.

For all the logical insight, there is no proof Euclid is correct. The abstract axioms are all that exist to verify truth.

Based on Schopenhauer's distinction between reasons for thinking something as opposed to a ground of knowledge, Euclid separated "the knowledge *that* something is from the knowledge *why* it is."[42] The importance of perceived space relations, in time, Euclid wholly overlooked. This is where the advantage of math rests. Derived from our knowledge of time, traced through perception, numbers correspond with reality. Instead, Euclid has hoisted logical proof over perception to reverse the proper line of reasoning. By not starting from perception, Euclid has demonstrated that it is possible to "consistently lie from the beginning,"[43] passing off logical coherence as truth when it is really verisimilitude.

Logically proved, with no applicability in the real world: "We are forced by the principle of contradiction to admit everything demonstrated by Euclid is so, but we do not get to know *why* it is so. We therefore have almost the uncomfortable feeling that we get after a conjuring trick."[44] Schopenhauer insists that perception precede logical proof "because its discovery always started from such a perceived necessity, and only afterwards was the proof thought out in addition."[45]

Schopenhauerian Influenced Field Theory

Abandoning the primacy of perception for axioms and the two-dimensionality of space, Euclid's missteps were followed by Newton and Kant. It was Albert Einstein (1879-1955), an admirer of Schopenhauer, who corrects this mistake. In Einstein's

[42] WWRI, 75; §15.
[43] WWRI, 74; §15.
[44] WWRI 70; §15.
[45] WWRI 73; §15. See also 72; §15.

1920s Berlin study, three figures hung on the wall: Michael Faraday, James Clerk Maxwell and Schopenhauer.

The philosopher conspicuously stands apart from two trailblazers in our understanding of electromagnetism. This prompted Howard to research the source of Einstein's high esteem for Schopenhauer. Starting from perception, Einstein uses the PSR to explain change: "variation occurring according to the causal law, always concerns a particular part of space and a particular part of time, *simultaneously* and in union."[46] He concludes that Einstein's concept of space-time was inspired by the *principium individuationis*: "Surprising as it may seem, Schopenhauer may well have been the source for the idea of spatiotemporal separability. Given how fundamental that idea was to Einstein's conception of a field theory, this may explain Schopenhauer's rather exalted place next to Faraday and Maxwell."[47] Of the classic philosophers he read, Einstein was steeped in Schopenhauer.

After the dust up over which one first invented the calculus in the late seventeenth century, Leibniz or Newton, the mathematical study of physical change became the follow-up controversy. The problems of individuation are played out in the Leibniz-Clarke correspondence.[48] From November 1715-October 1716 Samuel Clarke, a supporter of Newtonian or objective space, exchanged a series of letters with Leibniz, who argued for a relative understanding of motion. The debate highlights the intellectual commitment over the years to two main ideas. First, that

---

[46] WWRI, 10; §4.
[47] Don Howard, "A Peek Behind the Veil of Maya, Einstein, Schopenhauer and the Historical Background of the Conception of Space for the Individunationism of Physical Systems." John Earman & John Norton (eds.), *The Cosmos of Science*. University of Pittsburgh Press. 87--152 (1997); 87-88.
[48] Howard, 89.

spatiotemporal separation is an objective feature of spacetime; second, that this is sufficient to serve as a ground for the differentiation of systems. This discussion reverberated through the philosophical community over the years, eventually reaching Kant.[49]

Special and General Relativity

Starting from the observer's perception of spacetime,[50] Einstein's field theory is divided into special and general relativity. Beginning with special relativity (1905), motion is understood from the subject's perspective by positing the speed of light as the universal frame of reference for all observers. Causal time is identified with the perspective of the observer, with the result close to the position Schopenhauer describes here: "We witness causality as a change of states, since time always marches forth, as the position of an object changes its position through space."[51]

Time is held constant in classical Newtonian mechanics, but tying causality through motion in spacetime, the malleability of time exposes itself depending on the rate of speed at which the observer is traveling. Moving faster through spacetime slows down time, going slower speeds it up. This malleability is referred to as time dilation, predicted and experimentally confirmed in October1971 by the Hafele–Keating experiment. Airplanes containing four cesium-beam atomic clocks flew twice around the world, first eastward, then westward. Afterwards the clocks were compared against the stationary clocks at the United States Naval Observatory.

---

[49] For further information see H.G Alexander, *Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1956). Of course, Kant's Transcendental Aesthetic assumes space and time as *a priori*.
[50] Lawrence Sklar, *Space, Time and Spacetime* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 158-193. The classic introduction to relative field theory is Martin Gardner's *Relativity Simply Explained* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1997).
[51] WWR 9; §4.

Consistent with the predictions of relativity, the three sets of clocks differed with one another. The airborne clocks had gained about 0.15 microseconds compared to the ground based clock in the Observatory in Washington, D.C. This experiment established the clock paradox with respect to macroscopic clocks.[52]

Moving over to general relativity (1916), the motion of objects with the difference between it and the previous version is the inclusion of gravity. Newton was able to calculate gravity but did not know what it is. Unlike Kant, who claims our knowledge of gravity is *a priori*, Schopenhauer claims gravity can only be known *a posteriori*.[53] General relativity places a similar empirical requirement on mass to determine the existence of gravity. Gravity *is* the warping of the fabric of space-time by the mass of the object.

The importance of geometry derived from perception is hard to underestimate in the general theory. Einstein does not mistakenly assume the two-dimensionality of space as does Kant. Euclid's *Elements*, from the late third century before the common era, were long thought to be the supreme example of logical accuracy. The major problem is one so obvious it goes unnoticed: the assumption of space as two-dimensional, something our perception tells us otherwise. By assuming three-dimensions, it is possible to build other geometric systems that are not only consistent but more accurate.

---

[52] See J.C. Hafele and R. E. Keating in *Science*, volume 177 (1972). In addition to the malleability of time mass also takes on variability, becoming denser with more energy at high rates of speed. This is captured in his famous equation of $E = mc^2$. That massive amounts of energy can be released from small amounts of matter, in this case atoms.

[53] WWRI, 11; §4.

There are a number of geometries based on three-dimensional space, but the one Einstein adopted was from Hermann Minkowski (1864-1909), who combined space and time into a single point. There are two frames of reference possible from the double centered cone at each event in spacetime, providing for a resting frame and a moving frame. Between these two perspectives in Einstein-Minkowski spacetime, each observer slices up spacetime in one's own way. There is no universal way to slice up. Everyone is in motion and time is relative. Under both special and general relativity, there can be no certainty regarding simultaneity. With no absolute frame of reference outside the observer, determining whether or not two events happened at the same time is not impossible. Light is constant (c=186,000 ft/sec) for all observers, but simultaneity is still unable to be agreed upon.[54]

Schopenhauer's profound connection to Einstein assists in understanding the direct collision between the observer's existence and knowledge of the physical world. I pick up this issue of realism later on in my fourth chapter, arguing that Schopenhauer anticipates the observer paradox in quantum physics. The appropriateness of his subject-first-epistemology leads me to agree with Magee's position that the predictions of modern science are from the Kantian-Schopenhauerian perspective.[55]

5. The Dream of Life

Unable to stop the causal flux of the world, stoppage must take place in the subject's psyche, with the representation lifted from perception. Boxed in by *a priori*

[54] Sklar, *Space, Time and Spacetime*, 72-78. For Einstein's spacetime equation see chapter 7 in Robert Geroch's *General Relativity from A to B* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 159-185.
[55] Magee, 112.

knowledge making objective knowledge inaccessible, the PSR "must ultimately stop at such a *qualitas occulta*, and thus at something wholly obscure. It must therefore leave the inner nature of a stone just as unexplained as that of a human being."[56]

However much we may investigate from the outside, nothing can be obtained but images and names. Schopenhauer says: "We are like a man who goes round a castle, looking in vain for an entrance, and sometimes sketching the façades. Yet this is the path that all philosophers before me have followed."[57] How is one supposed to go about doing metaphysics? To get behind the castle walls, or appearance of any object, he suggests we look inward.

[56] WWRI, 80; §15.
[57] WWRI, 99; §17.

CHAPTER 2

The Timeless Wille

WWR Second Book: The World as Wille. First Aspect.

Instinct Precedes Reason

From epistemology we move to metaphysics. In Book II Schopenhauer proposes that our felt existence provides a solution to the "riddle of the world."[1] After perception, bridging the subject-object divide in the mind with the EN transcends the PSR . Switching from time combined with space to the inner and non-representational Now, a glimpse into metaphysical reality, the *Wille-zum-Leben*, becomes possible. As the single reality of everything, shifting to the Now exposes Wille's monism. With everything one Wille, we become microcosmic examples of the macrocosm.[2]

Using the PSR gives only part of the answer behind phenotypic explanations of evolution. Schopenhauer's Wille is an ontological explanation for the inherent violence found everywhere in nature. While he agrees with Darwin that human reason developed in response to instinctual survival, Schopenhauer thinks that this is only half the answer.

1. Materialism and Idealism: Ontological Dead Ends

A brief summary of Schopenhauer's objections to a materialism or an idealism approach to metaphysics assists in understanding his turn inward for answers. Materialism forgets about the subject; rationalism falls victim to overlooking the perceptual-objective real world.

[1] WWRI, 428.
[2] WWRI, 162-3; §29.

His first objection to materialism is that whenever we employ the PSR, existence of the Wille the life-force remains overlooked. By "stupidly denying the vital force"[3] materialism is guilty of denying the existence of what an object is in itself. Science "will tell us about these representations," he claims, "only in so far as they occupy time and space, in other words, only in so far as they are quantities."[4] This means that any explanation of mechanical operations of matter such as physics, chemistry and natural science will determine properties of matter and will not penetrate to metaphysical truths. The forces of impenetrability, gravitation, rigidity, fluidity, cohesion, elasticity, heat, light, magnetism and electricity "show us nothing more than mere connexions, relations, of one representation to another, form without any content."[5] Materialism mistakes the form for reality: "the foolish attempt to reduce the content of all phenomena to their mere form, when ultimately nothing but form would remain."[6]

Schopenhauer's second objection against materialism is that it reduces the Wille to a force of nature. Analysis of the parts misses what always remains over original forces found throughout nature. This is where Schopenhauer and Darwin part ways with one another. Cause and effect should not be mistaken for metaphysical insight. Crude materialism seeks to "reduce all the forces of nature to thrust and counter-thrust as its "thing-in-itself."[7] With all these difficulties, he agrees with Kant that it is "absurd to hope for the Newton of a blade of grass."[8]

---

[3] WWRI, 123; §24.
[4] WWRI, 96; §17.
[5] WWRI, 121; §24.
[6] WWRI, 139; §27.
[7] WWRI, 123; §24.
[8] WWRI, 143; §27

Where materialism mixes up causes with the life-force, idealist metaphysics denies empirical reality, admitting concepts as a *Grund*. Causal relationship between concepts is considered legitimate, while the phenomenal world from which they are taken is left behind. Attributing an overall pointlessness to empirical knowledge, he thinks the slide into egoism is inevitable. Not dealing with the actual nature of objects as timeless Wille rationality often appeals to analogy in order to explain similarities. If consciousness is not extended to other objects outside of oneself, it leads to theoretical egoism/solipsism.[9] Next, we turn to how the subject's double knowledge of oneself as representation and Wille, seeks to avoid impenetrability of form and bypass solipsism.

2. Recognizing the Importance of You

Starting from the empirical instance of the Wille, Schopenhauer identifies the Wille with a material body: "the will is knowledge *a priori* of the body, and ...the body is knowledge *a posteriori* of the will."[10] We cannot be aware of the Wille's existence without first perceiving it as representation residing in temporality (the case of music aside).

Imagine you are looking at yourself in a full length mirror. Starting from your feet, your eyes drift upwards and scan your body to your head. Eventually your gaze meets itself in the mirror. In an act of introspection you ask yourself, what am I? The life-force you feel inside but cannot fully understand Schopenhauer says "is given in the word *Will*." This alone reveals the inner mechanism of one's being, actions.[11] With

[9] WWRI, 103-4; §19. Atwell, *Schopenhauer on the Character of the World*, 69-70.
[10] WWRI, 100-1; §18.
[11] WWRI, 100; §18.

only one side of all other phenomena known to us as representation,[12] our body is the most exceptional object in the world.

This unique "double knowledge of our own body" allows us to know what is behind our eyes, "not as representation, but as something over and above this, and hence what it is *in itself*."[13] The body exists as representation, but we are afforded unique access to its content (*Inhalt* or *Gehalt*) behind the appearance. As immediate representation through the feeling (*Gefühl*) body everyone possesses direct knowledge (*Erkenntnis*) that they are Wille, making it the second philosophical truth behind intuitive causality.[14]

Schopenhauer references the four components of the PSR to explain how the first class of representations finds its explanation in the fourth class.[15] The first aspect is continual becoming. We understand causality as a reason for why something happens. This leads to our causal judgments about the world, the second aspect. Time and space are the third aspect. In the fourth class lies our ability to know ourselves as Wille. What motivates us to act? The Wille. Why is the world in a continual state of becoming? The same Wille. What we feel in us causes the perpetual motion we see. Atwell neatly characterizes Schopenhauer's position here as "motivation clarifies causation."[16] Schopenhauer elaborates on this inner representation though the body that is not a representation at all:

---

[12] WWRI, 125; §24. See also 103, §18.
[13] WWRI, 103; §19. See also 162; §29.
[14] WWRI, 102; §18; See also 109; §21.
[15] WWRI, 102; §18.
[16] Atwell, *Schopenhauer on the Character of the World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); 93.

> Only from a comparison with what goes on within me when my body performs an action from a motive that moves me, with what is the inner nature of my own changes determined by external grounds or reasons, can I obtain an insight into the way in which those inanimate bodies change under the influence of causes, and thus understand what is their inner nature...to understand from my own movement on motives the inner nature of the simplest and commonest movements of an inorganic body which I see ensuing on causes. I must recognize the inscrutable forces that manifest themselves in all the bodies of nature as identical in kind with what in me is the will, and as differing from us only in degree.[17]

With other objects differing only in degree from us, Young claims that what Schopenhauer is interested in is the *difference* in behavior among objects. He references the Black Box problem to demonstrate Schopenhauer's position: inputs are fed into a black box and outputs are produced. The knowledge that we are Wille, in the EN, allows us to turn the black box somewhat transparent.

As to the certainty of this entire process, Young explains: "Something about the body in question ensures that that cause produces precisely that effect (the same cause would produce different effects in other bodies) but we have no idea what it is; it is a '*qualitas occulta*.'"[18] So, while he thinks we have the practical ability to determine the Wille's existence, Schopenhauer follows his previous subjectivity and admits it is ultimately an interpretive endeavor.[19]

Young identifies two specific reasons Schopenhauer extends Wille to inorganic nature. The first is the law of homogeneity taken from Plato: the second is that physics requires completion by metaphysics or else it would "condemn the physical sciences to ultimate meaninglessness."[20] Extending the Wille to non-sentient

---

[17] WWRI, 125-6; §24. See also WWRII, Book II, §43.
[18] Young, *Schopenhauer*, 65; WWRI, 99-100, 109; §18 and §21 respectively.
[19] Atwell, *Schopenhauer on the Character of the World*, 111.
[20] Young, 75-6, WWRI, 105, §19; and 111, §22.

life is perhaps the hardest metaphysical pill to swallow. Schopenhauer admits that a certain amount of optionality comes into play since the final cause is problematic.[21] However, at the end of the day the Wille must be extended to inorganic nature.

Unknowable But Through Action

The energy available to reason, and what pushed evolution toward the creation of rationality, comes from the Wille. Kicking and screaming before we understand such behavior, our knowledge of the Wille precedes our rational understanding.[22] In Book II, Schopenhauer is concerned not with conscious, but with unconscious willing.

Willkür is acting with knowledge of motives, a sub-category of Wille. Conscious will, however, remains secondary to the non-conscious Wille.[23] Schopenhaur explains, Wille is the unconscious drives throughout the natural world: "the light of knowledge penetrates into the workshop of the blindly operating will, and illuminates the vegetative functions of the human organism."[24] The Wille, "as blindly urging force...constitutes the basis of our own phenomenon, as it expresses itself in our actions, and also in the whole existence of our body itself."[25]

Reason, developed from the unconscious, comes on the scene with a limited ability to inspect the subconscious. It is "a mere *μηχανή* [vehicle], a means for preserving the individual and the species, just like any organ of the body...destined originally to serve the will for the achievement of its aims, knowledge remains almost

[21] Young, 74-5; WWRI, 118, §23; 126, §24 ,146, §27.
[22] WWRI, 102; §18.
[23] Atwell, *Schopenhauer on the Character of the World*; 202, 103.
[24] WWRI, 151; §27.
[25] WWRI, 117; §23.

throughout entirely subordinate to its service."[26] Even though reason calculates how the Wille acquires what it wants, it cannot demonstrate it because everything known originates from it.

The Wille's unity might be unknowable; nevertheless, recognition of eternal aspects are possible through individual acts in time, "which is the form of my body's appearing, as it is of every body."[27] Individual acts follow with strict necessity from the effect of the motive on the particular character.[28] Going back to our previous example, looking at yourself in the mirror helps see Schopenhauer's point here. Only carrying out the motive attains the desires we want. Deliberations of reason over what to do at some future time is not a real act of Wille: "Only the carrying out stamps the resolve; till then, it is always a mere intention that can be altered; it exists only in reason, in the abstract. Only in reflection are willing and acting different; in reality they are one."[29] Our cohesive narrative created alongside our life as Wille is done over time.[30]

Furthermore, the way he frames our worldly knowledge as series of representations, Schopenhauer's system makes a demand for a unitary subject of experiences or apperception.[31] Janaway remarks: “the subject is self-conscious, but its primary awareness is of itself as a striving being. This covers a continuum from

[26] WWRI, 152; §27.
[27] WWRI, 101-2, §18.
[28] WWRI, 113;§23. See also 109; §21.
[29] WWRI, 100-1; §18.
[30] Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer’s Philosophy* (Clarendon Press: Oxford), 1989; 127-128.
[31] Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer’s Philosophy*, 301.

actions with conscious rational motives, through to instructive acts born out of pre-rational drives."[32]

Schopenhauer's use of the present moment in a non-causal way leads Wicks to hold that Schopenhauer's position on metaphysical knowledge is best understood as epistemic degrees of translucency. Time is the thinnest veil covering the Wille's "passage into visibility, its objectification, has gradations as endless as those between the feeblest twilight and the brightest sunlight, the loudest tone and the softest echo."[33] I agree with Wicks that Schopenhauer understands the veil as diaphanous and not as opaque.[34] We see the Wille in other objects because we know ourselves as Wille. With the Wille existing at all times, it exists atemporally but can be equated with the body only in an omnitemporal way (where the matter of the physical body persists over time). This translucency, as I understand it, is possible because of our sense of time as the recurring present.

3. Objectification of the Wille

Built on top of this monism are four ways I see Schopenhauer using the concept of objectification. 1. forces of nature, 2. matter/physical body itself, 3. bodily motion and 4. the Wille's self-awareness based on the form.

The first way he understands the Wille is as a pervasive force existing everywhere at the same time. Schopenhauer considers: "if I abstract from my character, and then ask why in general I will this and not that, no answer is possible, because only the *appearance* or *phenomenon* of the will is subject to the principle of

[32] Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 296-7.
[33] WWRI, 128; §25.
[34] Wicks, 76-77. Wicks discusses Schopenhauer's position on knowledge of the thing-in-itself in the WWRII, Chapter XVIII, "On the Possibility of Knowing the Thing-in-Itself."

sufficient reason, not the will itself, which only the in this respect may be called *groundless*."[35] The groundless (*grundlos*) nature explains the Wille's atemporality and its unfathomable nature, "because it is the content, the *what* of the phenomenon, which can never be referred to the form of the phenomenon, to the *how*, to the principle of sufficient reason"[36]

Unknowable to us the Wille is an all pervasive force existing in a single state and strives forever. With our bodies we know directly we are Wille and feel it as perpetual want and need. Everything is Wille "because it is groundless,"[37] a single life-force responsible for instantiating motion through the physical form of all objects. This non-representational way the Wille is objectified is very important concerning Schopenhauer's aesthetics. Regarding Book II I agree with Janaway's assessment that Schopenhauer maintains a critical distinction between objectification (or adequate objectification) of the Wille versus an act of Wille.[38] The way he understands objectification here is through perceiving the form.

The second way Schopenhauer understands the Wille's objectification is as adequate. This refers to how we know an instance where the Wille has been objectified, and is know to us using the PSR. I take Schopenhauer here to hold the position that we must shift our mind back to the object as understood causally. Schopenhauer uses this secondary understanding to denote the Wille as physically objectified. The object, as I see it, does not have to be in motion. A rock cannot move

[35] WWRI, 106; §20.
[36] WWRI, 125; §24.
[37] WWRI, 125; §24.
[38] Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 213.

under its own volition but does not cease to be Wille. Similarly, we do not stop being Wille sitting still thinking.

The third way Schopenhauer understands the objectification of the Wille is as motion itself. He calls this "the adequate objectification of the will through actions."[39] He is clear that every act is driven by the Wille. "Every true act of his will is also at once and inevitably a movement of his body; he cannot actually will the act without at the same time being aware that it appears as a movement of the body."[40] If the body does not appear to move, then Schopenhauer claims no *act* of Wille can be ascribed. From the standpoint of objectification, knowing ourselves as Wille (objectification 1) allows for the validity to infer that other bodies in question produce similar effect (objectification 2 and 3).

4. Macrocosm of Wille

Self-understanding grants access to the reality of the entire world.[41] Using reason we have the ability to recognize the Wille's macrocosmic perspective as identical to our own inner being as its microcosm. This "twofold regard"[42] of ourselves makes it impossible to understand the Wille without accounting for this macroscopic perspective.

Atwell suggests that Schopenhauer introduces into philosophy the macranthropologist turn.[43] This is the world as a great human being. As the foundational act of will, the World-Wille selects particular Ideas based on the consideration they must be jointly realizable, "Its content is the overarching Idea in

[39] WWRI, 152; §27.
[40] WWRI, 100, §18.
[41] Atwell, *Schopenhauer on the Character of the World*, 101.
[42] WWRI, 162, §29.
[43] Atwell, *Schopenhauer on the Character of the World*, 98.

which all the individual Ideas are harmonised."[44] I see a necessary shift in time that must happen between these two perspectives, from causal to eternally recurring under the Now. Atwell mentions this change in time, but gives no further details.[45]

Recognizing we are only one part that contributes to the working of the whole, the monism of Wille allows Schopenhauer to develop what is today called the Gaia Hypothesis, taking the name of the Greek goddess of the planet Earth.[46] The theory proposes that all the components of the Earth are themselves integrated into a single and self-regulating system.

Schopenhauer, claims Young, uses teleology on a plurality of levels to express the idea of the inner suitability of species. The Wille is responsible for the purpose-directed activities of the species. There are certain activities that we consider to be suitable and that accompany the representation, so Schopenhauer swaps out ordinary causation for final causation and views all motion as an intended act of Wille. Young adds that Schopenhauer's transition to the metaphysical Wille as the drive of action that acts "in" and "on" circumvents the paradox that the Wille must be aware of its own actions.[47]

I see Schopenhauer placing an ultimate aim of self-awareness on all levels of existence through the fourth way he uses the notion of objectivity, as self-awareness. Objects represent the Wille's knowledge of itself at different levels of awareness. That objects aim for some predetermined way to know the world still means the Wille, as

---

[44] Young, 78; WWRI, 158-9; §28.
[45] John Atwell, *Schopenhauer on the Character of the World--The Metaphysics of Will* (Berkeley: University of California Press), 1995; x.
[46] Young, *Schopenhauer*, 77. See also James Lovelock, *Gaia, A New Look at Life on Earth* (2001). Lovelock is credited for providing the current formulation from his work with NASA in the 1960s.
[47] Young, *Schopenhauer*, 71-77.

pure instinct, is purposeless.[48] Harmony "goes only so far as to render possible the *continuance* of the world and its beings, which without it would long since have perished. Therefore it extends only to the continuance of the species and of the general conditions of life, but not to that of individuals."[49]

Young says the World-Wille "is the perpetrator of all this horror. So it is evil. But since it is the world it is also the *victim* of its own evil. It bears all the suffering it creates. Since every part of the world is part of the world-organism, every time an animal sinks its teeth in the flesh of another, the world-will sinks *its* teeth in its *own* flesh."[50]

5. Ideas, Hierarchal Assimilation and Beauty

Schopenhauer introduces the term "Idea" in Book II, expanding on *his* formulation of an Idea as Wille moving forward in the WWR. Self-identification with other objects is possible through adopting a non-causal sense of time: "all time-determination is to be left out, for the Idea lies outside time."[51] An Idea stands for us as the relationship between individual things and their eternal forms or prototypes.[52]

Schopenhauer says, "by *Idea* I understand every definite and fixed *grade of the will's objectification*, in so far as it is thing-in-itself and is therefore foreign to plurality. These grades are certainly related to individual things as their eternal forms, or as their prototypes."[53] Based on natural kinds (mind-independent groupings), Young

---

[48] Young, 71.
[49] WWRI, 161; §28.
[50] Young, 82; See WWRI, 147; §27.
[51] WWRI, 159; §28. See also 160.
[52] WWRI, 129-130, §25.
[53] WWRI, 130; §25. Schopenhauer quotes Diogenes, "Plato teaches that the Ideas exist in nature, so to speak, as patterns or prototypes, and that the remainder of things only resemble them, and exist as their copies."

says: “Ideas are individual acts of will of the form: ‘Let there be lions’, let there be antelopes’ and so on.”[54]

Beauty is related on the level of species, the fulfillment of the potentiality of the form that results in conquering lower Ideas. All life is locked into a permanent struggle against chemical and physical forces against lower Ideas with prior right to that matter.[55] At different levels of perfection across nature, one manifestation of Wille dominates other forms to reach a greater level of ontological distinctness. Victory over lower forms of the Wille results in more perfect species, but "the inner antagonism...shows itself in the never-ending war of extermination of the *individuals* associated of those species."[56] For these reasons Schopenhauer remarks man is a wolf to man, "*homo homini lupus*,"[57] where metaphysical assimilation dictates "The serpent can become the dragon only by swallowing the serpent."[58] This inherent violence is unalterable and essential to the Wille:

> By virtue of such necessity, man needs the animals for his support, the animals in their grades need one another, and also the plants, which again need soil, water, chemical elements and their combinations, the planet, the sun, rotation and motion round the sun, the obliquity of the ecliptic, and so on. At bottom, this springs from the fact that the will must live on itself, since nothing exists besides it, and it is a hungry will. Hence arise pursuit, hunting, anxiety, and suffering.[59]

All the natural forces in nature fall under the domain of the Wille,[60] exhibiting themselves at the lowest grades of the Wille's objectification.[61] This includes gravity,

---

[54] Young, *Schopenhauer*, 77.
[55] WWRI, 146; §27.
[56] WWRI, 161; §28. See also 146; §27.
[57] WWRI, 147; §27. Schopenhauer references Empedocles, Aristotle and Plautus regarding the violence associated with being alive
[58] WWRI, 145; §27.
[59] WWRI, 154; §28.
[60] WWRI, 111; §22.
[61] WWRI, 130; §26.

felt and seen as "constant striving,"[62] for example, you will fight gravity until the day you die.

6. The Great Chain of Wille

Until the late eighteenth century most educated people in the West accepted without question the conception of the universe as a Great Chain of Being. The Catholic Church formulated the Great Chain using philosophical concepts from ancient Greece. It is my position that Schopenhauer's microcosmic-macrocosmic view of Wille imports the notion of ontological perfection found in the Great Chain of Being, in addition to a sense of Darwinian evolution.

Continuity throughout nature is explained by an infinite number of links ranging in hierarchical order. Species are ranked in a series that rise from nothingness to the inanimate realm of plants, then to animals, then to humans, up through angels and the immaterial in the heavens, reaching the top of the Chain with God, the *ens perfectissimum*.[63] A static picture of the world with no hint of evolution, every object has a fixed ontological place reflected through their appearance.[64]

According to Lovejoy, Plato and Aristotle constitute the philosophical roots of the Great Chain of Being, the principle of plenitude found in Plato and the principle of continuity found in Aristotle. With respect to the former, Lovejoy examines the Idea of the Good and the deity in the *Timaeus* and finds the principle of plenitude, "the thesis that the universe is a *plenum formarum* in which the range of conceivable diversity of all kinds of living things is exhaustively exemplified" and "that creation

---

[62] WWRI, 164; §29.
[63] Edward P. Mahoney, "Lovejoy and the Hierarchy of Being," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 48, No. 2 (April-June 1987): 211.
[64] Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being* (Harvard University Press: Cambridge, 1964), 59.

must be as great as the possibility of existence and commensurate with the productive capacity of a 'perfect' and inexhaustible Source, and that the world is better the more things it contains.[65]

With natural abundance derived from Plato, we turn our attention to Aristotle, who provides the Great Chain with biological hierarchy that "gave rise to *a* linear series of classes...such a series Aristotle observed tends to show a shading-off of the properties of one class into those of the next rather than a sharp distinction between them."[66] From Aristotle's *scala naturae*, Lovejoy claims to find the vague notion of an ontological scale along with a principle of unilinear gradation, and that these were added to Plato's principle of plenitude that demands fullness in the universe. It was chiefly Aristotle, who suggested to naturalists and philosophers of later times the idea of arranging species (i.e., natural kinds) cohesively into a single graded *scala naturae* according to their degree of "perfection."[67] Aristotle provides the Great Chain with the base order needed to establish grades of biological hierarchy by this principle of continuity into natural history. However, Aristotle's *scala naturae* did not presuppose perfection beyond humans, as did Plato or Christianity, Schopenhauer's stance too.

7. Differences With Darwin

Both Schopenhauer and Darwin apply similar methods but reach very different conclusions, mainly because of what sense of temporality is dominant.

[65] Lovejoy, 52, 59.
[66] Lovejoy, 56.
[67] Lovejoy, 58.

Darwin's argument in *The Origin of Species* (1859) and Schopenhauer's formulation of his views 40 years earlier here in Book II are both inductive.[68] Schopenhauer's argument retreats back to ontological realness in the EN, making the Chain of Wille possible. Opposite the subject, Darwin examines the phenotypic form and stays with functional interaction with the environment.

His concern for ontology leads Schopenhauer to retain the notions of teleology and Ideas that separate Schopenhauer from non-directional and empirical Darwinian evolution. Darwin's argument seeks to posit a monistic origin from the empirical side. The different environmental conditions across the natural world are the result of a single progenitor struggling to live across different environmental conditions. Darwinism admits a hierarchical relationship among species, but nothing past that. Schopenhauer believes the natural hierarchy in the world was created through a *combination* of ontology and material form. Underneath the material evolution of the world is an unchanging Wille[69] still directing life to propagate the species. Preoccupation with phenotypic variation misses the point by overlooking the Wille in favor of environmental pressures.

Atemporal and everywhere at once the Wille pushes toward "endless diversity and multiplicity of the phenomena," and "alone affords us the true explanation of that wonderful, unmistakable analogy of all nature's productions, of that family likeness which enables us to regard them as variations on the same ungiven theme."[70]

---

[68] Charles Darwin, *From So Simple A Beginning; The Four Great Books of Charles Darwin*, ed. Edward O. Wilson (New York: W.W. Norton, 2006). See Ernst Mayr, *One Long Argument* (Harvard University Press: Cambridge), 1991.
[69] Much of my discussion picks up similar points made by Lovejoy in Bently Glass, Owsei Temkin, William L. Straus, Jr. (eds), *Forerunners of Darwin: 1745-1859* (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1959).
[70] WWRI, 154, §28.

The timeless behind the temporal must not be overlooked at the expense of biological form, the force inside the person: "is not subject to the forms of the principle of sufficient reason, that is to say, it is groundless."[71]

Schopenhauer makes an explicit distinction between the evolutionary history of the Idea, in contrast to the form only. Outlining the uniformity of natural laws that Darwin also assumes, he reminds us that every empirical object is simultaneously an Idea:

> The infallibility of the laws of nature contains something astonishing, indeed at times almost terrible, when we start from knowledge of the individual thing, and not from that of the Idea. It might astonish us that nature does not even once forget her laws...today just as much as a thousand years ago, the definite phenomenon appears at once and without delay...It is the ghostly omnipresence of natural forces which then astonishes us.[72]

With regard to the development of reason, Schopenhauer finds some room to agree with Darwin. Visually manifest as an organ, rationality is as an expedient for the preservation of the individual and the propagation of the species, represented by the brain.[73] Of course Darwin does not prescribe to Schopenhauer's view that "rational knowledge...belongs to the inner being of the higher grades of the will's objectifications."[74]

Despite the differences there are three areas of agreement between Schopenhauer and Darwin: 1. The passage of time and uniformity of nature's laws; 2. procreation as the purpose of living; 3. the unforgiving nature of the real world.

---

[71] WWRI, 136; §26.
[72] WWRI, 133, § 26.
[73] WWRI, 150, §27.
[74] WWRI, 152; § 27.

On this third agreement, Darwin was never able to explain the source of nature's inherent violence. The Wille offers a possible solution to this unresolved issue, the problem of evil. Sounding very Darwinian, Schopenhauer describes this conflict: "No victory without struggle; since the higher Idea or objectification of will can appear only by subduing the lower Ideas, it endures the opposition of these."[75]

Next we turn to the third book where Schopenhauer claims knowledge can allow temporality to withdraw from the subjection of the Wille; to "throw off its yoke, and, free from all the aims of the will, exist purely for itself, simply as a clear mirror of the world; and this is the source of art." In the fourth book this self-elimination of the Wille through knowledge can bring about a level of resignation, "the ultimate goal, and indeed the innermost nature of all virtue and holiness, and is salvation from the world."[76]

[75] WWRI, 146; §27.
[76] WWRI, 152, §.27.

CHAPTER 3

Aesthetics and Transcendence

Third Book: The World as Representation. Second Aspect.

Salvation Through the Aesthetic Now

At the close of the second book, Schopenhauer has brought the reader to the lowest point in the WWR. No honest person will admit optimism in the long run, especially given necessary violence of the Wille. Without it, life would not exist. Life is a curse, not a blessing. If Schopenhauer's system ended here, life would be rightly considered to be pessimistic. His attitude in the second half of the WWR is far from desperate.

Thomas Mann compared the first four books of the WWR to a symphony in four movements. Book II represents the low point and we ascend from here on out. "The work as a whole is shaped, therefore, like a valley. Books I and II descend to its depths, Books III and IV rise up out of them."[1] In Book III Schopenhauer maintains the Wille can be momentarily silenced through aesthetic contemplation of the eternal Ideas.[2] Considering an object as Idea is at the heart of Schopenhauer's theory of value, connected to his belief in a better consciousness. It remains one of the most insightful views into the meaning of artistic sentiment and production ever written.

With the exception of the artistic genius, it is extremely difficult for most people to suppress the Wille for prolonged periods of time to recognize the Idea behind objects across nature's spectrum. For this reason, the true artist pays a hefty psychological price for genuine insight into the Wille's inner violence. Here

[1] Young, 104.
[2] WWRI, 176; §32.

Schopenhauer lends his voice in support of the connection between genius and madness. With time flying, he considers this ability of the genius an evolutionary adaptation closely linked to madness (i.e., suspension of reality). Nevertheless, through some effort an individual can learn to sustain a level of willful detachment from the world in the AN.

The spectrum of fine arts represents the Wille's gradient of objectification, where some artistic forms are more penetrating than others. The Idea is more easily seen, and more developable by the artist, moving up the hierarchy of self-awareness. The areas discussed are architecture, poetic arts, sculpture and drama. Singling out sculpture I argue Rodin's iconic *The Thinker* (1902) helps explain what I see Schopenhauer maintaining with regards to what the body is doing during contemplation. When the mind has reached the Now through an Idea, as Rodin reminds us, the body stops moving.

Music, the art closest to pure time itself, stands apart from the rest. As a direct copy of the Wille, he places music in a category of its own, making the genius composer the source of more insight using notes rather than words. Here Wagner's commentary on Schopenhauer's claim that music is a copy of reality, found in his essay on *Beethoven* is examined. The end of the chapter recaps the differences between a Schopenhauerian and Platonic Idea.

1. Schopenhauer's General Aesthetic Sentiments: Beauty and the Sublime

Aesthetics was developed as a philosophical discipline in 1735, when Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten, a fellow German, introduced it in his Halle master's thesis to *epistêmê aisthetikê*. He derived it from the Greek *aisthanomai*, which translates into the science of what is sensed and imagined through sensual perception. The type of understanding Baumgarten sought was an appreciation of natural objects outside any evidence of human design: imagination. Baumgarten's codification of aesthetics was extremely meaningful in the history of thought. At twenty-one years of age he formulated principles together that had been part of philosophy since Plato and Aristotle.[3] In the WWR Schopenhauer follows Baumgarten's establishing definition, proposing a change in time to achieve an aesthetic understanding based on Wille.

Natural Beauty

Schopenhauer claims our sentiment of beauty is determined by inferring how well a particular individual embodies the essential characteristics of the representative species. From the form some level of awareness is also inferred, in tandem with the actions of the body. The eternal Wille has punctured through into the temporal realm long enough to create a timeless prototype in our mind's eye. He explains this makes "the *Idea*, the eternal form, the immediate objectivity of the will at this grade."[4]

The grades of beauty are derived from the species themselves, the method Schopenhauer uses to resolve the issue of *how beautiful* by appealing to nature's

---

[3] Kai Hammermeister, *The German Aesthetic Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 7-11. Outside of Baumgarten's *Meditationes* see Plato's *Republic* and Aristotle's fragmented commentary in the *Poetics*.

[4] WWRI, 179; §34. See also 195; §37.

hierarchy. Judgment must take place inter-species and against others. This provides an Idea with an absolute and relative sense of beauty. It is easier to recognize the Idea in species at the higher levels of manifestation. With increased distinction and intelligence, these objectifications are *more beautiful*. Of course, we sit at the top of the Chain of Wille. Human beauty is the most complete objectification of the Wille available to know.[5] Unlike anything else in the world, nothing "transports us so rapidly into purely aesthetic contemplation as the most beautiful human countenance and form, at the sight of which we are instantly seized by an inexpressible satisfaction and lifted above ourselves and all that torments us."[6]

When a beautiful person enters a room, to Schopenhauer's point, everyone notices. He thinks this ease of recognition points to the *a priori-a posteriori* aspect of aesthetic knowledge. The situation is similar to that of causal knowledge, everyone possesses it but to a differing degrees. The key similarity between them is working from perception. This makes everyone susceptible "to the beautiful and to the sublime; indeed, these words could have no meaning for them. We must therefore assume as existing in all men that power of recognizing in things their Ideas, of divesting themselves for a moment of their personality."[7]

Depending on the level of objectification, and what the observer brings to the table, the Ideas on the Chain of Wille are more or less recognizable according to where the empirical manifestation rests on it. Schopenhauer explains this situation as follows:

---

[5] WWRI, 223; §45.
[6] WWRI, 221; §45.
[7] WWRI, 194-5; §37.

> appears in everything at some grade of its objectivity, and this thing is accordingly the expression of an Idea, everything is also *beautiful*...But one thing is more beautiful than another because it facilitates this purely objective contemplation, goes out to meet it, and, so to speak, even compels it, and then we call the thing very beautiful. This is the case partly because, as individual thing, it expresses purely the Idea of its species through the very distinct, clearly defined, and thoroughly significant relation of its parts. It also completely reveals that Idea through the completeness, united in it, of all the manifestations possible to its species, so that it greatly facilitates for the beholder the transition from the individual thing to the Idea, and thus also the state of pure contemplation.[8]

Overall, Schopenhauer's description of an Idea is one of biological completeness. Of course, we can only judge other creatures this way because we are alive too. This is not causal understanding, its the Now, the present moment as close to the eternal we can get. At this point, the power of the intellect, blind impulse (*bloßer Wille*) can be sufficiently blunted to where it becomes eliminated (*aufgehoben*).[9]

Ideas, the Aesthetic Now and Forgetting Oneself

The idea of accessing a Platonic domain to ward off the strivings of the Wille is found near the very beginning of Schopenhauer's philosophical career. Indicated by his early notebooks, Schopenhauer was enamored with the idea of Platonic transcendence in consciousness since 1813.[10] The term used to describe this aspect of Schopenhauer's philosophy is called the better consciousness (*besseres Bewusstsein*). It denotes what Janaway calls the elevating aspect of abstract thought in Schopenhauer's philosophy. “The timeless better consciousness is associated with happiness, consolation, freedom from pain, and with more explicit religious notions, such as sanctification (*Heiligung*) and even...the peace of God.”[11] The experience of art puts you in a *different* state of mind.[12]

---

[8] WWRI, 210; §41. See also p. 219.
[9] Atwell, *Metaphysics of Will*, 142.
[10] Young, 7.
[11] Janaway, 27-8.

This change is marked by an immediacy in understanding, like a spark in the darkness. He explains: "particular thing at one stroke becomes the *Idea* of its species, and the perceiving individual becomes the *pure subject of knowing*. The individual, as such, knows only particular things; the pure subject of knowledge knows only Ideas."[13] How is this possible? Because we are Wille, "that other kind of knowledge *a priori*, which makes it possible to present the beautiful, concerns the content of phenomena instead of the form, the *what* of the appearance instead of the *how*."[14]

Wicks claims the separateness of the Now offers different insights than absolute time offers.[15] In the AN our thoughts reside with the Idea, released not only from time but also from space.[16] This vertical elevation, as opposed to horizontal, is where Schopenhauer thinks value can be accessed. After viewing an object, a representation of it is held in the mind, dwelled upon, and we slip into the AN. Causal understanding does not leave the realm of perception like this. For this reason, what is of ultimate importance on this planet cannot be accessed through causality alone. Where value lies is the result of witnessing and feeling.[17] Ontological worth lies outside of all notions of causality, where "all distinction of time at once vanishes."[18]

With no beginning and no end, the Now captures the Wille's perfection in an Idea. Similarly, we carry around the one consciousness our entire lives. Concepts exist only in the mind, and since they are acquired using the PSR, concepts cannot

---

[12] WWRI, 437; *Appendix.*
[13] WWRI, 179; §34.
[14] WWRI, 222; §45.
[15] Atwell, *Metaphysics of Will*, 75.
[16] WWRI, 209-10, §41.
[17] Atwell, *Metaphysics of Will*, 144.
[18] WWRI, 209; §41.

grasp universal understanding. Schopenhauer explains this alternative arena of inquiry in a couple of passages:

> The Idea is the unit that has fallen into plurality by virtue of the temporal and spatial form of our intuitive apprehension. The *concept*, on the other hand, is the unity once more produced out of plurality by means of abstraction through our faculty of reason...described as *unitas post rem*, and the former [Idea] as *unitas ante rem*.[19]

> the *concept* is like a dead receptacle in which whatever has been put actually lies side by side, but from which no more can be taken out (by analytical judgements) than has been put in (by synthetical reflection). The *Idea*, on the other hand, develops in him who has grasped it representations that are new as regards the concept of the same name; it is like a living organism, developing itself and endowed with generative force, which brings forth that which was not previously put into it.[20]

Schopenhauer has taken Kant's notion of the synthetic *a priori* (used to explain our knowledge of cause and effect and how induction can be dealt with) and application to a Idea. The visual existence of Wille, a result of a timeless accumulation of incremental gathering, has, like our existence, punctured into existence through the form. Synthetical reflection (AN) on the *a priori* truth we are Wille grants access to the universal well-spring of life. A device of the Wille, the PSR cannot inject life into our understanding. The Idea, then, carries the sense of *lifetime*.

Schopenhauer's main requirement for accessing the Idea is that the knower must lose one's ego. This loss results in the Idea being more objective than concepts. This is where Schopenhauer posits his world-illusion. Abolishing ourselves lifts the veil of māyā from deceiving us; "It sees through the form of the phenomenon, the *principium individuationis*; the egoism resting on this expires with it." When motives are tossed aside for improved knowledge, "the real nature of the world, acting as a

[19] WWRI, 234-5; §49. Universals after the thing, and universals before the thing.
[20] WWRI, 235; §49.

quieter of the will, produces resignation, the giving up not merely of life, but of the whole will-to-live itself."[21] The mind lets go of the body, drifts upward and deliverance via consciousness is achieved.[22] Schopenhauer quips this is akin to the conferred ability to "perceive the beauty of women without hankering after them."[23]

Unless the subject lets go of one's individuality, more objective knowledge cannot be had. Schopenhauer's stance is clear on this point: ego driven understanding is subjective. The Idea of humanity can only be accessed by imaginatively raising the mind in the AN. The Idea of humanity contains all the "qualities, passions, errors, and excellences of the human race, in selfishness, hatred, love, fear, boldness, frivolity, stupidity, slyness, wit, genius...All of these, running and congealing together into a thousand different forms and shapes (individuals), continually produce the history of the great and the small worlds."[24] I quote Schopenhauer at length, in order to promote the context surrounding his position that the Now bears metaphysical superiority to causal time:

> then the earth-spirit would appear and show us in a picture the most eminent individuals, world-enlighteners, and heroes, destroyed by chance before they were ripe for their work. We should then be shown the great events that would have altered the history of the world, and brought about periods of the highest culture and enlightenment, but which the blindest chance, the most insignificant accident, prevented at their beginning. Finally, we should see the splendid powers of great individuals who would have enriched whole world-epochs, but who, misled through error or passion, or compelled by necessity, squandered them uselessly on unworthy or unprofitable objects, or even dissipated them in play. If we saw all this, we should shudder and lament at the thought of the lost treasures of whole periods of the world. But the earth-spirit would smile and say: "The source from which the individuals and their powers flow is inexhaustible, and is as

[21] WWRI, 253; §51.
[22] WWRI, 204; §39.
[23] WWRI, 206; §39.
[24] WWRI, 183-4; §35.

> boundless as are time and space; for, just like these forms of every phenomenon, they too are only phenomenon, visibility of the will. No finite measure can exhaust that infinite source; therefore undiminished infinity is still always open for the return of any event or work that was nipped in the bud. In this world of the phenomenon, true loss is as little possible as is true gain. The will alone is; it is the thing-in-itself, the source of all those phenomena. Its self-knowledge and its affirmation or denial that is then decided on, is the only event in-itself.[25]

Underneath Schopenhauer's description of the Idea of humanity is an assumption of vertical, as opposed to horizontal time.[26] So, how do we know observationally when a person has made this temporal shift? Schopenhauer is not clear on this. Attempting an answer, I see the contemplative aspect behind an Idea requiring an appropriate bodily position. The Wille-body identity claim demands, on some level, empirical knowledge of what the body is doing. What a potentially objective bodily state looks, one where the mind has drifted up to the Idea using vertical time, is explored a bit down the road. Safe to say here, the body is characterized by an overall sedentary posture; where this non-action is against the striving of the Wille witnessed everywhere across nature.

Perfect Wisdom

Curiously, a Schopenhauerian Idea shares this egoless similarity with key concepts in Mahâyâha Buddhism, available looking at the *Prajñāpāramitā* or Perfect Wisdom texts. These consist primarily of the Vagrakkhedikā Prajñāpāramitā or Diamond-Cutter Sūtra, along with the larger and smaller *Prajñā-pāramitā-hridaya-sūtra*. These works, coming out of the Great Vehicle tradition, offer the Buddha's guidance on achieving emptiness through the mind attaining *Nirvāṇa*.

---

[25] WWRI, 183-4; §35.
[26] WWRI, 185; §36.

The overriding message in the Diamond-Cutter is the acceptance of knowledge that cuts across observed differences. "There does not exist in those noble minded Bodhisattvas the idea of self, there does not exist the idea of a being," and neither are there any qualities (dharma) or no-qualities."[27] Real wisdom is incomprehensible, but can only be accessed "after putting aside all ideas" relating to the physical form, thus attaining "Buddha-knowledge" and viewing the world with the "Buddha-eye."[28]

Here an Idea's perfection bears a strong conceptual relationship to the Buddhist perfection of knowledge: "the person who is involved in this perception is no longer an individual, for in such perception the individual has lost himself; he is *pure* will-less, painless, timeless *subject of knowledge*."[29] Only when the viewer has liberated the intellect from the service of the Wille, one's mind "lifted up "wholly and completely above all this," by becoming the "*one* eye of the world" and transporting one's mind to a place where "Happiness and unhappiness have vanished."[30] This was also needed to see the World-Wille in the just discussed lengthy passage by Schopenhauer. He would also agree with the finding in the Diamond-Cutter that "the highest perfect knowledge would not be known by the Tathâgata through the possession of signs,"[31] since what is needed is synthetic *a priori* of the AN.

In both versions of the *Prajñā-pāramitā-hridaya-sūtra*, wisdom quells pain because it is not false knowledge. Only when the ego is let go of can the phenomenal world be seen as empty and unreal. After recognition of the Four Noble Truths, in the

---

[27] E. B. Cowell, ed., *Buddhist Mahâyâha Texts* (Dover Publications: New York, 1969), 117-8, 128-9, 136.
[28] Cowell, 117-8, 128-9, 136.
[29] WWRI, 179; §34. See also 195; §37.
[30] WWRI, 197-8; §37.
[31] Cowell, 141.

larger version is found: "Emptiness is not different from form, form is not different from emptiness. What is form that is emptiness, what is emptiness is form. Thus perception, name, conception, and knowledge also are emptiness."[32] This corresponds to the Wille as the one universal before all objects, empty of content.

Furthermore, "when the envelopment of consciousness has been annihilated, then he becomes free of all fear, beyond the reach of change, enjoying final *Nirvāṇa*."[33] Happiness, where our reality of the world resides, is more intellectual than physical. On this point Schopenhauer remarks, "It is then all the same whether we see the setting sun from a prison or from a palace."[34] Mindpower allows us to overcome environments hostile to the Wille. Lifting up our thoughts by admitting the reality of dire circumstances, a state of ease occurs. This is Schopenhauer's equivalent to *Nirvāṇa*, the sublime.

The Eastern Sublime

Different than beauty, the sublime is "the addition, namely the exaltation beyond the known hostile relation of the contemplated object to the will in general."[35] Reaching sublime heights is possible only after we have inwardly felt as life as a feeble phenomenon of the Wille.[36] He equates, without question, his usage of the sublime with the felt consciousness located in the Upanishads.

Feeling the sublime originates from becoming aware of our own mortality. This is done through witnessing the forces of nature on a large scale, such as stormy weather. This crushes the individual ego, producing the sublime, "the state of

[32] Cowell, 147-8.
[33] Cowell, 148-9.
[34] WWRI, 197 §37.
[35] WWRI, 202; §39.
[36] WWRI, 205; §39.

exaltation."[37] Schopenhauer includes the violent crashing of waves along rugged coastline, spraying water high into the air. "The storm howls, the sea roars, the lightning flashes from black clouds, and thunder-claps drown the noise of storm and sea."[38] This is the full impression of the sublime, caused by the sight of a threatening, destructive power beyond all comparison to the individual.[39] Schopenhauer describes how a foreboding storm brings with it ominous sounds as well as aggressiveness that can turn into the sublime:

> Nature in turbulent and tempestuous motion; semi-darkness through threatening black thunder-clouds; immense, bare, overhanging cliffs shutting out the view by their interlacing; rushing, foaming masses of water; complete desert; the wail of the wind sweeping through the ravines. Our dependence, our struggle with hostile nature, our will that is broken in this, now appear clearly before our eyes...aesthetic contemplation, the pure subject of knowing gazes through this struggle of nature, through this picture of the broken will, and comprehends calmly, unshaken and unconcerned, the Ideas in those very objects that are threatening and terrible to the will. In this contrast is to be found the feeling of the sublime.[40]

In the face of overwhelming violence, annihilation is indifference, given over to chance and quite easy. The individual's Wille is broken with the recognition that we are helpless and dependent on nature.[41] What gives us life also takes it away.

Although death frightens the Wille more than anything else, Schopenhauer believes over time the intellect can temporarily disengage this fear. When this happens those objects so terrible to the Wille can be contemplated as an Idea.[42]

---

[37] WWRI, 201; §39. See also 202.
[38] WWRI, 204; §39.
[39] WWRI, 205; §39.
[40] WWRI, 204; §39.
[41] WWRI, 204-5; §39.
[42] WWRI, 200; §38.

Crushing the individual's ego allows for the acceptance of fate. The truth is easier to accept when the futility of human willing is demonstrated and admitted.[43]

According to Schopenhauer this is the most objective state of mind possible. In humble defeat, the acceptance of this unchangeable truth creates a sense of tranquility. The fearful struggle of nature is viewed as a mental picture, something from which freedom can be obtained:

> If we lose ourselves in contemplation of the infinite greatness of the universe in space and time, meditate on the past millennia and on those to come; or if the heavens at night actually bring innumerable worlds before our eyes, and so impress on our consciousness the immensity of the universe, we feel ourselves reduced to nothing; we feel ourselves as individuals, as living bodies, as transient phenomena of will, like drops in the ocean, dwindling and dissolving into nothing. But against such a ghost of our own nothingness, against such a lying impossibility, there arises the immediate consciousness that all these worlds exist only in our representation, only as modifications of the eternal subject of pure knowing. This we find ourselves to be, as soon as we forget individuality; it is the necessary, conditional supporter of all worlds and of all periods of time. The vastness of the world, which previously disturbed our peace of mind, now rests within us; our dependence on it is now annulled by its dependence on us.[44]

In spite of death's hard inevitability, comfort is obtained by realizing no matter how vast the universe is, the image of the world rests entirely in our consciousness. This salvation through self-identification, an egoless position, Schopenhauer equates with the *Oupnek hat*. He quotes in two different places, "*Hae omnes creaturae in totum ego sum, et praeter me aliud (ens) non est*,"[45] that is, "I am all this creation collectively, and besides me there exists no other being."[46] With the entirety of the world resting on us, our miniscule existence, this awards consolation.

---

[43] WWRI, 201-2; §39.
[44] WWRI, 205; §39.
[45] WWRI, 181, 205-6; §34, 39.
[46] WWRI, 202; §39.

This claim here in Book III, that our dependence on this world is canceled out by its dependence on us,[47] is added to the metaphysical singleness of the Wille from Book II. This can be seen when Schopenhauer specifically locates the sublime with the insight of ontological singleness in the Chandogya Upanishad:

> in such endless succession and variety, in such different forms, all of which are accommodations to the various external conditions, and can be compared to many variations on the same theme. But if we had to convey to the beholder, for reflection and in a word, the explanation and information about their inner nature, it would be best for us to use the Sanskrit formula which occurs so often in the sacred books of the Hindus, and is called *Mahavakya,* i.e., the great word: *'Tat tvam asi,'* which means 'This living thing art thou.'[48]

The Hindu influence on Schopenhauer's aesthetics is profound. When you view the world, you are also looking at yourself. This also means that within all of us lies the source of the whole world. A better understanding of ourselves yields an improved insight into the hearts of others, the AN.

To remain in the serenity of objective knowledge, the Wille must not be provoked. Once it is provoked, Schopenhauer contends the Idea cannot be viewed. For this reason the real opposite of the sublime is the charming or attractive, not ugliness. For this reason its genuine contradiction is usually not noticed. Provocation of the Wille draws the beholder down from pure contemplation. When this occurs he concludes: "Thus the beholder no longer remains pure subject of knowing, but becomes the needy and dependent subject of willing."[49]

---

[47] WWRI, 205-6; §39.
[48] WWRI, 220, §44.
[49] WWRI, 207; §40.

Degrees of the Sublime

The sublime, beauty and Ideas coalesce in the Wille's hierarchy. The natural grade of inequality in nature produces levels of the sublime, from the low objectifications to the higher ones. Based on this Schopenhauer maintains certain objects convey greater levels of sublimity as opposed to others. The result is several degrees of the sublime, "in fact transitions from the beautiful to the sublime, according as this addition is strong, clamorous, urgent, and near, or only feeble, remote, and merely suggested."[50]

The sublime feeling is felt as varying degrees depending on what is afforded by the environment, what it offers us. From weak to strong Schopenhauer's degrees of the sublime are: 1. light, 2. peaceful solitary surroundings, 3. barren rocky landscape, and 4. lightening, thunder impending doom.[51] These are discussed in order.

Starting at the lowest level, light is needed at a minimum to access the sublime. Starting from perception, light is necessary to perceive the visible world. You cannot see anything in the dark so you cannot feel the sublime either. With a perception based epistemology (i.e., causal relationship between subject and object) and by linking feeling with truth, Schopenhauer embraces the philosophical tradition linking light with illuminating the truth. Most notable, and popular, is Plato's allegory of the cave. There are no shadows after a person escapes the cave. Sunlight provides full exposure as to why nature's creatures are as they appear. In the process the shadows of cave life mistakenly considered real are left behind. Beginning at

[50] WWRI, 202; §39.
[51] WWRI, see pp. 202-204; §39.

perception, Schopenhauer also shares this fondness for light in connection to knowledge.

Moving upwards, there are peaceful solitary surroundings where there is little motion and no sound. A boundless horizon, cloudless sky, still vegetation, "perfectly motionless air," no life forms, no moving water and the "profoundest silence" offer emancipation from the cravings of the Wille.[52] Surroundings like these summon us to contemplation because we are emancipated from the Wille's cravings. Hence we feel a touch of the sublime in this scene of solitude and peace because there are "no objects, either favourable or unfavourable a state of pure contemplation is possible.[53] As a result he claims "Such surroundings are as it were a summons to seriousness, to contemplation, with complete emancipation from all willing and its cravings," citing the prairies of the interior of North America as an example.[54]

From here the higher degrees of the sublime are contrasted against this motionlessness and silence at the lower levels. The Wille is more aggressive in the surrounding environment. This heightened hostility translates into an elevated sense of the direct knowledge we are Wille. The world as we know it is dependent upon our existence.

Subsequently, when there is a noted lack of life in the environment, absent of plants and only bare rocks, the Wille becomes frightened. It becomes "filled with alarm through the total absence of that which is organic and necessary for our subsistence." Schopenhauer elaborates: "The desert takes on a fearful character; our mood becomes more tragic. The exaltation to pure knowledge comes about with a

[52] WWRI, 203-4; §39.
[53] WWRI, 203-4; §39.
[54] WWRI, 203-4; §39.

more decided emancipation from the interest of the will, and by our persisting in the state of pure knowledge, the feeling of the sublime distinctly appears."[55]

Although every person is a sublime character oneself, there is general intellectual difficulty for most people. Unable to perceive "the weaker degrees of the impression of the sublime" they will not be able to grasp "the higher and more distinct degrees of that impression."[56] Even though the abundance of natural beauty invites contemplation,[57] most people need assistance to see the Ideas across the different grades of nature.

Enlightenment is tough intellectual business for most people. It can only be had through experience. Instead of putting in the effort to see the Idea, most people resort to the concept unable to hold an interest.[58] With respect to the power which to lie so close to the Wille's pure conflict, he asks: "There always lies so near to us a realm in which we have escaped entirely from all our affliction; but who has the strength to remain in it for long?"[59] Schopenhauer's answer is the aesthetic genius.

3. Lust for Life: The Aesthetic Genius

Unlike most people, the genius artist, endowed with a natural ability to see the Idea, has the opposite problem of most people. Easier conceptual understanding is actually the problem. The method is to drop the content from the PSR: "the nature of *genius* consists precisely in the preeminent ability for such contemplation."[60]

---

[55] WWRI, 204; §39.
[56] WWRI, 202-3; §39.
[57] WWRI, 197; §37.
[58] WWRI, 187; §36.
[59] WWRI, 198; §38.
[60] WWRI, 185; §36.

Since other viewers are only "dimly aware a priori" of the Idea, the artist fills this important ontological gap through the creation of an experience to raise the thoughts to the AN.[61] Few and far between, it is the genius who creates timeless works of art that retain enduring value.[62] This is the aim of art, to communicate the Ideas to others.

Sitting at the summit of other aesthetic creations that followed, these masterpieces express the "highest wisdom." The element he singles out is the way the aesthetic object unfolds in experience. Specifically, how people are "affected by stimuli, and finally by motives."[63] Through a medium, such as sculpture, painting, poetry, or music,[64] viewers are put in a position to edge toward objectivity.

Inspiration Over Imagination

A common mistake, Schopenhauer points out, is to equate imagination with authenticity. Derived from a suspension of intuitive understanding, imagination "has been rightly recognized as an essential element of genius." He continues: "it has sometimes been regarded as identical with genius, but this is not correct."[65] It is more than imagination that allows the genius to attain a will-free comprehension to access the Ideas.[66] Although this imagination might be a condition of genius, "strength of imagination is not evidence of genius; on the contrary, even men with little or no touch of genius may have much imagination."[67]

---

[61] WWRI, 310; §56; 223; §45.
[62] WWRI, 190-1; §36.
[63] WWRI, 233; §48.
[64] WWRI, 184-5; §36.
[65] WWRI, 186; §36.
[66] WWRI, 188; §36.
[67] WWRI, 187; §36.

The key issue is that Ideas are not abstractions for Schopenhauer. This makes the creation process fundamentally instinctual for the real artist. While he does leave room for the importance of imagination, this is better seen as stemming from a heightened feeling of the Wille. The "gift of genius" is unknowably inborn.[68] Even the genius is unaware how the finished product will eventually appear.

Schopenhauer is certainly correct on this point. Trying to predict what a finished work of art will resemble is impossible. A symphony, for instance, is not identifiable with some measurable pre-determined output. An accounting of the steps over the insight misses the point of art. The Idea resembles the living artist. Schopenhauer declares: "Only the genius...is like the organic body that assimilates, transforms, and produces." [69] Jacquette observes the temporal aspect here: "The grasping and clarification of Ideas can evolve along with the making of something that is first unexpected, as an idea takes shape."[70]

What are some of the outward signs of the artist? Schopenhauer thinks they possess the "character of thoughtfulness," as a decided predominance of knowing has overtaken their consciousness. This is pure knowing without any relation to Wille, opposite the spying, vacant faces of many others.[71]

The world as Idea requires the artist to be restless. Inspired action results in frenzied, inefficient activity. Schopenhauer asserts the mark of genius is a dissatisfaction with the present: "that restless zealous nature, that constant search for new objects worthy of contemplation, and also that longing, hardly ever satisfied,

---

[68] WWRI, 235; §49.
[69] WWRI, 235; §49.
[70] Dale Jacquette, "Metaphysics of Appearance and Will in the philosophy of art," in *Schopenhauer, philosophy, and the arts*, (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1996), 15.
[71] WWRI, 188; §36

for men of like nature and stature to whom they may open their hearts."[72] This makes the artist's demeanor anything but subdued. Prone to violent eruptions and irrational passions, the cause is not some intellectual deficiency; it is the "unusual energy of that whole phenomenon of will, the individual genius."[73]

The source of this outward eccentricity lies in the intellect. Extremes are seen everywhere across the world, manifesting themselves as extreme behavior. Schopenhauer explains: the genius "does not know how to strike the mean; he lacks cool-headedness, and the result is as we have said. He knows the Ideas perfectly, but not the individuals."[74]

Compulsively seeking the *Now*, as opposed to the recurring causal *now* in quotidian affairs, wreaks havoc on other aspects of the artist's life.[75] This is especially true in practical arenas, where "a prudent man will not be a genius insofar as and while he is prudent, and a genius will not be prudent insofar as and while he is a genius."[76]

This animation separates the genius from the ascetic, although both positions are from awareness of the Idea. Compelled to act, Schopenhauer thinks the artist is proxy that *absorbs* the pain needed to gain initial insight into the Idea, causing the artist to assist in deep contemplation of Ideas. Outside viewers assume a version of the AN that is tempered from the immersion of the genius in it. The aim is to produce within viewers a similar sympathetic view of the world, to see the surrounding world

[72] WWRI, 186; §36.
[73] WWRI, 190; §36.
[74] WWRI, 194; §36.
[75] WWRI, 188; §36.
[76] WWRI, 189-190; §36.

through their eyes.[77] Other subjects can become egoless through art precisely because the playwright "bears the cost of producing that play,"[78] with no access to the AN without it. He explains:

> This anticipation is the *Ideal*; it is the *Idea* in so far as it is known *a priori*, or at any rate half-known; and it becomes practical for art by accommodating and supplementing as such what is given *a posteriori* through nature. The possibility of such anticipation of the beautiful *a priori* in the artist, as well as of its recognition *a posteriori* by the connoisseur, is to be found in the fact that artist and connoisseur are themselves the "in-itself" of nature, the will objectifying itself. [79]

Schopenhauer also implies that salvation *from* the world as Wille is not possible if the sublime egoless Now is not conveyed. With the initial pain of insight dispersed by the artist overcoming her/his ego, the participating viewer has been helped along the path of insight into the Ideas. Legitimate art, Schopenhauer maintains, is produced for its own sake. Just as being alive is no good for anything other than itself. Egoless insight is not associated with expectant fame or reward. Neither is value properly determined through utility. It is actually the uselessness of the AN that gives way to the source of worth. In the end appeal is determined by both the thoughtfulness of the artist and personal ability, also a measure of an individual's intellectual worth.[80]

Madness

Insight into the Ideas is not without a price. The true and profound knowledge of the inner nature of the world is where the genius stops.[81] This destination is always the Wille's violence. Continual exposure to the Wille's violence

[77] WWRI, 218; §44.
[78] WWRI, 267; §52
[79] WWRI, 222; §45.
[80] WWRI, 234; §49.
[81] WWRI, 267; §52.

causes a sort of psychological scarring, left behind by inspirational insight. Too long a submersion leads to madness, the distinguishing outward feature of the genius.

More exactly, Schopenhauer understands madness as a memory disorder, forgetting causal knowledge. He explains this deficiency:

> mad people do not generally err in the knowledge of what is immediately *present*; but their mad talk relates always to what is *absent* and *past*, and only through these to its connexion with what is present. Therefore, it seems to me that their malady specially concerns the *memory*...a case of the thread of memory being broken, its continuous connexion being abolished, and of the impossibility of a uniformly coherent recollection of the past...This is the reason why it is so difficult to question a mad person about his previous life-history when he enters an asylum. In his memory the true is for ever mixed up with the false.[82]

To this argument he adds his personal visits to lunatic asylums. There are undoubtedly "individual subjects endowed with unmistakably great gifts. Their genius appeared distinctly through their madness which had completely gained the upper hand." He goes on to say: "I will not refrain from mentioning that I have known some men of decided, though not remarkable, mental superiority who at the same time betrayed a slight touch of insanity. Accordingly, it might appear that every advance of the intellect beyond the usual amount, as an abnormality, already disposes to madness."[83]

More generally, Schopenhauer links this holding onto of pain to repression. Still holding onto the suffering felt during past events, madness is traceable to a past experience. Suffering that should have passed is retained in consciousness, is held

[82] WWRI, 192; §36.
[83] WWRI, 191; §36.

onto, torment is great and resides in memory. Fictions in the mind are created as they destroy the "thread of its memory," filled with fictions.[84]

He thinks everyone copes with the past this way, through repression. Does this lead to expunging the experience from memory altogether? Schopenhauer is vague on the specifics as to how exactly, or when, past suffering is banished. The only safe reference of the inner state is from the outer. This means action is the ultimate judge. How a person lives is an outward reflection of the inside awareness. Living life by a different sense of time, the genius lives apart.

The Needed Outcast

Dedicated to "*nature's half-spoken words*,"[85] the artist necessarily becomes alienated from the larger part of the population. Whereas most people follow activities that only strengthen their egoism, concern with the inside promotes withdrawal from the behavior and opinion of contemporary society. Interested in the Ideas, the true artist will always stand apart from the time and the place which they live. This is part of the "essential martyrdom of genius" as Schopenhauer calls it.[86]

Regarding the overwhelming importance of social life, he maintains the majority of people do not like to be alone with nature. They are always in need of some distraction, pursuits at the behest of the Wille to distract from real reflection about the Wille. "Therefore in objects they seek only some relation to their will, and with everything that has not such a relation there sounds within them, as it were like a ground-bass, the constant, inconsolable lament, 'It is of no use to me.' Thus in

[84] WWRI, 193; §36
[85] WWRI, 222; §45.
[86] WWRI, 191; §36.

solitude even the most beautiful surroundings have for them a desolate, dark, strange, and hostile appearance."[87]

Schopenhauer submits the great minds of history as evidence of this rift. He claims that over every century complaints about their contemporaries are expressed. He mentions the direct connection to the biographies of Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), George Gordon Byron (1788-1824), and Vittorio Alfieri (1749-1803). The passage of time bears this out, as the "the approbation of posterity is earned as a rule only at the expense of the approbation of one's contemporaries, and *vice versa*."[88]

Emphasizing the temporal player here, we can say the natural separateness between the genuine artist and the masses is difference in what type of temporal awareness accompanies each. The problem is the flimsiness of popularity. The true artist avoids societal judgment, instead focusing on what matters most: escape from the Wille, not playing into vanity:

> For this reason the most excellent works of any art, the noblest productions of genius, must eternally remain sealed books to the dull majority of men, and are inaccessible to them. They are separated from them by a wide gulf, just as the society of princes is inaccessible to the common people. It is true that even the dullest of them accept on authority works which are acknowledged to be great, in order not to betray their own weakness. But they always remain in silence, ready to express their condemnation the moment they are allowed to hope that they can do so without running the risk of exposure. Then their long-restrained hatred of all that is great and beautiful and of the authors thereof readily relieves itself; for such things never appealed to them, and so humiliated them. For in order to acknowledge, and freely and willingly to admit, the worth of another, a man must generally have some worth of his own.[89]

---

[87] WWRI, 198; §38.
[88] WWRI, 236; §49.
[89] WWRI, 234; §49.

A rebel, the unparalleled ability of the genius stands in stark regard to his opinion of the communal intellect. This is a heroic view of the artist. Driven by the Wille to understand the outlines of the Idea, a solitary path to create art for its own sake.

4. Artistic, or Temporal, Expression of Wille

In an attempt to communicate the timeless through the temporal, the artist can turn to a number of established aesthetic forms. The refinement of the aesthetic delivery has evolved over time, developing purposefully with respect to human sensibilities.

The subject-object distinction intact, master works of artistic insight must be experienced. This requires preservation, and opens up the Wille as the source of cultural icons. Although the genius does not actively participate with the masses, they still shoulder the responsibility for the creation of culture. The form says something profound about the Wille that cannot be known without it. The reason certain works of art are turned to, time and time again, is because they have profoundly exposed an Idea. The underlying hierarchy causes an uneven depiction of the Wille. In the end, the Wille's monism means "the medium of art, makes no essential difference, but only an outward one."[90] Nevertheless, the aim of all art is the same, that is, the expression and presentation of the Ideas, "even those arts that are most widely separated can by comparison throw light on one another."[91]

Whenever Schopenhauer refers to art, he is referencing what today we call the fine arts. These are generally regarded as the creative arts and are predominantly visual, music being the great exception. The artist unfolds some

[90] WWRI, 195; §37.
[91] WWRI, 252; §51.

aspect of the Wille in time using an aesthetic form: art "repeats the eternal Ideas apprehended through pure contemplation, the essential and abiding element in all the phenomena of the world. According to the material in which it repeats, it is sculpture, painting, poetry, or music. Its only source is knowledge of the Ideas; its sole aim is communication of this knowledge."[92] Overwhelmingly powerful, the methods of expression needed time to develop as well.

Utility, Hierarchy and Light

There are three general features of Schopenhauer's aesthetic theory that move and mingle with one another: utility, hierarchy and light. Using these he produces a way generally to consider an aesthetic experience object of art as an Idea. In anticipation of the discussion we can say upfront that he thinks utility limits the insight of the artist, the visual arts that use humans as the direct subject matter are the most profound, and light is needed to illuminate the empirical side of the Wille.

Eschewing the Utility of Symbols

On the whole, Schopenhauer thinks utility should be avoided. Depending on the artistic medium, some degree of utility comes with it. From lower to higher objectifications of the Wille, utility becomes less an issue. These two elements lead him to adopt a general distinction between the nominal, or Idea made known in causality, and the Idea, the real significance of art.

Schopenhauer is firm that needless utility always detracts from the truth of the latter, as efficiency blocks the AN. Overall, he appears to maintain an inverse relationship between art form and utility. The more easily the Idea is seen, the higher

[92] WWRI, 184-5; §36.

the grade of objectivity, and vice versa. That the Wille is more easily recognizable where it has gained awareness of itself equates to the accessibility of the aesthetic medium. An improper sense of time is used, which is why he equates utility with the employment of symbols.

Time underpins the difference between utility and the Idea. This leads to Schopenhauer making a finer distinction between the nominal and real significance. The difference is empirical-causal knowledge, opposed to the better consciousness of the AN. "Symbols are of value in life," he says, "but their utility is foreign to the aim of art."[93] Furthermore, the artistic value of an allegorical picture is independent of what it achieves as allegory. He says of this difference: "the expression of a concept and the expression of an Idea. Only the latter can be an aim of art; the other is a foreign aim, namely the trifling amusement of causing a picture to serve at the same time as an inscription, as a hieroglyphic, invented for the benefit of those to whom the real nature of art can never appeal."[94]

Symbols come and go, whereas authentic art stands the test of time. This is because once a symbol has been brought into the phenomenal realm, it suffers, much like our bodies, from the effacing effects of time. Created with a publicized intent for utilitarian reasons, the overt meaning is ego produced and the possibility for the transferability of a similar meaning to everyone exists: "everything symbolical rests at bottom on a stipulated agreement, the symbol has this disadvantage among others, that its significance is forgotten in the course of time, and it then becomes dumb. Indeed, who would guess why the fish is the symbol of Christianity, if he did not

[93] WWRI, 239; §50.
[94] WWRI, 238; §50.

know? Only a Champollion, for it is a phonetic hieroglyphic through and through."[95] As a result, the best art will always remain impenetrable, in contrast to fleeting symbols and fashionable words.

We can begin to see the language game of symbols. Knowing the definitions allows for the ability to participate in the activity with others. While all artwork contains some combination of utility and the Idea, both are served simultaneously based on the aesthetic medium. Great works of art remain around because their exposure of the Idea resists a purely contemporary understanding. Languages have the ability to become dead when not enough people participate in the open meaning. This is not true of the Ideas, which are immune to the fluctuations in societal utility. It is precisely this lack of utility that is the hallmark of art, the AN.

We can sum up by saying the injection of utility into artistic production violates two Schopenhauerian principles. First, it entails planning with the PSR. As we have seen, everyone has to become ego free to see the Idea. Second, allegory mixes up concepts with Ideas. Allegory is an indirect conceptual meaning. It should never be the overt reason for the production of a work of art.

Hierarchy

Schopenhauer maintains art is most often enjoyed where the Idea is most open. With intelligence conferring distinctiveness, this means us. Just as self-awareness varies up along the Chain of Wille, so too does the ability of the artist to expose the Idea depend on the hierarchy of nature. As I read him here, the

[95] WWRI, 242; §50.

expressiveness of the Idea is inextricably linked to the empirical activity associated with consciousness (chapter 2).

He offers up the connection between architecture and nature as an example: "with aesthetic contemplation...of natural beauty in the inorganic and vegetable kingdoms and of the works of architecture, the enjoyment of pure, will-less knowing will predominate, because the Ideas here apprehended are only low grades of the will's objectivity, and therefore are not phenomena of deep significance and suggestive content."[96] He ranks the visual arts based on the observable manifestation from which they are drawn from in nature. Schopenhauer explains: "In this respect, the opposite of architecture, and the other extreme in the series of fine arts, is the drama, which brings to knowledge the most significant of all the Ideas; hence in the aesthetic enjoyment of it the objective side is predominant throughout."[97]

HIGHEST
-Drama; tragedy is the summit of poetical art.[98]
-Sculpture; use of allegory not okay as a plastic art representing the human form.[99]
-Historical painting / sculpture; allegory not allowed.[100]
-Animal painting / sculpture; allegory not okay.
-Landscape painting / horticulture / flower itself; allegory not permissible.[101]
-Architecture; manipulation of light and darkness; primarily utilitarian
-Light
LOWEST

My order of Schopenhauer's artistic forms--architecture, painting, poetic arts, sculpture and drama--differs from Jacquette's ranking.[102] I do not see Schopenhauer holding to painting as more objective than sculpture. The human form is just too

[96] WWRI, 212; §42.
[97] WWRI, 216; §43.
[98] WWRI, 252-3; §51.
[99] WWRI, 239-40; §50.
[100] WWRI, 220; §45.
[101] WWRI, 219; §44.
[102] Jacquette, *Schopenhauer, philosophy and the arts*, 13.

important. On my reading of the WWR, sculpture is superior because it can depict the human form in three-dimensional space. To be explained, painting simply does not capture the Idea as deeply as sculpture; features of panting cannot match this human scale achievable by sculpture.

∞Light

Light is the minimum precondition necessary for all visual knowledge. The sun is simultaneously the source of light and heat, the first condition of all life. Therefore, what heat is for the Wille, light is for knowledge.[103] Through the sun: "impression by means of reflected light-rays, is here brought before our eyes quite distinctly, clearly, and completely, in cause and effect, and indeed on a large scale."[104]

Responsible for pleasure and life, light has become the symbol of goodness, indicating eternal salvation in religious realms. Opposite this, darkness evokes damnation. "The absence of light immediately makes us sad, and its return makes us feel happy."[105] Schopenhauer is careful to qualify that lighted perception does not provoke the Wille: "sight, unlike the affections of the other senses, is in itself, directly, and by its sensuous effect, quite incapable of pleasantness or unpleasantness of *sensation* in the organ."[106]

The essential element in perception, art that plays on the lack of light to provide a weak example of the sublime will be at the lower end. This is where we turn next, architecture, the lowest of the aesthetic expressions.

---

[103] WWRI, 203; §39.
[104] WWRI, 200; §38.
[105] WWRI, 199; §38.
[106] WWRI, 199; §38.

∞Architecture

Admiring spatial beauty is the most minimal definition of beauty according to Schopenhauer.[107] Large architectural works stimulate a feeling of mathematical sublimity created through contrasting the relative smallness of our body against the largeness of the architecture. He remarks: "Many objects of our perception excite the impression of the sublime; by virtue both of their spatial magnitude and of their great antiquity, and therefore of their duration in time, we feel ourselves reduced to nought in their presence, and yet revel in the pleasure of beholding them. Of this kind are very high mountains, the Egyptian pyramids, and colossal ruins of great antiquity."[108]

With the Wille only known through the empirical, the space has to be delineated by the architecture. In order to receive this impression of the mathematically sublime," it is only "by becoming directly and wholly perceptible to us, affects us with its whole magnitude in all three dimensions, and is sufficient to render the size of our own body almost infinitely small. This can never be done by a space that is empty for perception."[109] Space must be "directly perceivable in all its dimensions through delimitation, and so by a very high and large dome, like that of St. Peter's in Rome or of St. Paul's in London." [110] The sublime arises from the contrast between the insignificance and dependence of ourselves as individuals and as Wille. Conscious of ourselves in this way, we become the pure subject of knowing, so if

[107] WWRI, 223; §45.
[108] WWRI, 206; §39.
[109] WWRI, 206; §39.
[110] WWRI, 206; §39.

there is nothing to see there is nothing to know. Without light there can be no knowledge available to be had.

Light, the lowest manifestation of the Wille, takes up an intimate relationship with architecture, the lowest artistic form. Ideas at the lowest grades of the Wille's objectivity show themselves in architectural works by exposing the inner antagonism of the Wille. "But above all else," Schopenhauer claims, "the beautiful in architecture is enhanced by the favour of light, and through it even the most insignificant thing becomes a beautiful object."[111]

Architecture, the first of the representational arts, reveals a fundamental truth about knowledge and its relationship to visible light. The reflection and blocking of light reveals, Schopenhauer claims, a fundamental truth about light and its relation to knowledge. Light is needed to have "the most perfect kind of knowledge through perception."[112] This is true not only throughout the Ideas but scientifically as well. Without an object of which to have knowledge, there can only be a subject. The Ideas are perceived in architecture: "only a bright strong illumination makes all the parts and their relations clearly visible."[113] He goes on: the "aesthetic pleasure of looking at a fine and favourably illuminated building "accompanies this apprehension."[114]

This antagonism between black and white is carried over to where the Ideas are, the perceived structure where the constant pull of gravity, another low manifestation of the Wille, is contemplated. This is done through the conflict

[111] WWRI, 203; §39.
[112] WWRI, 216; §43.
[113] WWRI, 216; §43.
[114] WWRI, 216; §43.

between the Ideas of gravity and rigidity. Why does the building stay erect and not fall down? How does it resist, continually, the inescapable pull of gravity? The entire structure works together to hold the always tenuous conflict between rigidity and gravity.[115] He says: "Gravity, rigidity, fluidity, light, and so on, are the Ideas that express themselves in rocks, buildings, and masses of water. Landscape-gardening and architecture can do no more than help them to unfold their qualities distinctly, perfectly, and comprehensively."[116]

Further, the conflict between gravity and rigidity is "the sole aesthetic material of architecture."[117] Architecture allows us to reflect upon the macrocosm of the Wille where we simultaneously see ourselves as a microcosm of Wille. Seeing the oneness of the world through the Ideas, this heightened awareness allows us to feel the sublime. When we are struck by the aesthetic beauty of a building we admire the tenuous nature of the building because the Ideas it represents are always competing with one another. At any minute the building can crumble down. It is impossible to relocate the "position, size, and form of every part," Schopenhauer says, because the building "would inevitably collapse."[118] Every piece in its own way is the most important; without it the whole does not work. The form of each part is determined not arbitrarily but by its purpose and its relation to the whole.

We feel gravity, and fight it too, just like architecture. This recognition allows us to enter a state of sublimity. We become aware of our own death through the realization that the Ideas, gravity and rigidity, exist because we do. Schopenhauer

---

[115] WWRI, 215; §42.
[116] WWRI, 210; §41
[117] WWRI, 214; §42.
[118] WWRI, 214-5; §42.

states, that the feeling of the sublime arises "through our being aware of the vanishing nothingness of our own body in the presence of a greatness which itself...resides only in our representation, and of which we, as knowing subject, are the supporter."[119] He considers duration a hallmark of architecture, citing the Egyptian pyramids and ruins of the ancient world as examples of how antiquity causes us to reflect on ourselves as Wille.[120]

Other Ideas highlighted by architecture include "cohesion, rigidity, hardness, those universal qualities of stone, those first, simplest, and dullest visibilities of the will."[121] As he notes, even the building materials are lower objectifications.

Schopenhauer rejects architecture as a serious art form ultimately on the grounds of authenticity. Schopenhauer pins the reason for constructing an architectural edifice as ultimately concerned with some functional reason, e.g., to provide a place to live, to serve some political function or to allow for a public sphere; the aesthetics are almost always secondary, if considered at all. "Ornamental work on capitals," he says, "belongs to sculpture and not to architecture, and is merely tolerated as an additional embellishment, which might be dispensed with."[122] The aesthetic enjoyment of a building resides in the relationship of the Ideas exposed by the structure, resulting in a higher consciousness, and not in surface characteristics. Ideas is limited because of practical concerns, making aesthetics secondary to utility. The lack of artistic variation available on the Ideas at this low

[119] WWRI, 206; §39.
[120] WWRI, 206; §39.
[121] WWRI, 214; §42.
[122] WWRI, 215; §43.

level attests to the regularity of buildings everywhere.[123] The only art that is an occupation, architecture "is bound to suffer great restrictions through the demands of necessity and utility."[124] Next, we move to painting where the Wille is exposed more clearly through both the subject matter and the artistic variation available to these higher Ideas.

∞Painting

Moving up along the hierarchy of aesthetic forms, we turn next to painting. Illustration is able to express a greater range of Ideas, using more than light and the Wille as unconscious material. A picture provides for more abstraction through the incorporation of different forms of Wille, expanding the range of Ideas. This allows for higher objectifications of the Wille to be represented.

From where exactly does the beautiful originate in a painting? Beauty, Schopenhauer holds, resides ultimately in the Wille and not in the artist's brush. He states: "The beauty displayed...belongs almost entirely to nature; the art itself does little for it."[125] The role of the painter is to render the conflicting Ideas in a beautiful way, providing for the sublime in the act of creation and in the viewer, both in the AN.

Schopenhauer claims the easiest way to enter the sublime in painting is through the recognition of the Wille's macrocosm, achieved with a portrayal of horticulture. The beauty of landscape painting is "the multiplicity of the natural objects" that are "clearly separated, appear distinctly, and yet exhibit themselves in

[123] WWRI, 217; §43.
[124] WWRI, 217; §43.
[125] WWRI, 218; §44.

fitting association and succession."[126] He explains that this sentiment of natural beauty expressed through the painting is equivalent to "aesthetic enjoyment everywhere without the medium of art."[127] I think Asher Brown Durand's *Scene from Thanatopsis* (1850) nicely fits Schopenhauer's description of natural beauty.

The painting of a countryside acts as a substitute for being there oneself. This looks to be a deficiency in his aesthetic theory, but this is precisely the role of the genius. Most people look at the countryside differently after an artist's rendition of the Idea. This applies to where it is hardest to see, the plant kingdom where the Wille is depicted without knowledge of its actions.

Why does the range of the artist who conceivably can depict any object, not excel in exposing Ideas further up the line of objectification? Our earlier discussions over the dimensionality of space come into help here. The three dimensionality of space automatically limits painting, a situation similar to the one in which Euclidean geometry finds itself. Cartographers especially are aware of differing distortions by stripping a dimension from three dimensional space.

Painting cannot be considered a strong art because of the poor job it does depicting the sharpness of human life. It is only the broad suggestiveness of human character that is at the highest rung of objectification and is isolated by painting, "For this reason, man is more beautiful than all other objects, and the revelation of his inner nature is the highest aim of art."[128]

A painting dealing in human character expresses the Idea of humanity with enhanced clarity, inviting contemplation. With every human life there is a unique

[126] WWRI, 218; §44.
[127] WWRI, 218; §44.
[128] WWRI, 210; §41.

manifestation of the Wille: "No individual and no action can be without significance; in all and through all, the Idea of mankind unfolds itself more and more. Therefore no event in the life of man can possibly be excluded from painting."[129] As the most perfect manifestation of the Wille, the daily life of millions of human beings, especially our actions, sorrows, and joys, is important enough to be the object of artistic painting. Variety must accompany the many-sided Idea of humankind in order to highlight "not the individual, not the particular event as such, but the universal in it, the side of the Idea of mankind that is expressed through it."[130]

A combination of beauty, grace and human character, Schopenhauer claims, should be leveraged in historical painting. The "Idea of mankind...the unfolding of its many-sidedness must be brought before our eyes in significant individuals."[131] He adds that in the artistic rendition of a historical achievement the "nominal significance" should not be too remote from the real.[132] As he sees it, faithfulness to the Idea of humankind requires that facts, particularly chronological ones, not be altered to create a preferential subjective artistry.

Moving too far beyond the facts surrounding the original occurrence for him means a potential slide into allegory, not permissible in visual art. The major problem with "the charming or attractive," Schopenhauer maintains, is that it "draws the beholder down from pure contemplation, demanded by every apprehension of the beautiful, since it necessarily stirs his will by objects that directly appeal to it. Thus the beholder no longer remains pure subject of knowing,

---

[129] WWRI, 230; §48.
[130] WWRI, 231; §48.
[131] WWRI, 230; §48.
[132] WWRI, 232; §48; see also 230.

but becomes the needy and dependent subject of willing."[133] He faults Dutch still life painting for "depicting edible objects. By their deceptive appearance these necessarily excite the appetite."[134] Painted fruit is okay since it exhibits itself as a further development of the flower without provoking the Wille. In comparison, he gives the ancients a pass on their use of nudity on grounds of motivation.
The artist created them with an objective spirit trying to capture ideal beauty, not to provoke sensuality.[135]

With this attitude of seriousness, Schopenhauer concludes from the character of resignation in certain Christian painting, "From this has resulted perfect resignation, which is the innermost spirit of Christianity as of Indian wisdom, the giving up of all willing, turning back, abolition of the will and with it of the whole inner being of this world, and hence salvation."[136]

∞ Sculpture

Breaking free from the two-dimensionality of painting, sculpture exposes an Idea with an added visual dimension. It remains about as practical as a painting by shedding the utility of architecture. Sculpture has the ability to portray the human form, the most complete objectification of the Wille at the highest grade of its knowability.[137] In view of the Wille-body identity thesis, this connection deserves an inquiry. With the Wille identified with both the body and motion, sculpture seeks to infer the inner state through the position of the body. I submit *The Thinker* (*La*

[133] WWRI, 207; §40.
[134] WWRI, 207-8; §40.
[135] WWRI, 208; §40.
[136] WWRI, 233; §48.
[137] WWRI, 223; §45.

Penseur, 1902-1904) by Auguste Rodin (1840-1917) as lending insight into the empirical understanding of Schopenhauer's *pure subject of knowing* in the Now.

Beauty, Grace and Motion

Schopenhauer describes sculpture as the attempt to portray human beauty as "an objective expression" of the Idea of people in general. This is done through the perceived form where the Idea is "completely and fully expressed."[138] Compared to painting, sculpture should not seek to capture facial expression over the position of the body. The medium does not call for it.

Emotion and passion are highly recognizable in painting as "alternations of knowing and willing" through facial expression, eyes, color and countenance. The domain of sculpture is not the face but the position of the body. From the sculptor's point of view, beauty is recognized in the universal form and not individual characteristics.[139]

The characteristics of beauty and grace are conveyed to the viewer under the strict limits of human plasticity. Schopenhauer's prerequisite for determining the grace of movement is that it first must reefer to the beauty of the body,[140] in other words, the implication of beautiful motion through the form.

The sculpture provides beauty that is on display through the "correct proportion" of the limbs, a "symmetrical structure of the body" (which is also "harmonious"), conveying a sense of ease, where "evident appropriateness in all postures and movements possible" is sought after; whereas "*grace* is the adequate

[138] WWRI, 221; §45.
[139] WWRI, 225-6; §45.
[140] WWRI, 224; §45.

manifestation of the will through its temporal phenomenon."[141] It picks up where beauty leaves off, "perfectly" and "without deficiency" to present ease of motion. Without this effortlessness the sculpture cannot be considered graceful.[142] As humans our heightened distinctiveness, and accompanying ease of recognition, make grace and beauty "complete and united" in us.[143]

To see this differentiation between grace and beauty clearer, consider the Discobolus or Discus Thrower. What we have is a Roman copy of the lost original bronze by the fifth century BCE Greek sculptor Myron. Action is communicated by the contrapposto of the feet (a major achievement in Western art in its own right) but with the weight distributed to the forefoot, he leaning forward and twisting back to look at the discus before the quarter turn release. As Wille, this implied movement makes the Discobolus an expression of the athletic Ideal.

What of Schopenhauerian beauty is in the Discobolus? Pentathletes were often considered inferior to other athletes with specialized training. Instead, they were admired for their physique. Where the lack of specialization failed to produce athletic domination, the lack of critical repetition produced proportional development of muscle groups. For this reason, pentathletes were appreciated for their outer beauty.[144]

Schopenhauer submits the Apollo Belvedere as exhibiting the physiognomy that demonstrates the supremacy of humans over animals.[145] From antiquity too, this Roman sculpture, based on a Greek bronze, portrays Apollo with arrows slung over

---

[141] WWRI, 224; §45.
[142] WWRI, 224; §45.
[143] WWRI, 224; §45.
[144] See Ian Jenkins, *The Discobolus* (London, The British Museum Press, 2012).
[145] WWRI, 178; §33.

his shoulders. Offering a sense of motion through contraposition, Apollo has just shot an arrow leaving the front of his body exposed. With only sandals on the feet of Apollo's legs, a robe swings across his neck to drape over his left arm. Apollo's naked sternum greets the viewer and the head is turned sideways in the direction of the released arrow. The secondary nature of the facial expression follows his claim that physicality, not really countenance, is the strength of sculpture.

Allegory and the *Laocoön*

In Schopenhauer's opinion, the objectification of the human form (he does not consider non-human subjects) dictates a level of adherence to perception that should not be violated, making allegory impermissible.[146] It is precisely the directness of the body's presentation that bars allegory in his opinion. Unlike the abstract poetic arts, where allegory is fully allowable, observing the entire human form supersedes the need for any symbolic intermediary.

He stoutly claims that the use of allegory in the rendering of *Laocoön and His Sons* demonstrates that Lessing came closest to the Idea of humanity but "completely missed the point,"[147] the reason being a confusion of mediums, that "crying out ought not to be expressed in it, for the simple reason that the presentation of this lies entirely outside the province of sculpture." With facial expression belonging to painting, "a shrieking Laocoön could not be produced in marble, "but only one with the mouth wide open fruitlessly endeavoring to shriek, a Laocoön whose voice was stuck in his throat."[148] As a result, pain in the *Laocoön* has to be conveyed through the

[146] WWRI, 240; §50.
[147] WWRI, 227; §46; see the *Aeneid*, Book II for the inspiration of the *Laocoön*.
[148] WWRI, 227; §46.

distortions of the body, something the artist "achieved to perfection" when "we abstract from the stoical sentiment underlying it."[149]

The Thinker and Position High Mindedness

To become high minded, which also means their awareness of time must slip into the Now. So, as a practical matter, if the Wille is associated with action then contemplative non-action is associated with unwilling behavior. What does Schopenhauer think the body is doing when a person has resigned one's Wille? What does gaining provisional control over the Wille look like?

Especially since Schopenhauer maintains that art holds the deepest of insights, can sculpture lend insight into what the position of the body should resemble in the AN? What does the manipulation of the body say about the form of contemplation? I submit *The Thinker* by August Rodin as providing a potential answer to these questions.

Janaway refers to Schopenhauer's identification of the Wille with the body as "extremely radical." There cannot be an act of will that is not directly manifested in bodily movement. "Willing and acting are one, and acting is a physical moving." This insight, he follows up, is "one of Schopenhauer's great achievements to have opened it up with such originality and insight."[150] Atwell is in agreement as well. The Wille-body identity thesis allows Schopenhauer to give the Wille an ability to break out of the world as representation (ideality of reality) by connecting with ethics, aesthetics and metaphysics.[151]

---

[149] WWRI, 228; §46.
[150] Janaway, 192.
[151] Atwell, *The Human Character*, 16.

Approached as an Idea, Rodin's *Thinker* does not present to us a particular human body but *the* human body. Atwell expresses this about Van Gogh, saying he does not present to us a particular sunflower but *the* sunflower.[152] As such, *The Thinker* has come to be known in the West as the representative of what it looks like to think through the language of gesture. Applying Schopenhauerian aesthetics to *The Thinker*, I would say this broad appeal stems from leaving out motion, precisely what sculpture excels in illustrating.

Aesthetic mindfulness means a calming of the body so that the mind may be raised, opposed to the normal striving of the Wille through action; the "unmoved beholder" translates outwardly into this state, where the twofold nature of consciousness is known.[153] Usually presented on a pedestal, *The Thinker* is the image of a man lost in thought, but whose powerful body suggests a great capacity for action (i.e., Wille). Effortful concentration to detach one's mind is needed because reaching for the sublime through the Idea is not easy. There is no way around it, preventing the mind from wandering to achieve enlightenment is tough work.[154] Although there is a noted lack of action, the sculpture is muscular. The impression is that to build such a muscular physique, some course of action had to already whatever course of action is taken

<u>∞ Poetical Arts of Autobiography and History</u>

Continuing up to the next level of aesthetic construction, we reach the power of the spoken and written word. Where sculpture offers an ability to express the Wille at its height of self-awareness by imitating the human form, language comes

[152] Atwell, *The Human Character*, 11.
[153] WWRI, 202; §39.
[154] WWRI, 202, §39.

straight from the person. The three previous representational arts lack this abstract directness.

Of concern here are the autobiographical poet and the historian. Respectively, each represents the Wille's inner and outer knowledge in its superior form. While the insights of each are important, they are not equal. Consistent with Books I and II of the WWR, as a rule, the poet prevails over the historian in matters of reality.

Schopenhauer is fully aware that his stand here is counterintuitive. Taken to dealing in objective facts in previous time, the troves of historical information has provided a narrative for humanity's journey. At this point his temporal objection is clear: reality is in consciousness. Working from the inside out, the poet avoids mistaking the temporal for the eternal. Not equal in insight does not mean unworthy. Schopenhauer does not summarily dismiss history as a discipline. The point he wants us to take away is that consciousness is a twofold process. Using his earlier metaphor, the poet is inside the castle while the historian sketches the facade, the eternal behind the temporal walls of the castle, or in this case the human body.

Lyrical Sound

The path to sublimity is through sound. Unlike previous grades of the Wille, architecture and painting, sound is the means of poetry. It is through grammar and rhetoric, not perception, that the Ideas are revealed. With abstract concepts the direct material of poetry, a "perceptive representative appears before the imagination" that is "modified further and further by the words of the poet according to his intention." This results in "the concrete, the individual, the representation of perception, out of the abstract, transparent universality of the

concepts by the way in which he combines them."[155] The poet focuses our attention on the lived life; through "a chain of actions and the accompanying inner awareness the poet has the benefit of progress and movement.[156] Others with a similar poetical mind will recognize the inner conflict of existence.[157]

Given that we must see the Wille before apprehending the Idea, is Schopenhauer inconsistent here? Does he violate the empirical proviso that we must see the Wille before we can apprehend it as an Idea? He says he does not, and I agree. Schopenhauer explains that the poet's knowledge of the Ideas is half *a priori*, standing "brightly illuminated" in the mind, with the details "as true as life itself."[158] The *a priori* nature of abstract thought makes this possible, and from the standpoint of radical idealism, thoughts are real. Hearing requires a corresponding assembling in the listener's brain. So, although Schopenhauer holds firm to the primacy of hearing to poetry, he does not disregard inner vision, that is, the vision in the mind's eye of the listener molded from hearing the concepts. In this way the Ideas are *seen*.

More specifically, Schopenhauer claims it is the use of rhythm and rhyme that allows poetry an unparalleled response in the mind. He says: "I can give no other explanation of their incredibly powerful effect than that our powers of representation have received from time, to which they are essentially bound, some special characteristic, by virtue of which we inwardly follow and, as it were, consent to each regularly recurring sound."[159]

---

[155] WWRI, 243; §51.
[156] WWRI, 244; §51.
[157] WWRI, 242; §51.
[158] WWRI, 245-6; §51.
[159] WWRI, 243-4; §50.

The connection between abstract vividness and non-representational nature of sound means poetry shares a common trait with music. The closeness of them can be seen, for example, in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in D minor (Opus 125). At the end of the fourth movement a choir sings the *Ode to Joy* of Friedrich von Schiller (1759-1805), possible because of the tonal delivery poetry shares with music.

Direct

Written or heard straight from the source allows poetry to capture the Wille with an abstract vividness unmatched by the other arts. Through the daily tedium of existence, the poet exposes the tension of the Wille at its highest level of objectification and self-awareness. The general angst associated with being alive stems primarily from the Wille not getting what it wants. These scenarios of romance, epic and drama represent the dominant themes by which the poet brings the Ideas to us.[160] Schopenhauer explains: "in the epic, the romance, and the tragedy, selected characters are placed in those circumstances in which all their characteristics are unfolded, the depths of the human mind are revealed and become visible in extraordinary and significant actions. Thus poetry objectifies the Idea of man, an Idea which has the peculiarity of expressing itself in highly individual characters."[161] Since the purpose is to communicate the Ideas to others, he considers the language used by the poet to be of the highest importance. Words should be strategically used to exhibit the Idea.

On this point, Schopenhauer makes a direct comparison to sculpture. Just as clothing on sculpture should be stripped down to allow the human form to come

[160] WWRI, 251; §51.
[161] WWRI, 252; §51.

through, language should communicate and not cover up. Obscure language is actually a sign of an impoverished mind, where "confusion and perversity of thought will clothe themselves in the most far-fetched expressions and obscure forms of speech, in order to cloak in difficult and pompous phrases small, trifling, insipid, or commonplace ideas."[162]

Schopenhauer's stance on language here reminds us of his attacks on Hegel. Time is always running out, so the poet or author need to get to the chase. Clarity is the good faith of philosophers, depth revealing itself through clarity of language.[163] Not a truly inspired representation of the Idea, this authentic deficiency is sought to be covered up with language, similar to the purely idealistic philosopher.

Poetry is beautiful precisely because it pulls inner experience from the world into verses. As I read Schopenhauer here, if there is a noted lack of *relate-ability* between the poet and others, the target has been missed. When this occurs, language is manipulated to overcome deficiencies in authenticity. Exposure, not concealment, is always to be sought after. Otherwise, art would not be the clearest picture of the Wille.

To disclose the Idea to others as fully as possible, the poet can legitimately turn to allegory. This is permissible, unlike in architecture and painting, because as an abstract art a picture of the Idea is created in the mind using sound and symbolic meaning. Schopenhauer states, "since the concept is always what is given in the poetical allegory, and tries to make this perceptive through a picture, it may sometimes be expressed or supported by a painted picture. Such a picture is not for

---

[162] WWRI, 229; §47.
[163] Schopenhauer, *Fourfold Root*, 4, 8. Schopenhauer quotes Marquis de Vauvenargues (1715-1747) here; the French poet and moralist considered to perpetuate the major tenets of Stoicism.

this reason regarded as a work of pictorial art, but only as an expressive hieroglyph, and it makes no claims to pictorial, but only to poetic, worth."[164] *Aesop's Fables* come to mind as an example meeting Schopenhauer's criteria for allegory. [165]

Returning to trace out the comparison between heavy clothing and loaded terminology, when the physical stature of a person lacks beauty, an attempt is made to cover-up this person's deficiencies with clothes. This distracts from the "insignificance or ugliness of his person under barbaric finery, tinsel, feathers, ruffles, cuffs, and mantles. Thus many an author, if compelled to translate his pompous and obscure book into its little clear content, would be as embarrassed as that man would be if he were to go about naked."[166] Without connecting with other viewers on the level of an Idea, the realm of propaganda, art passed off for other purposes, starts to expose itself in Schopenhauer's aesthetic theory. The substance of the message is overwhelmingly false given the inability of the propagandistic symbol to be found anywhere in nature.

Overall Downgrade of History

The Wille is "the dictionary of the language spoken by both"[167] the poet and the historian. The inequality between the insights stems from Schopenhauer's essential/inessential distinction, causing him to denigrate the past study of human history for the sake of coming to know the Idea within oneself intimately.[168]

From the outset, the historian is in a situation where the historian cannot possibly know the previous significance of another person's action. Even admitting

---

[164] WWRI, 241; §50.
[165] Aesop, *Aesop's Fables*, translated by Laura Gibbs (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2002).
[166] WWRI, 229; §47.
[167] WWRI, 244; §51.
[168] Atwell, *Metaphysics of Will*, 147.

varying degrees of certainty to historical facts does not penetrate into human form. The historian "cannot possibly possess all the data for this; he cannot have seen all and ascertained everything. At every moment he is forsaken by the original of his picture, or a false picture is substituted for it; and this happens so frequently, that I think I can assume that in all history the false outweighs the true."[169] In the end, the historian is always liable mistakenly to assume a trivial event to be significant.

The historian's use of the political edge to fill the empty gesture of the public servant to make value judgments about past events lends little insight into the Wile. Schopenhauer cautions that when the interpretation of the past becomes predominantly political what is really being described is a system of governance, not the lived lives of Wille. Meaning becomes "clothed in the stiff robes of State," an "inflexible armour," making it very difficult to recognize human movement in history.[170] The "history of the human race, the throng of events, the change of times, the many varying forms of human life in different countries and centuries, all this is only the accidental form of the phenomenon of the Idea. All this does not belong to the Idea itself, in which alone lies the adequate objectivity of the will, but only to the phenomenon."[171]

In contrast, the poet does not have the problem of inner access. Unlike the historian who sketches the facade, the poet works from within the castle walls. With direct access to the inner nature of humanity, Schopenhauer claims there is perhaps

[169] WWRI, 245; §51.
[170] WWRI, 247; §51.
[171] WWRI, 182; §35.

not a single autobiography that is not on the whole truer than any history ever written.[172]

What about honesty? Surely the poet can lie? Schopenhauer thinks that to make the conscious choice to sit down a person will not be prone to lying. It comes down to motivation. As he sees it:

> The man who records his life surveys it as a whole; the individual thing becomes small, the near becomes distant, the distant again becomes near, motives shrink and contract. He is sitting at the confessional, and is doing so of his own free will. Here the spirit of lying does not seize him so readily, for there is to be found in every man an inclination to truth which has first to be overcome in the case of every lie, and has here taken up an unusually strong position.[173]

He also mentions the problem of historiography. Temporally, the timeless Wille resides in the poet's voice, whereas the historian is concerned with the actions of a previous form. As a current sketch of past events, the historian always works within the temporal context. Being unable to consider anything in and of itself, the historian must relate everything to a certain context, its own times.[174]

For these reasons Schopenhauer concludes that "paradoxical as it may sound, far more real, genuine, inner truth is to be attributed to poetry than to history."[175] However, he does not consider historical study without merit. There is great benefit to studying the Wille's previous existence but the insight is not, according to his system, equal to the veracity of self-confession.

In spite of dealing strictly with the phenomena, Schopenhauer nevertheless admits the value of historical facts in order to ascertain valuable lessons about the

---

[172] WWRI, 248 §51.
[173] WWRI, 248 §51.
[174] WWRI, 245; §51.
[175] WWRI, 245; §51.

Idea of humanity. He emphasizes that attention should be paid to the history of civilizations.[176]

∞ Dramatic Arts

The next aesthetic step upwards takes us to the drama, the summit of the visual arts in Schopenhauer's aesthetic theory of Wille.[177] The stage affords us knowledge of the Idea at its highest level. Here the Wille's conflict with itself is most open, easiest to see, and the most profound. By placing the human form on a dramaturgical pedestal, the playwright has achieved the greatest aesthetic objectification possible, elucidating the connection between form and awareness.

By rendering the Wille's inner conflict on stage, drama forcefully provokes the sublime. In the world, some people are more powerful manifestations of Wille; others are more feeble and lack willpower. The playwright puts these interactions between individual egos of the Wille under a theatrical lens.[178] The macrocosm of the lived life is replicated on the microcosm of stage.

Crafted by the subconscious, this enables a better understanding of his claim that art "is the elucidation of this visibility, the *camera obscura* which shows the objects more purely, and enables us to survey and comprehend them better. It is the play within the play, the stage on the stage in *Hamlet.*"[179] This exposure of art as the unconscious makes watching a play an exercise in psychoanalyzing the Wille on a stage, the same subconscious lurking behind the isolated bodies on the stage within everyone. To Schopenhauer's claim here, consider the intense isolation behind

[176] WWRI, 182-184; §35.
[177] WWRI, 252; §51.
[178] WWRI, 253; §51.
[179] WWRI, 266-7; §52.

Hamlet's soliloquy,[180] the Wille's conflict displayed prominently on the stage through the isolation of form and the heightening of Hamlet's mental suffering where he contemplates suicide.

A true depiction of life requires "great misfortune" to occur, something that "is alone essential to tragedy."[181] For this reason Schopenhauer considers the acceptance of our fate to be an indispensable condition for understanding the dramatized Idea. The tragedian constructs the downward spiral of events that creates different interpretations of the Idea of death. For this reason drama is found across poetic works, stages and musical lyric. Comedic levity is available daily until the inescapable end. The true playwright knows the mask of tragedy is worn in the end.

Schopenhauer also thinks that the distinctiveness of drama lmakes it the preferred pedagogical tool. The ease of recognizing the Ideas assists in the development of intellectual maturation. Through the realness of tragedy, the Wille's inner conflict creates the he highest empathy. He goes on to make three distinctions among dramas, concluding the universality of situational relationships most accessible.

Three Traits of Misfortune

Schopenhauer identifies three archetypes symbolizing misfortune in a tragedy. Considered in turn they are extreme cruelty, unforgiving nature of fate, and the dynamical relationships among people.

The first way is through the extraordinary wickedness of a character who resides in the realm of extreme bounds of possibility. This person becomes the author

[180] Act III, Scene I.
[181] WWRI, 254; §51.

of the misfortune. Schopenhauer offers *Richard III*, Iago in *Othello*, and Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*, Franz Moor, the *Phaedra* of Euripides, and Creon in the *Antigone* among this type of dramatic tragedy.

The second way misfortune is brought about is not through an individual but through blind fate, chance, the "happened to be" of life. He cites *King Oedipus* of Sophocles as a true model of this kind, as well as the *Trachiniae*. Although in general most of the tragedies of the ancients belong to this class, examples of modern tragedies are *Romeo and Juliet*, Voltaire's *Tancred*, and *The Bride of Messina*.[182]

Schopenhauer notes a particular limitation inherent in these first two types of tragedies; "we look on the prodigious fate and the frightful wickedness as terrible powers threatening us only from a distance, from which we ourselves might well escape without taking refuge in renunciation."[183] The problem is the point-of-view.

Schopenhauer is onto something here I think. What is needed is a drama that is relatable to audiences. With an observational narrative, the first instance is too dramatized, while the second ultimately incomprehensible. What can people relate to? Social relationships. Schopenhauer says, "by the mere attitude of the persons to one another through their relations."[184]

This is the third way drama provides us with tragedy when pondering the Idea of humankind. Here there is no need for:

> a colossal error, or of an unheard-of accident, or even of a character reaching the bounds of human possibility in wickedness, but characters as they usually are in a moral regard in circumstances that frequently occur, are so situated with regard to one another that their position forces them, knowingly and with their eyes open, to do one

[182] WWRI, 254; §51.
[183] WWRI, 254; §51.
[184] WWRI, 254; §51.

> another the greatest injury, without any one of them being entirely in the wrong. This last kind of tragedy seems to me far preferable to the other two; for it shows us the greatest misfortune not as an exception, not as something brought about by rare circumstances or by monstrous characters, but as something that arises easily and spontaneously out of the actions and characters of men, as something almost essential to them, and in this way it is brought terribly near to us.[185]

Drama this third way makes us feel more. It is the most relatable because, unlike the other two, it is closest to everyday life. Here in the grey area of human relationships the Wille tears itself apart most clearly for most people to see. Betrayal, loss of trust, severing friendship, forgiveness and reconciliation, but above all else tragedy, strike most often in people's lives, exposed openly on the stage by the tragic poet. Tragedy produced through personal relationships "shows us those powers that destroy happiness and life, and in such a way that the path to them is at any moment open even to us."[186] We see the greatest suffering brought about by situations potentially realizable to us, with the characters taking action and perusing a similar course we are capable of following. A similar fate conceivable, "shuddering, we feel ourselves already in the midst of hell." [187]

Among this last type Schopenhauer offers Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (especially considering his relation to Laertes and to Ophelia), Schiller's *Wallenstein*, Goethe's *Faust* (with respect to Gretchen's relationship with her brother as propelling the action), and Pierre Corneille's *Cid*, in spite of lacking a tragic conclusion. He singles out Goethe's *Clavigo* as "a perfect model of this kind, a tragedy that in other respects

[185] WWRI, 254; §51.
[186] WWRI, 255; §51.
[187] WWRI, 255; §51.

is far surpassed by several others of the same great master."[188] I agree with Schopenhauer, I like the third way the best too. This brings to a conclusion the pictorial arts in Schopenhauer's aesthetic of Wille.

5. Music

Unlike the previous aesthetic mediums known through observation, there is no visual copy of a musical note. This non-representational character of music makes it "bound to be excluded"[189] from the other arts on Schopenhauer's metaphysics of Wille.

Music is a direct copy of the Wille. We cannot see the groundless nature; instead, we can hear eternity. This makes music special. It is over and above a copy of the Idea as are the other arts. Schopenhauer is clear: it is "a *copy of the will itself*, the objectivity of which are the Ideas. For this reason the effect of music is so very much more powerful and penetrating than is that of the other arts, for these others speak only of the shadow, but music of the essence."[190] Duration without form, music is the art that gets us closest to the EN. It is as close to pure time and eternity as we can get. The sonically known, and felt, existence of music indicates something over and above the observable.

On music as representative of the Wille's power, Safranski realys an incident where a young Schopenhauer observes listening to music and witnessing restraint. On his walks around Danzig with his mother as a youth near the *Speicherinsel*, the warehouse island where vicious bloodhounds guarded the trade merchandise at night behind closed gates, his mother relayed to him an occasion where a famous cellist

[188] WWRI, 255; §51.
[189] WWRI, 256; §52.
[190] WWRI, 257; §52. See also 262; §52.

made his way through the gates with liquid courage. Drunk and determined for a showdown as the pack of dogs began their attack, he drew the bow across the strings and began to play. The dogs stopped their offensive and became indifferent to the cellist at the expense of the music. Safranski says: "he played his sarabanes, polonaises and minuets, the bloodhounds peacefully crouched around him, listening. That was the power of music, which Schopenhauer was later to claim simultaneously expressed and appeased the torturing and dangerous restlessness of everything alive."[191] In the WWR we find an older Schopenhauer affirming the core of this story: "we must attribute to music a far more serious and profound significance that refers to the innermost being of the world and of our own self."[192]

Not limited by the plasticity of the lower aesthetic mediums, the composer "expresses the profoundest wisdom in a language that his reasoning faculty does not understand," distinguishing them from the previous visual artists.[193] For Schopenhauer, the composer is a metaphysician, who understands "completely and profoundly...his innermost being as an entirely universal language, whose distinctness surpasses even that of the world of perception itself."[194] As a result of this insight, the composer is elevated above others in the artistic community.

Schopenhauer acknowledges upfront that his discussion of music is analogical. He recognizes the importance of hearing music as opposed to talking about it. He is upfront with the reader on this point. His argument in the WWR is the only way it can be, analogical. Nothing is identical to listening to actual music,

---

[191] Safranski, 17.
[192] WWRI, 256; §52. See also 208; §40.
[193] WWRI, 260; §52.
[194] WWRI, 256; §52.

leading him to claim the inner essence of music cannot be proven because of this limitation.[195] "I recognize," he explains, "that it is essentially impossible to demonstrate this explanation, for it assumes and establishes a relation of music as a representation to that which of its essence can never be representation, and claims to regard music as the copy of an original that can itself never be directly represented." [196] Schopenhauer provides the analogical argument and offers nothing more.

Emotion, Harmony and Melody

Staying true to the subject-object distinction, t is only possible to talk about music as the second aspect of objects in nature. The origin of musical expression, like the art forms themselves, come from the hierarchy of the Wille. Through the Wille's monism, Schopenhauer makes a comparison from the twofold nature of consciousness. Every object is like us, Wille and representation, "two different expressions of the same thing; and this thing itself is therefore the only medium of their analogy, a knowledge of which is required if we are to understand that analogy."[197]

Schopenhauer claims the non-representational world is definitive, not some "empty universality of abstraction." The concept of feeling is expressed through "the infinite number of possible melodies, but always in the universality of mere form without the material." Melody: "portrays every agitation, every effort, every movement of the will, everything which the faculty of reason summarizes under the wide and negative concept of feeling, and which cannot be further taken up into the

[195] WWRI, 257; §52.
[196] WWRI, 257; §52. See also 261; §52.
[197] WWRI, 262; §52.

abstractions of reason." [198] Music is said to be the language of feeling and of passion, just as words are to reason. He even lists where he sees Western symphonic expression providing the variety of human.[199]

Although harmony can be understood mathematically, Schopenhauer is clear that music is not mathematical is essence. This was the same claim he makes in Book I concerning perception, from where he believes math originates. The nature of counting is universal, one might say groundless (*grundlos*)[200] in this regard. The problem, as he points out, is similar to that of sheet music, "related not as the thing signified, but only as the sign"[201] What exactly is missing from math? The passage of time, something musical notation includes.

Schopenhauer manufactures his analogy through the empirical, according to the Wille's hierarchy: "this is analogous to the fact that all the bodies and organizations of nature must be regarded as having come into existence through gradual development out of the mass of the planet." With all life evolving from material on the Earth, it remains both the supporter and the source of all music.[202]

The planet provides the ground-bass in lower pitches and the source of the universal bass. Deep bass is the ground of the symphony. The physical equivalents here are inorganic matter and physical slowness. At this low level Schopenhauer says here that the character of the Wille is frightened inorganic nature, physically slow, ponderous and powerful.[203] The Earth provides the "deepest tones of harmony."[204]

---

[198] WWRI, 259; §52.
[199] WWRI, 261; §52.
[200] Atwell, *The Metaphysics of the Will*, 57.
[201] WWRI, 256; §52.
[202] WWRI, 258; §52.
[203] WWRI, 259; §52. See also 265; §52.

With bass sounds representative of inorganic matter, and high pitched ones the plant and animal world. So, along with the low note, the high notes always sound faintly at the same time. Schopenhauer says: "it is a law of harmony that a bass-note may be accompanied only by those high notes that actually sound automatically and simultaneously with it."[205]

Schopenhauer explains how harmony is limited by this relationship: "There is a limit to the depth, beyond which no sound is any longer audible...Therefore, just as a certain degree of pitch is inseparable from the tone as such, so a certain grade of the will's manifestation is inseparable from matter."[206] It is this relationship between the bass-notes and ripienos that constitutes harmony. The upper musical notes constitute melody through a connection, moving rapidly and lightly in modulations. The other sounds have a slower movement without this larger connection.[207] Melodies are similar to concepts in that it is universal, expressing another level of reality.[208]

When higher melodies move from the quick transition from desires to satisfaction it is cheerful. Happiness and well-being is associated with rapid melodies without great deviations. Opposite this cheer, slow melodies "strike painful discords and wind back to the keynote only through many bars." Here the conceptual analogy is to "delayed and hard-won satisfaction." The delay between the notes represents new excitement, languor and contentment through the keynote. If the keynote is

---

[204] WWRI, 259; §52.
[205] WWRI, 258; §52.
[206] WWRI, 258; §52.
[207] WWRI, 259; §52.
[208] WWRI, 263; §52.

sustained for too long a period of time, the effect becomes intolerable. Monotonous and meaningless melodies are produced as a result. [209]

Wagner

Schopenhauer lived long enough to capture the fame that eluded him. Unknown is the degree to which he was aware that Richard Wagner was largely responsible for the popularization of his philosophy near the end of his life. Especially among the cultured elite of Germany, more than any other person, it was Wagner who introduced Schopenhauer into the discussion. I would venture to guess that Schopenhauer still owes a fair amount notoriety to Wagner's purposeful and artistic efforts.

Before reading Schopenhauer, Wagner sketched out his aesthetic theory of *Gesamtkunstwerk*, the totality of a work of art, in his essays *Art and Revolution, The Artwork of the Future* (both 1849) and *Opera and Drama* (1852). In his autobiography Wagner recalls the moment he formed a lifelong relationship with Schopenhauer. On September 26, 1854, he recalls reading the WWR, "In the tranquility and stillness of my house I now also became acquainted with a book, the study of which was to assume vast importance for me."[210] "Everyone who has been roused to great passion by life will do as I did," he says, "and hunt first for all the final conclusions of the Schopenhauerian system." He also inspired one of Wagner's most beloved works, "I was in doubt in part the earnest frame of mind produced by Schopenhauer, now

[209] WWRI, 260; §52.
[210] Richard Wagner, *My Life*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 508.

demanding some rapturous expression of its fundamental traits gave me the idea for *Tristan und Isolde*."[211]

Across the vast Wagnerian cannon, his essay *Beethoven* stands out for our purposes here. He lays out exactly how Schopenhauer assisted in his creation of the musical drama the lengthy supplement.

Beethoven

In the pantheon of great classical composers, there is widespread agreement that Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) reigns supreme. The American conductor Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990) agrees. What the next note should be, and how to create a symphonic theme around the necessity of its placement, are two challenges he claims all composers must overcome. More than any other composer, Bernstein says Beethoven achieves "rightness," referring to the tone and placement of notes. He has the inexplicable ability to know what the next note must be, allowing Beethoven to overcome the two compositional obstacles better than all others.[212]

Like Bernstein, Wagner acknowledges a similar level of influence in his famous essay *Beethoven* (December, 1870), written to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of his birth. Wagner deserves the bulk of credit for recasting Beethoven in a Schopenhauerian mold. [213] Outside of what it adds to Beethoven as the epitome of Schopenhauer's composer, the essay was also written when Wagner was at the summit of his creative powers.

---

[211] Wagner, 510. For more on Schopenhauer's influence on Wagner see also Edmund Dehnert, "Parsifal as Will and Idea," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, vol. 18, no. 4 (Jun., 1960), 511-520; and Wendell Elizabeth Barry, "What Wagner Found in Schopenhauer's Philosophy," *The Musical Quarterly*, vol. 11, no. 1 (Jan., 1925), 124-137.

[212] Leonard Bernstein, *The Joy of Music*, (Amadeus Press: Pompton Plains, N.J., 2004)28-29. 86.

[213] Alessandra Comini, *The Changing Image of Beethoven* (Santa Fe : Sunstone Press, 2008)

In Schopenhauerian language, he claims Beethoven's ability to manifest the essential nature of all things with music makes him "the true representative musician." Wagner captures Bernstein's idea of rightness. There is no excess in Beethoven's music, where he gives the listener pure melody as opposed to framing one. This is where Beethoven succeeds, a clairvoyant of the deepest dream of the world.[214]

Located in the supplement, Wagner's most detailed explanation of Schopenhauer's influence on his later compositions is found. Broken up into two parts, *On Vision* and *On the Metaphysics of Music*, Wagner specifically starts from the subject, where the Now resides, as opposed to the object.[215]

Wagner's thesis is exciting: he wants to give an explanation of spectral phenomena that is not spiritual but idealistic with music as the answer.[216] He references Schopenhauer's theory of dreams in connection to music, making the connection that just as dreams are known and unseen, so too is this the case with music. A vivid dream, like musical notes, are unseen but immediately known by us.[217]

He equates music with spectral phenomena; what you cannot see but know exists.[218] In spiritual music, the laws of time offer no assistance for understanding, Wagner asserts.[219] He explains: "with our eyes open, we have arrived at a condition

---

[214] Richard Wagner, *Beethoven; With a Supplement from the Philosophical Works of Arthur Schopenhauer* (William Reeves: London, 1903) 32, 35, 45.
[215] Wagner, *Beethoven*, 117.
[216] Wagner, *Beethoven*, 121.
[217] Wagner, *Beethoven*, 118.
[218] Wagner, *Beethoven*, 121.
[219] Wagner, *Beethoven*, 32-3.

which bears considerable resemblance to the condition of somnambulistic clairoyance."[220]

Schopenhauer provided Wagner with creative momentum while he was working on *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (1876), achieving a new philosophical relationship of music to the other arts worked out achieving the greatest exposure of the Wille as possible. This gives The Ring aesthetic immortality, noted by the countless reproductions and re-imaging over the years and across cultures.

In *Beethoven*, Wagner goes on to talk about opera. This looked to solve the problem. Wagner says it did not. Why? He answers: "the opera, apart from the music, the scenic occurrences only, and not the poetical thoughts explaining them, occupy the auditor's attention--and that the opera engages, alternately, *sight* and *hearing* only."[221] It becomes clear that in *Der Ring* Wagner fuses together music, Schopenhauer and Shakespeare: "the Drama representing the Idea can in truth be understood with perfect clearness only through those very musical motives that thus move, change and take shape. We might recognise in music man's a priori qualification for constructing the drama in general."[222]

Following Schopenhauer's aesthetic theory of Wille, Wagner in *Der Ring* has taken the human form, put it on stage, and animated its actions with music. Instead of *The Thinker*, musical accompanies the body in striving on stage. By integrating the various art forms behind the general prescriptions of Schopenhauer's Wille-body thesis, Wagner was attempting to show a world brought to life with musical notes.

---

[220] Wagner, *Beethoven*, 25; see also 12, 24,
[221] Wagner, *Beethoven*, 32-3.
[222] Wagner, *Beethoven*, 78.

It becomes difficult, in parts, to distinguish Wagner from Schopenhauer, in what is really a short book. The essay itself, outside of the supplementary, is just as much about Schopenhauer as it is Beethoven. It is not so much a celebration of Beethoven as it is a Schopenhauerian understanding of his genius. Sullivan's classic *Beethoven, His Spiritual Development* (1927) in my view does a better job examining Beethoven's spiritual development than Wagner does in *Beethoven.*

6. Ontological Status of a Schopenhauerian Idea

Schopenhauer maintains throughout that he has used the word *Idea* as "understood in its genuine and original meaning, given to it by Plato."[223] There is little doubt Schopenhauer's version of an Idea is not *entirely* Platonic. As you might expect, this has created a unanimous declaration against his claim. One does not have to go far into the commentary to find objections and refutations. Nevertheless, the Idea means Schopenhauer retains some level of Platonism through the transcendent nature of consciousness.

Ideas are not ultimate reality in the abstract. Although they refer back to the subject's own existence (EN), Ideas themselves are not ontological but represent an understanding as such, a position backed by Young. Atwell takes this angle too, arguing that pure contemplation of an ordinary object sufficient to bring forth the corresponding Idea. Atwell says the answer is no, mainly because this is the role of the genius.[224] Schopenhauer himself says: "the Idea is only the immediate, and therefore adequate, objectivity of the thing-in-itself, which itself, however, is the *will*

[223] WWRI, 129; §25.
[224] Atwell, *Metaphysics of Will*, 149-150.

-- the will in so far as it is not yet objectified, has not yet become representation."[225] In particular, I think Young's further claim that Schopenhauer's Idea is partially idealistic and empirical is a step in the right direction. A brief review of some key distinctions conclude this chapter.

Empirical and Manufactured Ideas

Based on the examples Plato provides, Schopenhauer charges him with failing to grasp the real distinction between concepts and Ideas.[226] Without some empirical instance all we are talking about are abstract concepts, not Ideas. Unable to understand the world outside time, Schopenhauer's notion of eternity takes on causal transit to the Now. "Time is merely the spread-out and piecemeal view that an individual being has of the Ideas. These are outside time, and consequently *eternal*."[227]

As the most eminent philosopher in the history of the West, Plato's negative opinion of art is well known. While Plato's uneven opinion of artistic insight varies across dialogues, nevertheless his stinging criticism of the arts in *The Republic* is still left wholly intact. Working from phenomena, whether or not Ideas exist in artistically manufactured articles is the clearest area of disagreement between them.[228] The Platonic distrust of aesthetic appeal is undeniable, as Schopenhauer notes: "Plato himself would have allowed Ideas only of natural beings and entities...according to the Platonists, there are no Ideas of house and ring."[229]

---

[225] WWRI, 174; §31.
[226] WWRI, 233; §49.
[227] WWRI, 176; §32.
[228] WWRI, 211; §41.
[229] WWRI, 211; §41; Schopenhauer references xii, chap. 3 and chapter 5 in Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. Plato's student Alcinous, Schopenhauer also tells us, denied that there were Ideas in manufactured articles.

Schopenhauer takes pains to distance himself from the mistake he thinks Plato commits: "one of the greatest and best known errors of that great man, namely of his disdain and rejection of art, especially of poetry."[230] Material as Wille is the key for Schopenhauer's Idea: "we say that they express the Ideas already expressed in their mere material as such."[231] It is the substantial form that denotes an Idea,[232] also seen by music lacking such form. Matter is the common substratum of all individual Ideas, the connecting link between the Idea and the phenomenon. By itself, matter does not express an Idea, as he explains: "confirmed *a posteriori* by the fact that of matter as such absolutely no representation from perception is possible, but only an abstract concept."[233]

[230] WWRI, 212; §41. Schopenhauer references the tenth book of the *Parmenides*.
[231] WWRI, 211; §41.
[232] WWRI, 211; §41.
[233] WWRI, 213; §43.

Chapter 4

Eternal Justice, Temporal Ethics and Realism

Fourth Book: The World as Wille. Second Aspect.

Temporal Action Toward Eternal Wille

The fourth book of the WWR marks the finale of Schopenhauer's symphony of Wille. It pertains to how the Wille, with knowledge of itself, should live at its highest manifestation. A subject "foreign or indifferent to none,"[1] he considers Book IV the most important, giving it the most attention. The keynote of the closing movement is mystic, not despair. The urge must be resisted, Schopenhauer claims, to solve unsolvable problems through linguistic tricks and unprovable myths.[2] This intellectual restraint produces the physical equivalent in the morality surrounding the Wille.

Crafting a version of original sin under the matrix of Wille, Hinduism, Buddhism, and the evolutionary bond of procreation, play critical roles in Schopenhauer's rendition of eternal karma: life is already suffering, do not actively seek to create more, a very Hippocratic looking ethical code. The Oneness of the Wille means injuring others harms the perpetrator of violence too.

Based on self-awareness, Schopenhauer contends there are two behavioral extremes. They correspond to his dyadic time. Consumed with themselves, the first is the egoist, whose PSR prevents moral vision past one's own needs. The ascetic is the second, whose recognition of Wille in everything causes freedom from egotistical thinking,

[1] WWRI, 271; §53.
[2] WWRI, 411-2; §71.

becoming "pure, will-less subjects of knowing."[3] The feeling of life is thereby subdued, not dwelled in, producing non-attainment.

The establishment of the body politic, the State, originates from the widespread inner recognition of the Wille. Here I use Hobbes and Locke to draw distinctions with Schopenhauer's own State of Nature theory, notably how his two notions consider the State a temporal manifestation of eternal justice. Created to punish wrongdoing, he thinks the State should not promote utility. Nor does the State necessarily exist to defend a set of constitutional entitlements. Furthermore, Schopenhauer discloses some practical advice for living virtuously. Pushing the Now, our precious commodity of existence, time should not be wasted. Reflecting on personal experiences provides insight into one's unchanging character, allowing a person to live true to oneself.

The final section of the essay marks a return to the entire premise of the WWR, Schopenhauer's bold opening statement at the start of Book I: without a pre-existing subject there is no knowledge of anything to be had. He furnishes not a single argument in support, claiming it is dishonest to admit otherwise. Is Schopenhauer, that correct this truth is beyond argumentation on paper? Is radical idealism true? Or, as time frames the situation, does the EN precede the AN of an Idea? As best we know it, Schopenhauer's placement of the subject first is correct. Modern science shines light on the wholly overlooked brilliance of his methodology, specifically the observer paradox and intuitive knowledge as causal. It does turn out that temporality is the leanest, and deepest, part of our knowledge about the world.

[3] WWRI, 209; §41.

After reviewing why the Wille cannot be Kantian ultimate reality, I propose another potential alternative explanation: the zero point energy field.

1. Schopenhauer's Perceptual Thanatology

Western secular thought, Hinduism and Buddhism, all recognize philosophy as a meditation on death. Schopenhauer's contribution to this thread: life entails death, integral to the living as a natural phenomenon.

In the second volume of the WWR, he defends the Socratic definition of philosophy[4] as a *thanatos melete*, or preparation for death.[5] Consider the well-known story in the *Phaedo* of Socrates, in which the unknown realm of death over banishment from Athens is preferred. Death is the real inspiration behind genuine philosophy. With no firm supporting evidence, the fear of death is irrational. An unknowable state, nothing prevents us from fearing the gaze back from the abyss.[6]

Along with this Western tradition, Schopenhauer recognizes the death-contemplation at the center of Hinduism and Buddhism.[7] These Indian mythologies contain the wisest insights into dying. "Never has a myth been, and never will one be, more closely associated with a philosophical truth accessible to so few, than this very ancient teaching of the noblest and oldest of peoples." These truths live on today, the same as four thousand years ago.[8] The ancientness of the insights, and staying power, cannot be tossed aside like an aberration, he adds. [9]

---

[4] WWRII, 463. Also in R. Raj Singh, *Death, Contemplation and Schopenhauer* (Hampshire: England, Ashgate Publishing), 2007; x.
[5] WWRII, 463. Also in R. Raj Singh, *Death, Contemplation and Schopenhauer*, xii.
[6] WWRI, 283; §54. Also see 68c in the *Phaedo.*
[7] Singh, *Death, Contemplation and Schopenhauer*, x.
[8] WWRI, 356; §63.
[9] WWRI, 389; §68.

A person who kills an animal will be born as just such an animal at some point in endless time, suffering the same fate. Wickedness forces a person down into lower societal castes, an animal, as a pariah, a leper, a crocodile, and so on down the line.[10] With respect to pure striving without intellect, Schopenhauer does not believe in cognizant reincarnation but only the repurposing of material. However, the benefit of reincarnation is that all these concepts are supported with perception.[11]

Schopenhauer turns to the natural world to create a sound ethical system. According to this physical side: “it is evident that, just as we know our walking to be only a constantly prevented falling, so is the life of our body only a constantly prevented dying, an ever-deferred death."[12] Western religions deny the reality of death, positing eternal life after the secular one. To avoid the construction of such a flimsy, disingenuous ethical system, he turns like the East to the actual world: "so rich in content that not even the profoundest investigation of which the human mind is capable could exhaust it...nothing will be less necessary than for us to take refuge in negative concepts devoid of content...we could call it more briefly cloud-cuckoo-land."[13]

Schopenhauer thinks the fear of death comes from mistaking causality for ultimate reality--a temporal misjudgment. Once a person abandons causality for the recurring present, one can edge up to reality in the Now. Feeling time as the always now with our being a person can stare into Nietzsche's abyss resolute when it gazes

[10] WWRI, 356; §63.
[11] WWRI, 356; §63.
[12] WWRI, 311; §57.
[13] WWRI, 273; §53.

back. Behind *both* gazes is the same thing, the eternal Wille. This is how a person starts to love life instead of dreading death:

> It will not run away from the will, nor the will from it. Therefore whoever is satisfied with life as it is, whoever affirms it in every way, can confidently regard it as endless, and can banish the fear of death as a delusion. This delusion inspires him with the foolish dread that he can ever be deprived of the present, and deceives him about a time without a present in it. This is a delusion which in regard to time is like that other in regard to space, in virtue of which everyone imagines the precise position occupied by him on the globe as above, and all the rest as below. In just the same way, everyone connects the present with his own individuality, and imagines that all present becomes extinguished therewith; that past and future are then without a present. But just as on the globe everywhere is above, so the form of all life is the *present*; and to fear death because it robs us of the present is no wiser than to fear that we can slip down from the round globe on the top of which we are now fortunately standing. The form of the present is essential to the objectification of the will. [14]

No doubt, in his better consciousness the overwhelming sense is truthful acceptance.

In §54 he includes a footnote on the scholastic usage of a permanent Now. They taught "eternity is not succession without a beginning and end: "but a permanent *Now*;" in other words, we possess the same *Now* which existed for Adam; that is to say, that there is no difference between the *Now* and the *Then*."[15] Schopenhauer takes the reference from Hobbes *Leviathan* and it presages his major complaint against Hobbes empiricism as the source of ethics. For all these reasons, life is death and death is life. There is One single current of life, the Wille.

In a crucial step toward the Wille, he argues for the extentionlessness of the present moment: "it cuts time which extends infinitely in both directions, and stands firm and immovable."[16] Just as a tangent line does not roll with a sphere, at the

---

[14] WWRI, 280; §54.
[15] WWRI, 280; §54.
[16] WWRI, 280; §54.

present point of contact the subject's Now (without form) does not revolve with the object known in time. The Now is unknowable and the condition of all that is knowable.[17] In further detail, he explains:

> Or should we suppose that the past took on a new existence by its being sealed through death? Our own past, even the most recent, even the previous day, is only an empty dream of the imagination, and the past of all those millions is the same. What was? What is? The will, whose mirror is life, and will-free knowledge beholding the will clearly in that mirror. He who has not already recognized this, or will not recognize it, must add to the above question as to the fate of past generations this question as well: Why precisely is he, the questioner, so lucky as to possess this precious, perishable, and only real present, while those hundreds of generations of men, even the heroes and sages of former times, have sunk into the night of the past, and have thus become nothing, while he, his insignificant ego, actually exists? Or, more briefly, although strangely: Why is this now, his now, precisely now and *was* not long ago? Since he asks such strange questions, he regards his existence and his time as independent of each other, and the former as projected into the latter. He really assumes two nows, one belonging to the object and the other to the subject, and marvels at the happy accident of their coincidence. Actually, however, only the point of contact of the object, the form of which is time, with the subject that has no mode of the principle of sufficient reason as its form, constitutes the present...only in the present, however, are there real objects. Past and future contain mere concepts and phantasms; hence the present is the essential form of the phenomenon of the will, and is inseparable from that form. The present alone is that which always exists and stands firm and immovable.[18]

In physics parlance, this is the hypersurface of the present at the center of two light cones: one in an infinite past, the other toward an infinite future.

The mind has the power to elevate its attunement to recognize that the only real time is always now if one keeps in mind that the links of cause and effect bring to every present moment an incalculable past with a similar future: "a whole eternity,

[17] WWRI, 279-280, 284; §54.
[18] WWRI, 278-9; §54.

in other words an endless time, has already elapsed up to the present moment, and therefore everything that can or should become must have become already."[19]

The courage to live confidently in an unknown future results from admitting the Now as real, thrusting the present to the mind's fore:

> A man who had assimilated firmly into his way of thinking the truths so far advanced, but at the same time had not come to know, through his own experience or through a deeper insight, that constant suffering is essential to all life; who found satisfaction in life and took perfect delight in it; who desired, in spite of calm deliberation, that the course of his life as he had hitherto experienced it should be of endless duration or of constant recurrence; and whose courage to face life was so great that, in return for life's pleasures, he would willingly and gladly put up with all the hardships and miseries to which it is subject; such a man would stand 'with firm, strong bones on the well-grounded, enduring earth,' and would have nothing to fear. Armed with the knowledge we confer on him, he would look with indifference at death hastening towards him on the wings of time.[20]

Schopenhauer thinks that everyone who can say the following can be master of their life: "'I am once for all lord and master of the present, and through all eternity it will accompany me as my shadow; accordingly, I do not wonder where it comes from, and how it is that it is precisely now.'"[21]

It appears that for Schopenhauer morality can be accessed only after the fear of death has been overcome. A genuinely virtuous action is impossible without it, since one cannot recognize the ego in others without discovering it in oneself. Only at this point can a person stop wanting and focus on how to live justly.

---

[19] WWRI, 273-4; §53.
[20] WWRI, 283-4; §54.
[21] WWRI, 279; §54.

2. Eternal Justice and Karmic Compassion

Schopenhauer provides a conception of eternal justice based on the Wille's "original discord" that is "a perennial source of suffering."[22] This original sin of Wille produces the felt truth of our lives. Outside conceptual understanding, Ideas are the path to ethics, by recognizing the world and oneself as Wille. Awareness of this violent monism results in refraining from action.

He thinks that everyone knows justice rests on the fact that everything is one Wille "at least as an obscure feeling." [23] A person accesses the eternal nature of justice by acknowledging that the victim and the perpetrator of violence have the same inner nature. Recalling the second book, humanity has a tendency to turn on itself. The same Wille, in endless time, bears both the pain and guilt.[24] Schopenhauer leverages the Upanishads to develop karma under the paradigm of Wille: "all beings of the world, living and lifeless, are led past in succession...called the *Mahavakya: Tatoumes*, or more correctly, *tat tvam asi*, which means 'This art thou,'"[25] unity re-established in the mind from its dispersion into innumerable individuals, held together by the bond of procreation.[26]

Schopenhauer considers this the correct source of normative ethical conduct. Normative definitions of good and bad lie "at the summit of mental endowment and

[22] WWRI, 333; §61.
[23] WWRI, 357; §64.
[24] WWRI, 357; §64.
[25] WWRI, 355; §63.
[26] WWRI, 329; §60.

self-consciousness."[27] Singular, the Wille has the ability to explicate an understanding of itself as Wille.[28]

Moral imagination closes the fact-value gap through the feeling of empathy (*Mitleid*), the compassion felt for another person (or object) transcends logical rules. Rationality by itself is unable to access this feeling of shared existential commiseration. Going back to Book I for a moment, it is "the felt truth" that "leads us back on the right path, violating all syllogistic argument."[29] Everyone suffers because everything is Wille, material products created over millions of years of constant rebirth, existing only in occupied time: "For life is inseparable from the will-to-live, and its form is only the Now."[30] Going through the Idea, he avoids analogical reasoning through the recognition of the Wille's monism: "either in imagination we put ourselves vividly in the sufferer's place, or we see in his fate the lot of the whole of humanity, and consequently above all our own fate,"[31] hence, "All love is compassion or sympathy."[32] Moved to tears by the suffering of others using their moral imagination, the ego is suppressed. This requires a turning back on ourselves,[33] where fate of all humanity above our own: "Accordingly, *weeping is sympathy with ourselves*, or sympathy thrown back to its starting-point."[34]

3. Knowledge of the Eternal Awakens Negative Freedom

Using the laws of the identity, non-contradiction and the excluded middle, Schopenhauer discusses the Wille's morality through two general archetypes

[27] WWRI, 307; §56.
[28] Atwell, *Metaphysics of Will*, 143-4, 148.
[29] WWRI, 87; §16.
[30] WWRI, 366; §65.
[31] WWRI, 377; §67.
[32] WWRI, 374; §66.
[33] WWRI, 378 §68.
[34] WWRI, 377; §67.

empirically determined. These are the extreme positions of the ascetic and of the egoist. This general distinction lies at the core of Schopenhauer's system,[35] with time the penultimate divide--the EN, or PSR.

Willing is Not Taught

As a process of self-discovery, Young detects a similar set of axioms to the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism: "the world is my representation; the will is the 'thing in itself" and so pain is the essence of the world; temporary relief from pain is possible through art; permanent relief is possible through 'denial of the will,' through, that is, the only finally effective form of such 'denial,' death."[36]

Schopenhauer links the Wille's insatiability to the Buddhist sentiment of non-attachment. Following time, satisfaction (*Zufriedenheit*) is unattainable in Schopenhauer's system because our bodies are not immune from the continual becoming of the world. On the contrary, he holds we have evolved out from this passage of time. The PSR resets, or always collapses back into the present due to the Now, leaving the attainment of bliss unfulfilled. Consequently, to wish is to be in pain.[37]

Once a person recognizes that willing is not taught, *Velle non discitur,*[38] the real essence of freedom can be known. He explains that the charm of obtainment quickly wears off: "The wish, the need, appears again on the scene under a new form; if it does not, then dreariness, emptiness, and boredom follow, the struggle against which

---

[35] WWRI, 391; §68; and Atwell, *Metaphysics of Will*, 171, 214.
[36] Julian Young, Chapter 10, *Schopenhauer, Buddhism, Death and Salvation* in *Better Consciousness, Schopenhauer's Philosophy of Value*, eds. Alex Neill and Christopher Janaway (Blackwell Publishing), 2009.
[37] WWRI, 379; §68. Also 319; §58.
[38] WWRI, 369; §66; and 295; §55.

is just as painful as is that against want."[39] Subsequently, the satisfaction of desire only leads to another wish, he claims: "really and essentially always *negative* only, and never positive."[40]

Schopenhauer claims a calming effect takes place when the mind's eye grasps that wants will be with the person over one's lifetime. This knowledge becomes "a *quieter*, silencing and suppressing all willing,"[41] where the pleasure associated with wrongdoing is outweighed by another's suffering,[42] turning away from life to a state of "voluntary renunciation, resignation, true composure, and complete willlessness."[43] This brings us to the first archetypal extreme who cannot suppress this awareness.

The Saintly Ascetic

Schopenhauer respects the ascetic lessons taught by Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity.[44] He notes the practice is most extreme in India, where near total renunciation of desires can be seen, the warning that behind our existence lies a wickedness needing control. Using the "knowledge of the Ideas,"[45] the ascetic sees a way to obtain an appearance of freedom through self-renunciation. Here we can see an aspect of Buddhism Schopenhauer does not share--*nirvānā*. The Wille never ceases. There is much commentary on the parallels between the denial of the Wille and the Buddhist conception, but the situation still remains murky.[46] Dealing with a force incalculably more powerful than we, it makes sense why Schopenhauer does not do

[39] WWRI, 313-4; §57.
[40] WWRI, 319; §58.
[41] WWRI, 308; §56.
[42] WWRI, 343; §62.
[43] WWRI, 379; §68.
[44] WWRI, 384; §68.
[45] WWRI, 301; §55.
[46] Cross, 6.

so. Real emptiness can be had only when one dies because the Wille never stops pushing until death. What you can do is suffer less by letting go of fleeting desires to suffer less, something in general agreement with Buddhism.

The ascetics have discovered "the source and essence of justice,"[47] compelling them to hold greater love for all objects in the world. He explains this transformation in the mind as such: "Only when suffering assumes the form of pure knowledge, and then this knowledge, as a *quieter of the will*, produces true resignation, is it the path to salvation, and thus worthy of reverence."[48] The same one metaphysical substance, the ascetic extends consideration of the Now to objects across the Wille's gradient.[49] The choice has been made for "penance, and self-chastisement, for the constant mortification of the will."[50]

Inner desire turns into outward chastity and poverty, in an attempt to mortify the Wille and suppress desire.[51] Wanting nothing translates into feeling nothing. Reaching back to the first book, this non-attainment must be learned: "only the fear of present compulsion can restrain his desires until at last this fear has become custom, and as such determines him; this is training."[52]

You can only have freedom from the body, from willing. Schopenhauer characterizes this nothingness as a "special kind of suicide." In extremely rare cases, starvation, the highest form of denial, can be achieved.[53] Singh calls this aspect of

---

[47] WWRI, 378; §68.
[48] WWRI, 397; §68.
[49] WWRI, 374; §66.
[50] WWRI, 392; §68.
[51] WWRI, 381-2; §68.
[52] WWRI, 37; §8.
[53] WWRI, 400-1; §69

Schopenhauer's philosophy "death-contemplation," where the only salvation achievable is through a sort of soft death.[54]

Schopenhauer explains that there is a noted lack of movement in the truly resigned individual. His Wille-body thesis means action that gives life is contradicted by non-action: "Voluntary and complete chastity is the first step in asceticism or the denial of the will-to-live. It thereby denies the affirmation of the will which goes beyond the individual life, and thus announces that the will, whose phenomenon is the body, ceases with the life of this body."[55] Wanting nothing is associated with non-action.[56]

Schopenhauer agrees with Kant that the concept of nothing can be known relative to the body, a *nihil privativum* or private nothing, different from a *nihil negativum*, an absolute nothing, which is impossible.[57] Ascetic nothingness is judged by the empirical. Action is the special ingredient given to us by the body; with the Wille associated with motion, when the body halts, the Wille does too. In terms of time, the body ceases to be an object of causality through arrestment.

Over evolutionary time, we compiled a material body, what Schopenhauer calls the *acquired character*. As our own empirical character, he is referring to our mental and bodily powers, and the strengths and limitations of our own individuality.[58] The Wille is only free outside the body, where it is positively free outside the PSR. It exists as a force exisitng everywhere at the same time, making

[54] WWRII, 463. Also in Singh, *Death, Contemplation and Schopenhauer*, xii.
[55] WWRI, 380; §68.
[56] WWRI, 408-9; §71.
[57] WWRI, 409, §71; 288; §55. See the *Critique* A 291-2/B 347-9. Schopenhauer says his position on nothingness is the same found in Plato's *Sophist*.
[58] For those readers interested in greater clarification, Schopenhauer directs them to chapter ten on his 1840 prize essay concerning the Wille's ultimate freedom (WWRI, 290; §55). See *On the Basis of Morality* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1995) 109-115.

itself known in phenomena subject to causality.[59] Schopenhauer thinks people who defend complete freedom in human action is possible are "uncultured." He goes on: "following his feelings, most vigorously defends complete freedom in individual actions, whereas the great thinkers of all ages, and the more profound religious teachings, have denied it."[60]

Given the horror of the Ideas, in most cases, ascetic insight leads to vegetarianism. The ontological status of animals, under the proper notion of time to use in ethical matters, the EN, leads the ascetic to stop eating animal flesh. Moral agency conferred across "the animals and to the whole of nature; he will therefore not cause suffering even to an animal."[61] On this companionship, he references the Book of Job (30:29): "I am a brother to dragons, and a companion to owls." As a general rule, Schopenhauer recommends eating living creatures less aware of their existence, lower on the Wille's Chain: "In this way, the will-to-live as a whole endures less suffering than if the opposite course were adopted. At the same time, this determines the extent to which man may, without wrong, make use of the powers of animals."[62] So, while intelligence gives us power over animals, he indicates in this footnote that compassion toward all life is the rule. Placing too much burden on the lower life forms turns this necessary dependency into cruelty.

Nevertheless, he thinks this respect can go too far, for example, the Jains who hold cloths over their mouths while sweeping the floor before they step, lest they inhale or step on a bug. This behavior misses the connection between form and

---

[59] WWRI, 287; §55.
[60] WWRI, 289; §55.
[61] WWRI, 372; §66. Also 388, §68.
[62] WWRI, 372; §66, footnote on this page.

intelligence, what I argued in the second chapter was the most important way Schopenhauer understands objectification of the Wille. "In my opinion, that right does not extend to vivisection, particularly of the higher animals. On the other hand, the insect does not suffer through its death as much as man suffers through its sting. The Hindus do not see this."[63]

In addition to the genius, the ascetic represents another alternative insight under the Now in addition to the genius in the WWR. Determined by their conduct, both are extremely different. The genius is prone to insanity, while the ascetic mortifies the Wille through voluntary starvation, confining spaces, or flagellation.[64] The ascetic enjoys a countenance of serenity, cultivated from time spent in silent solitude, exacting self-torture from wanting.[65] We become more like the ascetic while we are enjoying a work of art and wanting nothing in the AN, not available unless the artist has borne the brunt of suffering to bring it into existence.

So, who has the deeper insight into the Wille, the ascetic or the genius? Both are promoting the growth of life, not hindering it. The nothingness of ascetics can only be observed while they are alive, whereas the artist suffers through labor to bring the Idea into aesthetic appreciation for another viewer. The result is an aesthetic object outlasting the lifetime of the genius, where as the behavior of the ascetic cannot. Leaving behind an experience transcends causality in a way the behavior of the ascetic cannot. For these reasons, as it pertains to who taps into a closer understand of the Ideas, action elevates the genius above the ascetic. After all,

[63] WWRI, 372; §66, footnote on this page.
[64] WWRI, 373; §68.
[65] WWRI, 391; §68.

Schopenhauer defends the view that, if a person was so inclined, one could run toward suffering and quiet one's desires.[66] However, genius cannot be taught.

The Wicked Egoist

Moving from a heightened regard for other life to a near complete disregard, Schopenhauer considers egoism the source of all evil in the world. The needs of the egoist supersede those of all others: "from the natural standpoint, he is ready for this to sacrifice everything else; he is ready to annihilate the world, in order to maintain his own self, that drop in the ocean, a little longer. This disposition is *egoism*, which is essential to everything in nature.[67]

Consumed by the anticipation of an unknown future, unable to see that desires are like seawater for quenching one's thirst, the egoist lacks the courage to question his/her life. What follows is a life filled with pain. Egoists take their mind off the present, projecting their thoughts to the future. This results in a disregard of the present moment to pursue mental suffering. Indecision and reason are set loose and "neither chooses nor avoids the passing pleasure or pain, but ponders over the consequences of both."[68]

Schopenhauer equates a lie with an act of violence, active plotting to extend power over someone else through deception to prevent another from acting as one would otherwise.[69] It is the "*doing* of wrong generally...either through *violence* or through *cunning*; it is immaterial as regards what is morally essential."[70] He considers

[66] WWRI, 378; §68, and 300; §55.
[67] WWRI, 332-3; §61.
[68] WWRI, 299 §55.
[69] WWRI, 337; §62.
[70] WWRI, 337; §62.

purposeful deception a sign of the weakest moral character.[71] Furthermore, the egoist can suffer from a disinterested form of the mental condition. In an attempt to take the focus off their mental suffering, the egoist seeks out to harm another person. Pain an end in itslef. Schopenhauer says this is cruelty.[72] "He often tries to escape by wickedness, in other words, by causing another's suffering, from the evil, from the suffering of his own individuality, involved as he is in the *principium individuationis*, deluded by the veil of Maya."[73]

Opposite the ascetic's relationship with animals, the egoist assumes a malicious posture towards other life. This cruelty eventually extends to enjoyment. To escape a reality hostile to their ego, pleasure is taken by antagonizing animals for amusement. Unable to resist provoking other life: "they cannot easily just contemplate a rare and strange animal, but must excite it, tease it, play with it, just to experience action and reaction."[74] With this quote, Schopenhauer's assumption of the AN can be seen. Zoos, circuses, factory farming, sport hunting, and other endeavors commoditizing the Idea, downgrade the high-minded Now.

4. Character and Relative Good

Schopenhauer believes a person's character lies in-between the bodily willing and non-willing, represented by the ascetic and the egoist. To protect the inner life of the mind, these radical positions disregard the outside world. Both positions properly recognize that the reality of the world lies in the mind, but differences over time produce very different behaviors. Schopenhauer understands character as residing

[71] WWRI, 338-9; §62.
[72] WWRI, 363; §65.
[73] WWRI, 352, 354; §63; 363; §65.
[74] WWRI, 314; §57.

in-between these two choices, indicative of our two options facing the world. What motivates people to act throughout life is determined by an unchanging character.

Motives and Unchanging Character

Where not-willing is to recognize the Idea, and willing to not have knowledge of it, both senses of time collide in Schopenhauer's concept of elective decision. As far as temporality goes, this explains the source of our inner character. He explains: "the unalterable nature of the empirical character which is the mere unfolding of the intelligible character that resides outside time, and also the necessity with which actions result from its contact with motives."[75]

He makes the case that motives show themselves empirically through the actions of the body.[76] Old beliefs that character can be changed drop away with age after what a person has done is considered. It is "not the dead concepts of philosophy [that]decide the matter," but instead, "the daemon which guides him and has not chosen him, but has been chosen by him, as Plato would say."[77] Judging what a person does gives the closest we can get to the innermost nature of person.

Abstract motives only become visible over time. Virtue cannot be taught and a person has to learn how to be disinterested and see who one really is over time. Strive to be indifferent toward most things that come one's way. This is what leads to a good disposition. It is one that is ego free and disinterested, the Now over the now.

[75] WWRI, 301; §55. Also see 289; §55; and 297; §55.
[76] WWRI, 402; §69. Upfront with the reader, Schopenhauer makes no claim to certainty, only a general outline: "indeed hard to explain; but human nature has depths, obscurities, and intricacies, whose elucidation and unfolding are of the very greatest difficulty."
[77] WWRI, 271; §53.

Action denotes more than a passing mood in Schopenhauer's system. The abstract motives conflict with one another, concealing the reasons for the winner even from the actor oneself:

> Our character is to be regarded as the temporal unfolding of an extra-temporal, and so indivisible and unalterable, act of will, or of an intelligible character. Through this, all that is essential in our conduct of life, in other words its ethical content, is invariably determined, and must express itself accordingly in its phenomenon, the empirical character.[78]

The ability of motives to be held in the abstract means they can be saved and called upon in causal time. They do not have to be present, only known.[79] He explains:

> For only *in abstracto* can several representations lie beside one another in consciousness as judgements and chains of conclusions, and then, free from all determination of time, work against one another, until the strongest overpowers the rest, and determines the will. This is the complete *elective decision*.[80]

As one might expect, Schopenhauer claims the concept of an absolute good is impossible. The first reason is that an absolute good implies satisfaction, which he says is an outright contradiction.[81] The second reason, is that when outside conditions change, so does what is considered good change. Based on his objections, there is no object that can be considered the highest good among all others: “always with the retention of the relative...for example, in the expression: 'This is good for me, but not for you.'”[82] For all practical matters: "we call everything good that is just as we want it to be."[83] He then proceeds to subdivide it into two further ways using time: 1. present satisfaction of the Wille according to temporal conditions; 2. indirect

---

[78] WWRI, 301; §55.
[79] WWRI, 295; §55.
[80] WWRI, 298; §55. See In Book II 139; §26.
[81] WWRI, 362; §65.
[82] WWRI, 360; §65.
[83] WWRI, 360; §65.

satisfaction concerning what the possible future may hold.[84] Badness and evil are encountered when interactions are not agreeable to the Wille's striving.[85]

5. Schopenhauerian Virtue

The love for others begins with self-love. Schopenhauer declares that virtue cannot be taught. Although related, Schopenhauer does not equate acting virtuously with rationality. He thinks everyone has the capacity for some level of virtue, with the ability matched to individual character. Following Kant: "Virtue is as little taught as is genius."[86] People have to figure out on their own to let their inner voice lead their public one.

Starting with reason works the other way around; concepts are perceptually driven, with the *a priori* framework of the PSR missing the Ideas. Performing good deeds stem from respecting the sufferings of others, where "*knowledge of the suffering of others*," is felt directly from one's own suffering.[87] It is necessary to stop hurting oneself first before prevention of harming others can occur. Additionally, Schopenhauer does not think a virtuous life respecting the Ideas will bring happiness. In most cases, living virtuously to respect one's Wille, and others, requires begrudging effort.

Morality that motivates people can be done only from self-love. Schopenhauer relates: "no genuine virtue can be brought about through morality and abstract knowledge in general, but that such virtue must spring from the intuitive knowledge

[84] WWRI, 360; §65.
[85] WWRI, 361; §65.
[86] WWRI, 271; §53.
[87] WWRI, 375; §67.

that recognizes in another's individuality the same inner nature as in one's own."[88] Genuine virtue is similar to authentic art. If the ego is involved, selfishness has crept in, making true, sympathetic affection impossible.[89] He describes his position:

> Genuine goodness of disposition, disinterested virtue, and pure nobleness of mind, therefore, do not come from abstract knowledge; yet they do come from knowledge. But it is a direct and intuitive knowledge that cannot be reasoned away or arrived at by reasoning; a knowledge that, just because it is not abstract, cannot be communicated, but must dawn on each of us. It therefore finds its real and adequate expression not in words, but simply and solely in deeds, in conduct, in the course of a man's life. We who are here looking for the theory of virtue, and who thus have to express in abstract terms the inner nature of the knowledge lying at its foundation, shall nevertheless be unable to furnish that knowledge itself in this expression, but only the concept of that knowledge. We thus always start from conduct, in which alone it becomes visible, and refer to such conduct as its only adequate expression. We only interpret and explain this expression, in other words, express in the abstract what really takes place in it.[90]

There can never be a theory of virtue, because being virtuous consists in performing activity.[91] Ideas are associated with the inherently wicked vital force; violence of the Ideas shows the virtuous person that life is suffering but living in the arena of life requires acting.

Guideposts to Virtue

While virtue cannot be taught, as recognition of the Ideas happens at a different rate and pace in everyone, Schopenhauer nevertheless holds some abiding rules of conduct for those interested in living as fully as possible. Not pursuing a path dictated by one's inner character is spiritual suicide for Schopenhauer. It is nothing less than doing violence to one's intelligible character. Without following the

---

[88] WWRI, 367-8; §66.
[89] WWRI, 376; §67.
[90] WWRI, 369-70; §66.
[91] Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, Book 1, Chapter 8.

direction of one's character, and developing talents that correspond to one's natural abilities, a person's labor is robbed from one, irreplaceable time lost forever.

∞ Know who you are.

For Schopenhauer, the situation that results from not knowing one's inner self is similar to a ship at sea with no sails or rudder. Powerless to harness nature's energy, the boat has no choice as to where to go. To avoid a comparable life, the first virtuous activity a person should aim toward is introspection. Living according to this inner calling provides a person with focus and direction, ways to harness the energy of life. On this proper alignment of the body with the mind: "our capabilities of every kind, and of their unalterable limits, is in this respect the surest way to the attainment of the greatest possible contentment with ourselves." [92]

As the PSR has to look backwards from the perspective of the Wille's vitalism that powers it, concepts expose this inalterability *a posteriori*. "We must first learn from experience what we will and what we can do; till then we do not know this, are without character, and must often be driven back on to our own path by hard blows from outside."[93] A person can choose another line of work unbecoming to one's inner nature but this is from a lack of knowledge about oneself, and this person will be miserable.[94] He explains the need to pursue work where we make a living suitable to our character:

> Therefore mere willing and mere ability to do are not enough of themselves, but a man must also *know* what he wills, and *know* what he can do. Only thus will he display character, and only then can he achieve anything solid. Until he reaches this, he is still without character, in spite of the natural consistency of the empirical

[92] WWRI, 306; §55.
[93] WWRI, 304; §55.
[94] WWRI, 305, §55.

> character. Although, on the whole, he must remain true to himself and run his course drawn by his daemon, he will not describe a straight line, but a wavering and uneven one. He will hesitate, deviate, turn back, and prepare for himself repentance and pain. All this because, in great things and in small, he sees before him as much as is possible and attainable for man, and yet does not know what part of all this is alone suitable and feasible for him, or even merely capable of being enjoyed by him. Therefore he will envy many on account of a position and circumstances which yet are suitable only to their character, not to his, in which he would feel unhappy, and which he might be unable to endure. For just as a fish is happy only in water, a bird only in the air, and a mole only under the earth, so every man is happy only in an atmosphere suitable to him. For example, not everyone can breathe the atmosphere of a court. From lack of moderate insight into all this, many a man will make all kinds of abortive attempts; he will do violence to his character in particulars, and yet on the whole will have to yield to it again. What he thus laboriously attains contrary to his nature will give him no pleasure; what he learns in this way will remain dead.[95]

From the inside-out, the good person follows one's intelligible character attempting not to hurt others in the process. This is directly associated with power from confidence in ability. Irreplaceable time is not lost chasing down dead ends, instead; "we shall attempt to develop, employ, and use in every way those talents that are naturally prominent in us. We shall always turn to where these talents are useful and of value, and shall avoid entirely and with self-restraint those pursuits for which we have little natural aptitude."[96]

Self-confidence and determination are linked to knowing what one is good at. After a person becomes acquainted with one's strengths and weaknesses, Schopenhauer claims following action true to oneself helps avoid humiliation, which causes the greatest mental suffering.[97] It is only through using temporal time as valuable that a skill becomes acquired. Schopenhauer claims: "we must in life, if we

[95] WWRI, 303-4; §55.
[96] WWRI, 305; §55.
[97] WWRI, 305-6; §55.

wish to grasp and possess one thing, renounce and leave aside innumerable others that lie to the right and to the left. If we cannot decide to do this, but, like children at a fair, snatch at everything that fascinates us in passing, this is the perverted attempt to change the line of our path into a surface. We then run a zigzag path, wander like a will-o'-the-wisp, and arrive at nothing."[98]

"For there is really no other pleasure than in the use and feeling of our own powers, and the greatest pain is when we are aware of a deficiency of our powers where they are needed."[99] Once we know who we are, the search for direction in life is over. Do not search around for direction like a novice. There is one life. Be it fully and know it. Find out who you are and go after what you want.

Schopenhauer also councils that a person should avoid imitating others. With the highest regard for individuality, he quips: "Imitating the qualities and idiosyncrasies of others is much more outrageous than wearing others' clothes, for it is the judgement we ourselves pronounce on our own worthlessness." [100] Unfortunately, he judges that most people will chase material wealth at the expense of inner contentment, going their whole lives "without being allowed to come to their senses."[101]

∞ Value the Now

As close to eternity as possible, Schopenhauer advises us to set our minds on the present. Grounding everything known, we need to avoid "killing time." As we

[98] WWRI, 303; §55.
[99] WWRI, 305; §55.
[100] WWRI, 306; §55.
[101] WWRI, 328; §60.

have seen, refusal to recognize the present as more ontologically real is another mask of *māyā*.

Spending time in the Now avoids behavior averse to one's present spiritual health, such as sentimentality. He cautions the reader to beware of "the danger of *sentimentality*," another way to avoid grappling with death. Opposite this longing for the past is the heroic view of time: "standing up courageously and rising to resignation," avoiding nostalgia.[102]

Whatever it is a person is going to be, Schopenhauer tells us one needs to get acting on it. “But this need for exciting the will shows itself particularly in the invention and maintenance of card-playing, which is in the truest sense an expression of the wretched side of humanity."[103] Death stands in the background and may enter the scene at any moment.[104] Schopenhauer's advice: enjoy good art, it elevates thoughts to the AN, warding off desires.

∞Avoid Vanity, Boredom and Unhinged Optimism

Schopenhauer explicitly advises the reader to avoid vanity. Beware of optimism disconnected from the perceived world is intellectual snake oil. Disguised as an elixir of everlasting life, obfuscates setting achievable goals: "all suffering really results from the want of proportion between what we demand and expect and what comes to us."[105]

With most people not knowing what they want, the unrewarding behavior eventually leads to boredom. Schopenhauer characterizes this feeling as a sign of

[102] WWRI, 396; §68.
[103] WWRI, 314; §57.
[104] WWRI, 312-3; §57.
[105] WWRI, 88; §16.

despair: "the deadening boredom that makes existence a burden to us."[106] Boredom results in amusements that are diversionary, perpetuating rather than solving the problem. Caught up in the chase, a person forgets about one's inner misery for awhile, only to be reminded of it after attainment: "a fearful emptiness and boredom come over...life swings like a pendulum to and fro between pain and boredom, and these two are in fact its ultimate constituents."[107] To alleviate boredom, Schopenhauer argues people run after sociability. "It causes beings who love one another as little as men do, to seek one another so much, and thus becomes the source of sociability."[108]

He characterizes the optimist position as "thoughtless talk of those who harbour nothing but words under their shallow foreheads, seems to me to be not merely an absurd, but also a really *wicked*, way of thinking, a bitter mockery of the unspeakable sufferings of mankind."[109] "Folly goes to such lengths, and the opinion of others is a principal aim of the efforts of everyone, although the complete futility of this is expressed by the fact that in almost all languages vanity, *vanitas*, originally signifies emptiness and nothingness."[110]

Denying death allows for other realities to be denied. Schopenhauer invokes the spirit of Voltaire's *Candide* (1759), where he ridiculed Leibniz's claim that this is the best of all possible worlds. Our eyes, not words, make the determination that frightens our ego. He states:

---

[106] WWRI, 313; §57.
[107] WWRI, 312; §57.
[108] WWRI, 313; §57. Schopenhauer references the practice of solitary confinement in Philadelphia while he was writing. Since the Wille's quest for stimulation is unattainable: "It is so terrible an instrument, that it has brought convicts to suicide."
[109] WWRI, 326; §59.
[110] WWRI, 325; §59.

> If we were to conduct the most hardened and callous optimist through hospitals, infirmaries, operating theatres, through prisons, torture-chambers, and slave-hovels, over battlefields and to places of execution; if we were to open to him all the dark abodes of misery, where it shuns the gaze of cold curiosity, and finally were to allow him to glance into the dungeon of Ugolino where prisoners starved to death, he too would certainly see in the end what kind of a world is this *meilleur des mondes possibles*.[111]

Appeals made to your ego should not deter "the flattery of the moment, the allurement of hope, and the satisfaction of the will offering itself again and again...a constant temptation to a renewed affirmation of it. For this reason, all those allurements have in this respect been personified as the devil."[112]

In review, I notice Schopenhauer's guidelines to increase virtue resemble those of Musonius Rufus (30-100 C.E.). He is considered one of the four great Roman Stoic philosophers; Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius the other three. The Stoics abandoned the rigorous asceticism of the Cynics, the most extreme of the post-Socratic philosophers. Rufus taught that virtue is practiced, by getting one's emotions under control, accomplished through training. Rufus attests: "Although understanding the theory behind the action enables one to speak, it is practice that enables one to act."[113]

Suicide is Unacceptable

Schopenhauer recognizes that in almost all ethical systems suicide is condemned, a view he fully supports. Counter intuitively, as an undertaking, Schopenhauer considers suicide to be the strongest affirmation of the Wille,[114]

---

[111] WWRI, 325; §59.
[112] WWRI, 392; §68.
[113] Cynthia King, translator, *Musonius Rufus*, (CreateSpace, 2011), 34-5.
[114] WWRI, 399; §69.

Nothing less than: “the most blatant expression of the contradiction of the will-to-live with itself."[115]

The Wille always wills life.[116] This is contrary to the way most people think about suicide. How can suicide represent an assertion of life, much less the highest one, for that matter? The situation does not allow for the "unchecked existence and affirmation of the body," which creates great suffering from the inability to "develop and display its efforts."[117] With nowhere else to turn, the desire unmet, the constant struggle of the Wille is turned away from other phenomena and leads to the individual declaring war on itself. An act of suicide is the Wille's self-annihilation, exposing destruction as the inner essence of reality.

Similar to the egoist, a person who commits suicide mistakes causality for reality. Mistaking the temporal for the eternal, "The suicide wills life, and is dissatisfied merely with the conditions on which it has come to him."[118] The height of this temporal delusion reaches its peak, Schopenhauer attests, when a person kills one's children before killing oneself. Having recognized one's offspring as the perpetuation of one's life-force, the decision is made based on “the phenomenon as the being-in-itself,” to deliver the kids from a life of misery too.[119] He adds that Instances like these continue to occur despite conscience, religion, and tradition, holding murder as the gravest of all wrongs.

---

[115] WWRI, 400; §69
[116] WWRI, 275; §54.
[117] WWRI, 399; §69.
[118] WWRI, 398; §69.
[119] WWRI, 400; §69

The Example of Madame de Guyon

Schopenhauer considers it a rarity for "mere knowledge"[120] to bring about the change in a person's behavior. In most cases, the ego will have to be painfully broken. This requires a person to hit rock bottom, as "the greatest personal suffering before its self-denial appears."[121] He describes the situation: "those unfortunate persons who have to drink to the dregs the greatest measure of suffering, face a shameful, violent, and often painful death on the scaffold with complete mental vigour, after they are deprived of all hope; and very often we see them converted in this way."[122] The rule of thumb Schopenhauer endorses is: the bigger the ego, the greater the pain needed to break its false image of the world as always yielding to them.

He notes two literary examples that portray how knowledge is not enough to produce resignation. The first is Gretchen in Goethe's "immortal masterpiece," *Faust*. Gretchen's desperate surrendering to her circumstances at the end of the first part emulates the "violently willing heroes" to follow, led by naïve seduction. The scene is "a perfect specimen" of the involuntary way a person is led by hard blows from the outside to "complete resignation."[123]

The second instance is the lived life of Madame de Guyon. Her *Autobiography* is of a "great and beautiful soul."[124] The genuine nature of the insights, he attests, will keep it overlooked by the masses of common thinkers.[125] Her experiences show the purifying effect denial can have on a person. This leads to a complete reversal of the

[120] WWRI, 393; §68.
[121] WWRI, 392; §68.
[122] WWRI, 393; §68
[123] WWRI, 393; §68.
[124] WWRI, 385; §68.
[125] WWRI, 386; §68.

original situation, a vehement renouncing of everything formerly desired and a happy welcome of death. This is to be saved and free: "the gleam of silver that suddenly appears from the purifying flame of suffering, the gleam of the denial of the will-to-live, of salvation."[126] He quotes the end of her *Autobiography*: "Everything is indifferent to me; I *cannot* will anything more; often I do not know whether I exist or not."[127] A sentiment that stands out here is Schopenhauer's recognition that the death of an *idea* entails a grieving process: "brought to the verge of despair through all the stages of increasing affliction with the most violent resistance."[128] He seems to intimate here that there are stages of grief after the death of an egotistical world-view.

Schopenhauer's open praise of the character of Gretchen and of Madame de Guyon's autobiography is at odds with the notorious maid incident.[129] This, in combination with the essay *On Women*, in the *Pargera and Paralipomena* asserting women are not much more than large children,[130] often causes outright rejection of his thought. There is no trace of anti-feminism in the first volume. In the opposite

---

[126] WWRI, 393; §68.
[127] WWRI, 391; §68.
[128] WWRI, 393; §68.
[129] The infamous maid incident occurred on August 12, 1821, during the year and a half Schopenhauer was in Berlin after his disastrous attempt to lecture against Hegel. As Wicks explains, there is record of Schopenhauer petitioning the landlord to manage the noise level adjacent to the room he was also renting. It was the maid living in the rooming house, forty-seven year old Ms. Marguet and her friends, who were responsible for the noise. After hearing disturbance outside his room, an altercation followed after she refused to leave. He forcibly removed her a first time, after she tried to retrieve some belongings. She came back a second time, where Frau Marguet began screaming and fell down. Claiming her arm was injured as a result of the attack, this endangered her livelihood as a seamstress, so Ms. Marquet sued him. What resulted were six years of litigation, with Schopenhauer leaving for holiday in Italy without hearing from the courts in May 1822. In his absence he lost an important appeal and the final decision went against him in 1827. He had to pay most of the court costs and pay 15 thalers every quarter, which he did for twenty years. When she died, he wrote "*Obit anus, abit onus*," Latin for "The old woman dies, the burden departs. See Wicks, *Schopenhauer*, 8-9; and Peter B. Lewis, *Arthur Schopenhauer* (London: Reaktion Books, 2012), 109-110.
[130] Schopenhauer, *Pargera and Paralipomena*, Vol. II (Oxford: Claredon Press, 2000), 614-626.

direction, the year before his death Elisabet Ney (1833-1907) finished her bust of him. No misogynist charges to deflect in the WWR, quite the opposite actually.

Schopenhauer's Pessimism in Context

With an adequate exposition of Schopenhauer's ethics of Wille behind us, the most direct accounts of pessimism in Book IV, §59, are worth considering. Every life is:

> a continual series of mishaps great and small, concealed as much as possible by everyone, because he knows that others are almost always bound to feel satisfaction at the spectacle of annoyances from which they are for the moment exempt; rarely will they feel sympathy or compassion. But perhaps at the end of his life, no man, if he be sincere and at the same time in possession of his faculties, will ever wish to go through it again. Rather than this, he will much prefer to choose complete non-existence. The essential purport of the world-famous monologue in *Hamlet* is, in condensed form, that our state is so wretched that complete non-existence would be decidedly preferable to it. Now if suicide actually offered us this, so that the alternative 'to be or not to be' lay before us in the full sense of the words, it could be chosen unconditionally as a highly desirable termination ('a consummation devoutly to be wish'd'). There is something in us, however, which tells us that this is not so, that this is not the end of things, that death is not an absolute annihilation.[131]

Not long after this passage he follows up with: "Accordingly, the shortness of life, so often lamented, may perhaps be the very best thing about it."[132] Another passage worth adding comes from §57: "Ultimately death must triumph, for by birth it has already become our lot, and it plays with its prey only for a while before swallowing it up."[133]

A fair and honest consideration of Schopenhauer's philosophy in the WWR, as I have done here along the lines of temporality, finds that he does not deserve the

[131] WWRI, 324; §59.
[132] WWRI, 325; §59.
[133] WWRI, 311; §57.

generic pessimistic label. Rather, Schopenhauer is an honest realist, one who is wearing similar intellectual clothing to Buddhism. One looking for a glimmer of optimism in the WWR can find it here: "There is something in us, however, which tells us that this is not so, that this is not the end of things, that death is not an absolute annihilation."[134]

6. Temporal Justice through the State

Schopenhauer applies the running temporal distinction of eternal and temporal to understand the creation of the political State. At some earlier point in human history, people came together and created civil government. From what plausible nebulous did it evolve? Why did people decide to cooperate, live communally and eventually create human culture?

In the West, the search for some potential answers has resulted in a standardized approach called the State of Nature (SON) theory. This argument figures prominently in the English political tradition, philosophers Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) and John Locke (1632-1704), notably the *De Civ* and *The Leviathan* (1660) by Hobbes and Locke's *Two Treatises of Civil Government* (1689).

Not to be left out, this also includes Jean-Jacques Rousseau's (1712-1778) *The Social Contract* (1762). A hypothetical Schopenhauerian State would look awfully similar to the French interpretation of the SON. I'll leave the reader to chase down these affinities. My purpose here is to use Hobbes and Locke as foils to draw out how the Wille creates a society based on eternal justice of negative behavior. Where

[134] WWRI, 324; §59.

Schopenhauer takes into account the EN, politics is tangled up with the PSR for Hobbes and Locke.

The fact that he never wrote anything substantial on political philosophy can be traced back to the subjective access to the ontological primacy of the Now, more specifically, to his earlier comments surrounding the ultimate deficiency of history, since it is based in causal time. Neither does the State mechanism have access to morality outside of us.

From Eternal to Temporal Justice

The metaphysics of Wille cause Schopenhauer's view to align with Hobbes's description of life in the SON. He points to instances where mobs assume authority over law and order: "we then see at once in the most distinct form the *bellum omnium contra omnes* which Hobbes admirably described in the first chapter of his *De Cive*."[135]

Life is a war of all against all. Nothing stands in the way of people willing to destroy the happiness or life of others to increase their own well-being, making egoism the starting-point of all conflict.[136]

Hobbes was also correct to indicate the "origin and object of the State; the old fundamental principle of all State law and order, *salus publica prima lex esto*," that universal welfare must be the first law. [137]

In Schopenhauer's view, all States are created by eternal justice. Collective human reason recognized that the best way to diminish suffering was to distribute it equitably across society through group renunciation, the partaking in the pleasures

[135] WWRI, 333; §61.
[136] WWRI, 331; §61.
[137] WWRI, 345; §62.

obtained by wrongdoing given up for moral assurances,[138] making renunciation the source of all governments.

Temporal justice takes place in the realm of phenomena; it "require(s) time in order to succeed, balancing the evil deed against the evil consequence only by means of time."[139] As he sees it, the empathetically created State seeks to promote the well-being of everyone on the karmic moral of law, where State contract (law) is gradually perfected by egoism.[140]

Intellectual Versus Physical Egoism

Contrary to popular belief, I maintain Schopenhauer, not Hobbes, creates a SON theory truer to psychological egoism. Hobbes works from empirical egoism, while Schopenhauer's ego is non-empirical, but known through conduct. [141] Schopenhauer contrasts his position with Hobbes: "Yet we cannot show him a point without extension or a line without breadth; hence we can just as little explain to him the *a priori* nature of mathematics as the *a priori* nature of right, because he pays no heed to any knowledge that is not empirical."[142]

Schopenhauer's main complaint with Hobbes' SON theory is treating right and wrong as arbitrary determinations. Treating morality as created with the positive law of the State: "we can never explain to him through external experience what does not belong to external experience."[143] By overlooking the moral force of people as agents

[138] WWRI, 343-4; §62. Rousseau is also in agreement on the dangers of greed; see Chapter 4, *Democracy*, in *The Social Contact* (1762).
[139] WWRI, 350; §63.
[140] WWRI, 343-4; §62.
[141] WWRI, 285; §54.
[142] WWRI, 342; §62.
[143] WWRI, 342; §62.

of Wille, Hobbes makes the same mistake as all materialists must in any proposal about the world, the vital force.

In Schopenhauer's view the State cannot be considered a moral agent. Only people contain an awareness of themselves as Wille. This means even in pre-government times there was morality; "the concepts of right and wrong, even for the state of nature, are indeed valid and by no means conventional; but they are valid there merely as *moral* concepts, for the self-knowledge of the will in each of us."[144] His point is that there must be something beyond the bureaucratic mechanism upon which State action is judged.[145] For Schopenhauer this appears to be excessive egoism: "Thus the State, aiming at well-being, is by no means directed against egoism, but only against the injurious consequences of egoism arising out of the plurality of egoistic individuals, reciprocally affecting them, and disturbing their well-being."[146]

Moral versus Natural Rights: A Difference in Time

The fundamental difference between classic positive right and a Schopenhauerian negative one is metaphysical. It is the eternal and monistic Wille that circumvents the solipsism carried along by the entitled liberty. Schopenhauer's starting point for determining the range of individual rights in a society as "freedom from" is directly contrary to the Western political tradition.

As he understands the situation, there is no concept of right without that of wrong. Political science borrows our moral sense to develop a doctrine of right: "if we

[144] WWRI, 341; §62.
[145] WWRI, 341; §62.
[146] WWRI, 345; §62. Schopenhauer references Aristotle here, from the *Politics*, book 3 chapter 9, "The object of the State is that men may live well, that is, pleasantly and happily."

wish to *do* no wrong, as the limits we must not allow another to transgress, if we wish to *suffer* no wrong, and from which we therefore have a *right* to drive others back."[147] For example, consider self-defense. Schopenhauer believes in an absolute right to defend oneself against harm. The concept of a righteous act takes into account warding off physical violence, justified by the motive of self-defense.[148]

The terminology of "natural rights" misses the mark because the validity of a right comes from our timeless moral sense.[149] Locke's emphasis on temporality overlooks, like Hobbes, the eternal within. Schopenhauer's question seems to be: Why have a conscience to begin with if all rights are naturally just?

As concepts, not Ideas, Schopenhauer does not think concepts of right and wrong are conceivable in the positive account of rights; theory of right from moral precepts:1.Concepts of right and wrong, and their application, are derived from within us; 2. The right to property; 3. Moral validity of the State resides on contracts between individuals having it; 4. Transferred agreement to enforce a moral code means the inversion of this consent into legislation; and lastly, 5. Derivation of the right to punish comes from violating the law.[150]

For Schopenhauer the State was conceived as a check on egoism, whereas for Locke it was conceived to aide and abet individual egoism. Schopenhauer rejects entitlements along Locke's lines of inalienability, with the clash between them seen over property rights and slavery.

---

[147] WWRI, 344, 339, 341; §62.
[148] WWRI, 339; §62.
[149] WWRI, 341; §62.
[150] WWRI, 347; §62.

Both are in agreement over the special importance of labor; it is the single factor that determines the legitimacy to property. Expelling labor creates a moral right to the land, harvesting what one has sowed. Labor put into the service of cultivation extends one's power over their body to the immediate area where labor was expelled. Only then can the item be exchanged, after labor has transformed it.[151] In defense of his position, he acknowledges the moral right to property to be one of the oldest of all codes of ethics, claiming it is derived from "elaboration and adaptation." He cites chapter IX section 44 in the *Laws of Manu*. [152] So, for Schopenhauer, lawful appropriation originates from the application of labor brought on by the elective decision.

Moreover, good land must be used, or else a person forfeits one's ownership rights. Schopenhauer shares an agreement with Locke concerning the lack of improvement. Owning land, and not improving it, is not deemed permissible. For Schopenhauer it denies the right to other people who would otherwise make good use of it. Locke famously argues for a no-spoilage requirement in his *Second Treatise*. The first qualification has to do with waste. Locke writes: "As much as anyone can make use of any advantage of life before it spoils, so much by his labor he may fix a property in; whatever is beyond this, is more than his share, and belongs to others. Nothing was made by God for man to spoil or destroy."[153]

Schopenhauer proclaims that the good person disavows an unearned fortune. When it comes to property, Schopenhauer says that there is no moral right behind the claim of preoccupation. "Thus morally the so-called right of preoccupation is

[151] WWRI, 337; §62.
[152] WWRI, 336; §62.
[153] Locke, *The Second Treatise on Government* (Upper Saddle Rive, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1952), 19; section 31.

entirely without foundation; according to it, for the mere past enjoyment of a thing, a man demands a reward into the bargain, namely the exclusive right to enjoy it further."[154]

Just as someone's property is unlawfully seized after the labor exerted upon it, one cannot steal the work of others. On the issue of slavery, Schopenhauer starkly disagrees with Locke. It has to be your labor for Schopenhauer, who diverges from Locke, who defends slave owning.[155]

Rights in society come from eternal justice, which means institutions like slavery are wholly unjust:. "Therefore by taking this, we take the powers of his body from the will objectified in it, in order to make them serve the will objectified in another body...the powers, the work of another's body, are, so to speak, incorporated in, and identified with, this thing."[156] This is nothing less than the denial of another's Wille, in other words, an injustice.[157]

Capital Crimes and State Punishment

Derived from eternal justice, applied to the temporal form, and understood as concepts of right and wrong, laws, jurisprudence can be cataloged in linear time. Any ethical behavior considered *normal* must be public, a manifestation in causal time. Behind this outward appearance lies the intuitive push from within to treat others as oneself. So, contracts of varying degrees of intimacy are entered into on a daily basis where the rule of thumb is to renounce the pleasure to be had from doing wrong.

---

[154] WWRI, 337; §62.
[155] For more information see James Farr, "Locke, Natural Law, and New World Slavery," *Political Theory*, Vol. 36, No. 4 (Aug., 2008), 495-522.
[156] WWRI, 335-6; §62. 336-7; §62. See also 335.
[157] WWRI, 336-7; §62. See also 335.

Where as his political theory lacks a defined set of rights, Schopenhauer nevertheless thinks there is a short list of clear cut capital crimes based on eternal justice as Wille. They are, from greater to less severity: 1. Cannibalism, 2. Murder, 3. Intentional mutilation, 4. Slavery, 5. Seizure of property. Moreover, one has the inherent right to self defense.[158]

Generally speaking, if no tangible harm is created, does the State still have the legal right to enforce the law? No, answers Schopenhauer: "forbid a wrongdoing to which corresponded absolutely no suffering of wrong by the other party; and, simply because this is impossible, it prohibits all wrongdoing."[159] If there is no actual harm, the State has no conditioned ought to use for justification to interfere; neither can you punish one for the thoughts in their head. What matters is how the person has acted toward others:

> the *deed* alone does so (whether it be merely attempted or carried out), on account of its correlative, namely the *suffering* of the other party. Thus for the State the deed, the occurrence, is the only real thing; the disposition, the intention, is investigated only in so far as from it the significance of the deed becomes known. Therefore, the State will not forbid anyone constantly carrying about in his head the thought of murder and poison against another, so long as it knows for certain that the fear of sword and wheel will always restrain the effects of that willing.[160]

When is the State justified in carrying out punishment? Punishment is legal, Schopenhauer claims, when an individual has been warned of the consequences. The reason is to deter future decisions, where punishment "is inflicted *in fulfilment of a law.*"[161] Additionally, he claims the State has the authority to limit breaches where

---

[158] WWRI, 340; §62.
[159] WWRI, 347; §62.
[160] WWRI, 344; §62.
[161] WWRI, 348; §62.

harm is concerned, not to limit the rights of people, not promoting them or its own.[162]

Punishment is supposed to act as a deterrent, not a means in itself to achieve some other nefarious end, like torture: "No sensible person punishes because a wrong has been done, but in order that a wrong may not be done"[163] The State is in the business of arbitrarily infringing on civil liberties if there is no actual harm. If there is no actual harm, Schopenhauer calls legislative enforcement "a *positive wrong*; it is a publicly avowed enforced wrong. Such is every despotism."[164] Schopenhauer's objections are a take-down of Kant's deontological ethics. He is after a morality suited for responsible adults, not grown-up children as Kant would have it: "Also we shall not speak of an *"unconditioned ought,"* since this involves a contradiction ...Generally we shall not speak of "ought" at all, for we speak in this way to children and to peoples still in their infancy, but not to those who have appropriated to themselves all the culture of a mature age."[165]

To Schopenhauer's credit on the eternal nature of justice, most people express daily outrage against injustices inflicted on them. For instance, we root for the vigilante, overlooking their breaking of State law in a quest to serve just punishment on wrongdoers. Driven by a cause greater than themselves, the crime fighter, who has experienced some eventful harm in one's life: "deliberately and irretrievably

---

[162] WWRI, 333; §61.
[163] WWRI, 349; § 62. Schopenhauer says this notion is not new, pointing the reader to Hobbes (*Leviathan*, chaps. 15 and 28; *De Civ* (Book II, chap. 13), along with the works of Samuel von Pufendorf (1632-1694)and Ludwig Feuerbach (1804-1872).
[164] WWRI, 346-7; §62.
[165] WWRI, 272; §53.

stakes his own life in order to take vengeance on the perpetrator of that outrage."[166] His position appears to be that revenge ending in killing misses where ontology rests, not in the body, but the eternal behind it.[167]

7. The *Wille-zum-Leben* and *Das Ding-an-sich*

While he was writing the WWR Schopenhauer believed he had solved Kant's challenge in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781). To say this claim is contested in the secondary literature would be an understatement. The chorus is unanimous: in the WWR the Wille cannot be the ultimate reality of objects behind perception as Kant understood it.

Schopenhauer's Major Mistake: Knowability

Putting the issue of the Wille's macrocosm aside for the moment, Schopenhauer's identification of Kant's thing-in-itself commits the mistake of knowing total reality of an object. Instead of claiming the Wille is another way to recognize reality, he reaches a conceptual impasse with Kant, who claims the total reality of an object is unknowable in every aspect.

Young judges that Schopenhauer uses two senses of the thing-in-itself, one in appearance, the other outside its relation to appearance.[168] Atwell does much the same, claiming he keeps a running distinction between the Wille and the thing-in-itself.[169]

Schopenhauer's mistake is confusing two different types of representations, the 'pure' (pleasure, emotion, desire) as opposed to those constructed by the

---

[166] WWRI, 358; §64.
[167] WWRI, 357; §64.
[168] Young, *Schopenhauer*, 97.
[169] Atwell, *The Metaphysics of Will*, 117, 171.

intellect. Young explains: “This, however, is a ground-level mistake since while all representations A are subject to the from of time Kant’s thing in itself is *atemporal*. The whole of our inner experience, that is to say, is temporally organised: this pain has happened before, after or during that burst of lust.”[170] This goes directly against Kant’s claim that *time* (and space) are merely properties of appearances and not characteristics of the thing-in-itself.[171] His account of the Wille is not an account of the world in itself because he denies there can be knowledge of the thing-in-itself apart from the appearance of the phenomena.[172]

The result is a three-tiered view of the world: 1. the world as objective representation, 2. the world as pure representation (inside ourselves) 3. the world as it is in itself in the Kantian sense ultimately unknowable by us. Schopenhauer is committed to discussing the thing-in-itself on the side of appearance (*Erscheinung*) to equate it with the Kantian unknowable. If one claims knowledge of something, in this case the Wille, it cannot be the thing-in-itself, what Young equates to failing Kant 101.[173]

I see an underlying Indiological reason that Schopenhauer uses to claim knowledge of ultimate reality. He thinks Kant and the Vedas are honing in on the same truth: "a principal teaching of the *Vedas* and *Puranas*, namely the doctrine of Maya, by which is understood nothing but what Kant calls the phenomenon as

[170] Young, *Schopenhauer*, 92.
[171] Young, *Schopenhauer*, 92.
[172] Atwell, *The Metaphysics of Will*, 171.
[173] Young, *Schopenhauer*, 96.

opposed to the thing-in-itself."[174] Schopenhauer seems to use Kant's *a priori* as the mechanism blocking access, looks to the East for assistance going through the body. Since the problems are insurmountable, Schopenhauer changes what he means by the Wille from the 1815 to 1824 edition of the WWR.[175] Then by 1844 "the Wille is the thing-in-itself" took on a different meaning than the one originally in 1818. The claim was tempered because he arrives at a wall he cannot climb over, that claims about ultimate reality cannot be substantiated through his conception of Wille.[176] Schopenhauer admits in two letters to Julius Frauenstädt that he should have followed Kant and left the thing-in-itself undefined.[177]

The change in Schopenhauer's mind over equating the Wille with the thing-in-itself is precisely over the temporal factor. This is located in the WWR, II, Chapter XVIII:

> Meanwhile it is to be carefully noted, and I have always kept it in mind, that even the inward observation we have of our own will still does not by any means furnish an exhaustive and adequate knowledge of the thing-in-itself...there still remains the form of *time*, as well as that of being known in general. Accordingly, in this inner knowledge the thing-in-itself has indeed to a great extent cast off its veils, but still does not appear quite naked.

Young says that this position is radically different than the one Schopenhauer presents in the first edition of the WWR.[178]

I endorse Atwell's standpoint that Schopenhauer's inconsistencies among the Wille, thing-in-itself and consciousness do not merit throwing away his conceptual scheme. "It may be that the human character, human experience, and human life

---

[174] WWRI, 419; *Appendix*.
[175] Young, *Schopenhauer*, 14. Young says that the crucial revision comes in WWRII, Chapter 18.
[176] Young, *Schopenhauer*, 96.
[177] Young, *Schopenhauer*, 96, 101.
[178] Young, *Schopenhauer*, 98.

include parts that simply cannot be integrated into a self-consistent whole."[179] The maxim Schopenhauer borrows from La Rochefoucauld to describe Kant should be applied to himself: "Only the great are entitled to great faults."[180]

Forward from the Wille

Here at the concluding section we return to assess the beginning premise of Schopenhauer's entire system in the WWR. Left at the end of the first chapter was the unfolding of his single thought from the side of the subject. It is the viewer alone who possesses first the Now and the now upon which causal knowledge is placed. Among the branches of philosophy, epistemology supports all the others. He takes a lot of heat for not providing a single argument in the WWR to defend the superiority of the subject over the object as their interplay produces knowledge.

Here is the bold opening line of the start of the entire WWR: "The world is my representation: "this is a truth valid with reference to every living and knowing being, although man alone can bring it into reflective, abstract consciousness." Schopenhauer claims no honest argument can be advanced to claim otherwise. He thinks that those who construct theoretical systems otherwise are modern day sophists. This is especially true considering metaphysics, why the world is in motion.

Atwell argues that the insolvable difficulties Schopenhauer runs into grappling with are repentance, compassion and salvation. This causes Schopenhauer, he claims, to abandon the Wille-body thesis, a bedrock premise. At the end of *The Human Character*, Atwell references the potential of this insight, claiming it holds monumental potential for exploration. He also pushes this point in *The Metaphysics of*

[179] Atwell, *The Human Character*, 5.
[180] François, Duc La Rouchefoucauld, *Maxims*, translated by Leonard Tanock (Penguin Books: London, 1959), 61.

Will, carries the strong implication that the Wille would always be unknown..[181] For example, when Schopenhauer says the "thing-in-itself, that which is essentially not representation, not object of knowledge; but only by entering that form has it become knowable"[182]

In my opinion, separating the Wille from the thing-in-itself actually strengthens Schopenhauer's argument. What is the Wille "in-itself" apart from being manifested in us? Is this one step closer to reality?[183] I think Atwell is on the right track. The Wille is potentially something that can be empirically known to us, another aspect of ultimate reality. If the *Wille-zum-Leben* is not Kant's thing-in-itself, what else could it be? Is there an all pervasive force across the universe comparable to the Wille without an accompanying material body? Questions such as these bring us to the essay's completion, starting with an assessment of Schopenhauer's epistemic starting point.

Mind-Dependent and Independent Reality

Before jumping into some possible alternatives to what Schopenhauer's Wille could conceivably be, some definitional housework is in order. Specifically, the general distinction between mind-independent and dependent claims to what is real. Another major obstacle to greater appreciation of Schopenhauer's insights, besides his pessimism, is the radical idealism of his epistemic starting point. On my view, the situation is quite the opposite.

Mind-dependent qualities are those qualities that would not exist, if we were not present. Mind-independent qualities are aspects of the world that exist when no

[181] Atwell, *The Metaphysics of Will*, 113-5.
[182] WWRI, 121; §24.
[183] Atwell, *The Human Character*, 213-5; 223.

perceiver is around to witness the world, what remains intact when there is no knowing subject.[184] For Schopenhauer, the reality of the world remains intact in his version of radical idealism--we evolved from Mother Earth. While he adheres to a weak version of idealism over a person's lifetime, where the world is held as a representation in the mind, eventually the Now runs out. When the EN perishes, the world we know disappears too. After all, nobody can claim to have knowledge of the world before they were born into it.

Wicks claims the reverse of Schopenhauer's correlativism; no object without subject is not possible because it is a linear argument and does not work in reverse.[185] Fully aware of the profundity of his approach Schopenhauer explains: "We started neither from the object nor from the subject, but from the *representation*, which contains and presupposes them both; for the division into object and subject is the first, universal, and essential form of the representation."[186] So, is he right to deny scientific realism, where the world is metaphysically independent from the mind?

8. The Quantum Enigma, Wave-Particle Duality of Matter, and Zero Point Energy

Modern science has been passed down from two re-enlightenments: relativity theory and quantum mechanics.[187] Schopenhauer seems to have played a hand in both these adjustments of human thought. In this section, I argue that Schopenhauer's system of the world in the WWR, with respect to its exegesis here in this essay using the tool of temporality, provides an outstanding apprehension of our present day understanding of the material world.

---

[184] Wicks, *Schopenhauer*, 17-19.
[185] Wicks, *Schopenhauer*, 51.
[186] WWRI, 25; §7.
[187] Raymond Marcin, *In Search of Schopenhauer's Cat: Arthur Schopenhauer's Quantum-Mystical Theory of Justice*, (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2006), 39.

The soundness of Schopenhauer's epistemic approach has been obtained by experimental findings in science. This discussion, then, lends support to my overall thesis. Schopenhauer establishes a *lifetime* from which the EN (Book II, IV), and the AN (Book III) originate. In other words, being *alive* really is the necessary condition for *everything* else we hope to know in the world because we evolved from it, Schopenhauer's placement of ontology in the subjective Now is fundamentally correct.

The Observer Problem in Quantum Theory

Dealing with the infinitely small, quantum theory lies at the base of all scientific theories. Quantum theory is undoubtedly the most accurate scientific theory ever. To date, not a single prediction has proven to be incorrect. It is considered the "most battle-tested theory in all of science." In principle, what quantum theory has to say about the world at the subatomic level applies to the entire world.[188]

There exists, as Schopenhauer's brief critique of materialism provides, an unproven assumption of mind-independent reality: that there is an objective reality outside of our existence. In terms of time, causality is considered ontologically superior to the Now. It appears Schopenhauer's criticism, and his own subjective starting point, are both right on the money.

In *Quantum Enigma*, Rosenblum and Kuttner detail the paradox that eventually led to the wave-particle duality of matter. The quantum enigma is a real experimental event. It cannot be discarded as pseudo-science. Before an observation,

[188] Rosenblum and Kuttner, *Quantum Enigma* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 5, 54; for applications, 110.

an objective world does not exist. Instead, there exists a wave. Waves can only be accounted for by probability. To get a concrete answer (using the PSR), the wave function collapses when it is measured. The fact this paradox exists more fully at quantum level makes it an across the board challenge to scientific realism. No observer, no reality.[189]

Schopenhauer captures the sentiment of the modern day quantum enigma in the WWR in these examples and over the course of our discussion: "Everything that in any way belongs and can belong to the world is inevitably associated with this being-conditioned by the subject, and it exists only for the subject,"[190] as well as, "in the case of knowing beings the fact that the individual is the bearer of the knowing subject, and this knowing subject is the bearer of the world."[191] Furthermore, just as we can choose to view an object with the PSR or the Idea, similarly, quantum physics also depends choosing the method of measurement, as a vibration node or particle. Schopenhauer's dual aspect of the world where everything is Wille and representation, the choice is ours.

The issue is clear: with physical reality created through human observation, physics runs into consciousness. Currently, there are three popular interpretations to unify Einstein's macrocosm with the unpredictable particle, which would in essence what would solve the observer paradox in science. These are the Copenhagen and many-worlds interpretation, holographic universe.

---

[189] Rosenblum and Kuttner, chapters 7 and 8; 87-114; also 239
[190] WWRI, 3; §1.
[191] WWRI, 332; §61.

Planck and Schrödinger

Compared to Einstein, it is fair to say Schopenhauer's influence was more openly profound in on Max Planck (1858-1947), the founder of modern quantum theory, as well as Erwin Schrödinger (1887-1961). Planck won the 1918 Nobel Prize in Physics, Schrödinger the 1933 one. The origin of the observer paradox resides with these two men.[192]

Planck

Near the start of the twentieth century, what started off on a quest to make lights more efficient resulted in the birth of quantum mechanics. The German Bureau of Standards asked Planck to create a light bulb that made the relationship between light and heat most efficient. Investigating the relationship between these, he found higher frequencies, ones that broke down beyond the ultraviolet in the spectrum of observable light, were unexplainable by classical mechanics. After years of frustration, in what he later called "an act of desperation," Planck's breakthrough, like Einstein, was to follow Schopenhauer's epistemic lead. With the accumulation of shared observational data, he worked backwards from the evidence to derive what is now called Planck's constant (h).[193]

Planck's *Philosophy of Physics* reads like a condensed version of the WWR, minus the concept of Wille. He mentions Schopenhauer nowhere in the text. More than words, his *Physics* contains four books with these titles: I. Physics and World Philosophy; II. Causality in Nature; III. Scientific Ideas: Their Origin and Effects; IV.

[192] For more on Planck and Schrödinger, refer to Rosenblum and Kuttner, chapters 5 and 6; 55-85.
[193] Rosenblum and Kuttner, 58-59.

Science and Faith. Along the way, there are also unmistakable tip offs to Schopenhauer: "Every prediction implies a predicting person."[194]

Planck assumed that: "an electron could radiate energy only in chunks, in "quanta" (the plural of quantum). At this level, similar to our perception of the natural world as in a state of observed non-equilibrium, particles too are always in motion. What is more, they travel faster than the speed of light, violating the fundamental rules of relativity theory.

Using *h*, Planck's constant, it states motion is equal to 1/2 hf, where f is the oscillation frequency. Each quantum would have an energy, equal to the number *h* in times the vibration frequency of the electron.[195] The smallest sliver of space-time, and therefore duration, *h* is undetectable.[196] In other words, *h* is the smallest causal unit of measurement possible between the subject and the object. There is only a wave of energy before any observation is made because, as Planck had discovered, vibration creates matter. More specifically, slowed down vibration.

To accommodate his quanta, Planck says materialism was forced to concede supremacy. What replaced it was: "a system of material waves, and these material waves are the elements of the new world image."[197]

Schrödinger's Cat

Schopenhauer's influence on Schrödinger was considerable, especially considering the existential crisis created in the aftermath of the First World War in

[194] Max Planck, *The Philosophy of Physics*, translated by W.H. Johnson (W.W. Norton & Company: New York, 1936) 75.
[195] Rosenblum and Kuttner, 55-59.
[196] Rosenblum and Kuttner, 55-59.
[197] Planck, *The Philosophy of Physics*, 64.

1919.[198] Although quantum indeterminacy has not been demonstrated with macro-level objects,[199] Schrödinger formulated a hypothetical example attempting that has grabbed imaginations over the years. The colorful example attempts to tease further understanding from the wave-particle, with the help of a feline friend.

Imagine: there is a cat in a box and the subject does not know whether the cat inside is dead or alive. Based on quantum non-locality before opening the box the cat is both dead and alive according to quantum law. Furthermore, this superposition of states based on non-locality resolved and known only by opening the box, creating a backwards reality in the process, life or death through our observation. Not only does a particle exist in two different places simultaneously, without any perceived force, but an observation in one place simultaneously influences an observation somewhere else. For one person to observe the cat creates the reality for everyone else in the same way at exactly the same time. How can a new state of affairs be created simultaneously?

Schrödinger studied Vedanta and Buddhism intensely. His essay on the Diamond Cutter opens up the avenue to our final realm of discussion concerning what else the Wille. The Schopenhauerian influence, and language, comes shining through:

> There is one reality but there is no permanent individual...Phantom succeeds to phantom, as undulations to undulations over the ghostly Sea of Birth and Death. And even as the storming of a sea is a motion of undulation, not of translation,-even as it is the form of the wave only, not the wave itself, that travels--so in the passing of lives there is only the rising and vanishing of forms,--forms mental, forms material. The fathomless Reality does not pass...Within every creature incarnate

[198] Walter Moore, *Schrödinger, Life and Thought* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1989), 111-113.
[199] Barbara Hannan, *The Riddle of the World; A Reconsideration of Schopenhauer's Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 67-70.

> sleeps the Infinite Intelligence involved, hidden, unfelt, unknown, --yet destined from all eternities to waken at last, to rend away the ghostly web of sensuous mind, to break forever its chrysalis of flesh, and pass to the extreme conquest of Space and Time.[200]

Here are Schopenhauer's words:

> For 'No object without subject' is the principle that renders all materialism for ever impossible... On the other hand, the law of causality, and the consideration and investigation of nature which follow on it, lead us necessarily to the certain assumption that each more highly organized state of matter succeeded in time a cruder state. Thus animals existed before men, fishes before land animals, plants before fishes, and the inorganic before that which is organic; consequently the original mass had to go through a long series of changes before the first eye could be opened. And yet the existence of this whole world remains for ever dependent on that first eye that opened, were it even that of an insect. For such an eye necessarily brings about knowledge, for which and in which alone the whole world is, and without which it is not even conceivable. The world is entirely representation, and as such requires the knowing subject as the supporter of its existence. That long course of time itself, filled with innumerable changes, through which matter rose from form to form, till finally there came into existence the first knowing animal, the whole of this time itself is alone thinkable in the identity of a consciousness. This world is the succession of the representations of this consciousness...Thus we see, on the one hand, the existence of the whole world necessarily dependent on the first knowing being, however imperfect it be; on the other hand, this first knowing animal just as necessarily wholly dependent on a long chain of causes and effects which has preceded it, and in which it itself appears as a small link.[201]

To recall, it was mentioned how Schopenhauer, at times in the WWR, uses Wille interchangeably with consciousness. The following passage assists in considering them separate entities. On the one hand, the Wille is immaterial, groundless and outside of causally perceived time. From observation, he starts from the thing-in-itself through the side of appearance (*Erscheinung*).[202] Separateness an illusion;

---

[200] Walter Moore, *Schrödinger, Life and Thought* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1989), 114.
[201] WWRI, 29-30; §7.
[202] Young, 98.

everything only appears, through the PSR or māyā, to be different. Causal awareness stands in development to the subconscious which can be accessed on another kind of reflection in non-causal time. It exists everywhere all at once, like a force field. Held in the other fist is consciousness; awareness we are alive and breathing. This ability is made possible through the accumulation of matter over eternal time; a single reality differentiated temporally through biological development. The takeaway point: Wille cannot be conscious because it is unconscious. A self requires physical embodiment.

Atwell says time is the mechanism through which Schopenhauer ultimately equates the Wille with the thing-in-itself.[203] On this claim, we turn to Schopenhauer:

> accordingly we have to refer to the whole world of phenomena to that one in which the thing-in-itself is manifested under the lightest of all veils, and still remains phenomenon only in so far as my intellect, the only thing capable of knowledge, still always remains distinguished from me as the one who wills, and does not cast off the knowledge-form of *time*, even with *inner* perception.[204]

Returning to Schrödinger's paradox, is it possible to know whether or not the cat is alive or dead without seeing it? Following Schopenhauer, I put forth that the cat can make the presence of its being known to us without observation: the cat can meow. The closest we can get to the act of an openly objective inner conception of time is the non-visual wave. Observation does not create outside reality, but the wave of information (as close to pure time as we can get) reaches our aural understanding perpetually unannounced. Further, hearing a meow from inside the box would also backfill causal events, same as observation. Perhaps looking at the situation this Schopenhauerian way, the Now allows for reality as a wave to be understood, a wave-field theory beyond our visual abilities (i.e., limitations due to the spectrum of light).

---

[203] Atwell, *Metaphysics of Will*, 116.
[204] WWRII, 196-8; Chapter 18.

The wavelike behavior of all matter makes Schopenhauer's consideration of music as representative of reality all the more interesting. The East makes itself heard here through the Hindu concept of OM, the mystical syllable chanted as a mantra. In the Chandogya Upanishad we find: "Let us meditate on OM the imperishable, the beginning of prayer...This is the essence of essences, the highest, the eighth rung, venerated above all that human beings hold holy. OM is the Self of all."[205] The vibration of creation is always everywhere.

What our discussion has honed in is both Schopenhauer and quantum physics both seeking the same route--the oneness of reality. Although for Schopenhauer it is Oneness, where the wave is the immortally felt part of us. The Wille, apart from the temporal phenomena "can be called free and even omnipotent."[206] Outside of any phenomenon, he presses a wavelike outside observation: "not representation or object, but thing-in-itself, it is also not subordinate to the principle of sufficient reason, the form of all object. Thus it is not determined as consequent by a reason or ground, and so it knows no necessity; in other words, it is *free*."[207] This takes us to a possibility for Schopenhauer's *Wille-zum-Leben*.

Zero-Point Energy

One of the problems Einstein grappled with was how particles could violate the speed of light under quantum mechanics. This problem is the focus of the EPR paradox.[208] What could possibly enable particles to travel faster than the speed of light and be considered a candidate for Schopenhauer's description of the Wille?

---

[205] Easwaran, *The Upanishads*, 125, 140.
[206] WWRI, 300; §55.
[207] WWRI, 287; §55.
[208] EPR refers to

Quantum mechanics postulates the existence of zero-point energy in a vacuum and a temperature of absolute zero. There is no perceivable motion in this, the lowest state of quantized energy possible, yet this infinite sea of energy still exists. There is strong speculation is the existence of a universal sea of energy called the Zero Point Field (ZPF). Zero Point electromagnetic radiation is the product of tiny energy modes across vast spatial density, yielding a very high theoretical zero-point energy density per cubic centimeter. An indication that science is headed in this general direction is Laszlo's *Science and the Akashic Field* (2007).[209] Laszlo postulates the ZPF holds the key to an integral theory of everything.

Interestingly enough, one Schopenhauer's fiercest critics, Copelston maintains that Schopenhauer chose poorly by using Wille, insisting that a better term is the concept of *energy*.[210] Both he and Magee agrees that Schopenhauer should call it force and not Wille. In mind here are the electric forces responsible for all of chemistry and therefore the entirety of biology.[211] Existing everywhere all at once, the Zero Point Field, a potential source of vitalism for Schopenhauer's Wille. Energy is derived from vibration frequency.

Here we reach the end of our discussion of Schopenhauer's use of a dual understanding of time in the WWR. The essay is brought to a conclusion in the next chapter. A brief overview of the main temporal claims made over the course of discussion offers an instructive way to ward off the current mass extinction caused

---

[209] Ervin Laszlo, *Science and the Akashic Field*, (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions, 2007).
[210] The reader can access the internet to watch Magee and Copleston spar over Schopenhauer, after discussing Kant, on the Great philosophers program (BBC Broadcasting, 1987).
[211] Rosenblum and Kuttner, *Quantum Enigma*, 43-46. Especially the contributions of Michael Faraday (1791-1867) and James Clerk Maxwell (1831-1879).

by human hands. There is a real difference between being clever, and living consciously.

CONCLUSION

Recognizing the Now: Our Greatest Asset

The Now and Causality: Responsible for the Twofold Nature of Consciousness

The rigid causal relationship Schopenhauer introduces in the first book instructs the metaphysical, aesthetic and ethical insights of the subsequent three. It is also the mechanism he uses to criticize all other schemes of thought. My discussion has centered around his dual usage of time, the EN and causality. Putting a spotlight on his employment of the temporal factor over the four books in the WWR, where the felt Now always precedes the known now, Schopenhauer is justly considered the first modern existential philosopher. Time, knowledge and existence are compositely inseparable. To recap, the following points were concluded concerning Schopenhauer as a philosopher of time:

Book I: Schopenhauer's epistemology allows for general causal understanding using the PSR. Respecting the systematic nature of science, new empirical evidence for the adjustment of beliefs is fully allowed. Perceived, causal motion requires both time and space, they are inseparable.

Book II: We are physically and intellectually separated from the outside world. Our human form bypasses causal reasoning to recognize the *Wille-zum-Leben*. What lies in us is the same timeless Wille that constitutes everything else around us: an interconnected Chain of Wille. In Schopenhauer's version of the better consciousness, ontology rests in the felt Eternal Now.

Book III: The understanding, creation and enjoyment of art represent relief in the form of aesthetic resignation. This is accomplished through shifting our temporal

perspective to recognize the correct ontological value residing in the Eternal Now. More than any other art, music reigns supreme, nothing less than the Wille itself.

Book IV: It is through empathy, putting oneself in another's shoes, that the realm of morality is entered. Governed by the Wille's inherent evilness, positive values come from not harming other others since everyone is metaphysically equal. This includes the lower species too. A virtuous life and a just State promote the Now in the temporal realm. Schopenhauer always supports less wanting, from people and from the world.

Lastly, using the quantum enigma as evidence, I argue that Schopenhauer's starting point of radical idealism is fundamentally sound. The correctness of his method, while not giving us Kant's ultimate reality of an object, offers another aspect of ultimate reality that is not perceivable. No succession in time and space can be seen, yet an infinite sea of energy exists, known as the Zero Point Field.

Schopenhauer and Sustainability

The human species pushes to acquire material wealth, primarily through industrialization and capitalism, and has catastrophically damaged the planet's ecosystem. Schopenhauer's World-Wille, the Chain of Being that gives us life, is in need of desperate attention. The global environment has been fundamentally changed, from plenitude to scarcity. The good sense inherent in our relationship with nature has been forgotten. More often than not, people see themselves as uniquely distinct from nature, rather than as a part of it.

The inability for people to see the inherent long-term problems has led to the human species eradicating the very environmental conditions that gave it life. In the

WWR, Schopenhauer issues a warning against overpopulating the Earth. He captures the dire predicament Earth's ecosystems find themselves in today:

> Finally, even if all these evils were removed, boredom would at once occupy the place vacated by the other evils. Moreover, even the dissension and discord of individuals can never be wholly eliminated by the State, for they irritate and annoy in trifles where they are prohibited in great things. Finally, Eris, happily expelled from within, at last turns outwards; as the conflict of individuals, she is banished by the institution of the State, but she enters again from without as war between nations, and demands in bulk and all at once, as an accumulated debt, the bloody sacrifices that singly had been withheld from her by wise precaution. Even supposing all this were finally overcome and removed by prudence based on the experience of thousands of years, the result in the end would be the actual over-population of the whole planet, the terrible evil of which only a bold imagination can conjure up in the mind.[1]

Schopenhauer's nightmare, unfortunately, become a horrible reality. In Kolbert's *The Sixth Extinction*, she frames the current mass extinction on the planet to previous ones (The Big Five), to pull out the difference: this one is created by an animal--us.[2] By 2050, estimates for global population are nine billion. Meanwhile, the extermination is already underway.

Following Schopenhauer, exactly how have humans been able to re-create global apocalyptic events? Going by his dual sense of time, ontology misappropriated to the PSR. Reason, incorrectly elevated above the Now. A change in knowledge must lead the way to mending the environment through the cultivation of life. In short, people have to learn to become more mindful.

So, a shift in the collective consciousness of humanity is needed. But how? If we follow Schopenhauer, the best way to teach mass empathy is through art. He

---

[1] WWRI, 350; §62. The point was also made earlier in the fourth chapter that wanting less could be taught to some degree.
[2] Elizabeth Kolbert, *The Sixth Extinction, An Unnatural History* (Picador: New York, 2014), 3.

offers a potential solution to the crisis facing us in §66: stewardship motivated from *voluntary justice*.

For this to be achieved, an inner awakening must first take place. Because this is a process of self-realization, the aesthetic approach is preferable. It lacks confrontation, if we follow Schopenhauer, because the genius has carried on his/her shoulders the load of suffering needed to sustain such deep insight into the Idea. This is the martyrdom of genius: to peel back temporal layers in an attempt to relay the terrible nature of existence to others; to teach others to be high-minded on their own terms. Knowledge of the Wille becomes a source of better consciousness for the species, knowledge turned into power. The expansion of the human mind holds the key to our long-term survival as a species. After all, as Schopenhauer points out, by choosing to save the planet we are also rescuing ourselves in the process: "This is why the man tormented by passions, want, or care, is so suddenly revived, cheered, and comforted by a single, free glance into nature. The storm of passions, the pressure of desire and fear, and all the miseries of willing are then at once calmed and appeased in a marvellous way."[3]

[3] WWRI, 197; §37.

Works Cited

Primary Sources

_____

Aesop, *Aesop's Fables*. Translated by Laura Gibbs. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Aristotle. *The Basic Works of Aristotle*. Edited by Richard McKeon. New York: The Modern Library, 2001.

Berkeley, George. *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous*. Edited by Robert Merrihew Adams. Indianapolis: Hackett Pulishing, 1985.

Cowell, E. B., editor. *Buddhist Mahâyâna Texts*. New York: Dover Publications, 1969.

Goddard, Dwight, editor. *A Buddhist Bible*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1994.

Darwin, Charles. *From So Simple A Beginning; The Four Great Books of Charles Darwin*. Edited by Edward O. Wilson. New York: W.W. Norton, 2006.

Descartes, René. *Discourse on Method* and *Meditations on First Philosophy*. Third Edition. Translated by Donald A. Cress. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1993.

Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan, Parts One and Two*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1958.

Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of Pure Reason*. Translated by Norman Kemp Smith. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965.

---*Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*. Edited by Lewis White Beck. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1950.

---*Critique of Judgement*. Translated by James Creed Meredith. Edited by Nicholas Walker. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Locke, John. *The Second Treatise of Government*. Edited by Thomas P. Peardon. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1952.

---*An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Edited by Kenneth P. Winkler. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1996.

Lyell, Charles. *Principles of Geography*, 3 volumes. London: Penguin Books, 1997.

Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Untimely Meditations*. Translated by R.J. Hollingdale. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Planck, Max. *The Philosophy of Physics*. Translated by W. H. Johnston. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1936.

Plato. *Plato, Complete Works*. Edited by John M. Cooper. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1997.

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *The Social Contract*. Translated by Maurice Cranston. London: Penguin Books, 1968.

Rufus, Musonius. *Musonius Rufus: Lectures & Sayings*. Translated by Cynthia King. CreateSpace, 2011.

Schopenhauer, Arthur. *On Visions and Colors*. Translated by Georg Stahl. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2010.

---*On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason*. Translated by E. F. J. Payne. Introduction by Richard Taylor. La Salle, Illinois: Open Court Classics, 1994.

---*The World as Will and Representation*, two volumes. Translated by E. F. J. Payne. Indian Hills, Colorado: The Falcon's Wing Press, 1958.

The Upanishads. Translated by Eknath Easwaran. Nilgiri Press: The Blue Mountain Center of Meditation, 2007.

Schrödinger, Erwin. *What is Life?* with *Mind and Matter & Autobiographical Sketches*.. Malta: Canto/Interprint Limited, Canto, 1992.

Wagner, Richard, *My Life*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

---*The Ring of the Nibelung*. Translated by Andrew Porter. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1976.

---*Beethoven*. London: W.M. Reeves, 1903, third edition.

Secondary Sources

_____

Alexander, H.G. *Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1956.

Alperson, Philip. "Schopenhauer and Musical Revelation." *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, vol. 40, no. 2 (Winter, 1981), 155-166

Atwell, John E. *Schopenhauer, The Human Character*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990.

---*Schopenhauer on the Character of the World, The Metaphysics of the Will*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

Barma, Arati, editor. *Understanding Schopenhauer Through the Prism of Indian Culture*. Berlin & Boston: DeGruzter, 2012.

Barry, Wendell Elizabeth. "What Wagner Found in Schopenhauer's Philosophy." *The Musical Quarterly*, vol. 11, no. 1 (Jan., 1925), 124-137.

Berger, Douglas. *The Veil of Māyā: Schopenhauer's System and Early Indian Thought.* Binghamton, New York: Global Academic Publishing, 2004.

Blackburn, Simon. *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Copleston, Frederick. *Arthur Schopenhauer, Philosopher of Pessimism*. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1975.

Cross, Stephen. *Schopenhauer's Encounter with Indian Thought,* Representation *and* Will *and Their Indian Parallels*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2013.

Cartwright, David. *Historical Dictionary of Schopenhauer's Philosophy*. Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2004.

---*Schopenhauer, A Biography.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Dauer, Dorothea W. *Schopenhauer as Transmitter of Buddhist Ideas*. Berne, Switzerland: Herbert Lang & Co., 1969.

Dehnert, Edmund J. "Parsifal as Will and Idea." *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, vol. 18, no. 4 (Jun., 1960), 511-520.

Delmonico, Neal translator. *First Steps in Vedānta; Vedantic Texts for Beginners: Sadānanda's* Vedānta-sāra; *Baladeva's* Prameya-ratnāvalī; *A Brief Overview Advaita Vedānta by Dinesh Chandra Bhattacharya Shastri*. New York: Global Scholarly Publications, 2003.

Dolev, Yuval. *Time and Realism*; *Metaphysical and Antimetaphysical Perspectives*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2007.

Flood, Gavin. *An Introduction to Buddhism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Farr, James. "Locke, Natural Law, and New World Slavery." *Political Theory*, Vol. 36, No. 4 (Aug., 2008), 495-522.

Fox, Michael, ed. *Schopenhauer: His Philosophical Achievement*. Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1980.

Gardner, Martin. *Relativity Simply Explained*. Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, 1997.

Gardiner, Patrick. *Schopenhauer*. Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1963.

Geroch, Robert. *General Relativity from A to B*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978.

Grunfeld, Frederic V. *Rodin, A Biography*. New York: Da Capo Press, 1998.

Gupta, R.K. "Freud and Schopenhauer." *Journal of the History of Ideas*, vol. 36, no. 4 (Oct.- Dec., 1975): 721-728.

Hafele, J.C., and Keating, R.E. "Around-the-World Atomic Clocks: Observed Relativistic Time Gains." *Science*, Vol. 177 (1972).

Hale, William Harlan. *The World of Rodin, 1840-1917*. New York: Time-Life Books, 1969.

Hamlyn, D.W. *Schopenhauer*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980.

Hammermeister, Kai. *The German Aesthetic Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Hannan, Barbara. *The Riddle of the World; A Reconsideration of Schopenhauer's Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Hammer, Espen. *Philosophy and Temporality from Kant to Critical Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Hesse, Herman. *Siddhartha*. Translated by Hilda Rosner. New York: Bantam Books, 1981.

Howard, Don. *A Peek Behind the Veil of Maya, Einstein, Schopenhauer and the Historical Background of the Conception of Space for the Individunationism of Physical Systems*. In *The Cosmos of Science* , edited by John Earman and John Norton. University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997.

Jacquette, Dale, ed. *Schopenhauer, philosophy, and the arts*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

---*The Philosophy of Schopenhauer*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005.

Janaway, Christopher. *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989.

---*Schopenhauer*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.

---ed. *Cambridge Companion to Schopenhauer*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Jenkins, Ian. *The Discobolus*. London: The British Museum Press, 2012.

Jones, W.T. *A History of Western Philosophy*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1952.

Kolbert, Elizabeth. *The Sixth Extinction, An Unnatural History*. New York: Picador, 2014.

Laszlo, Ervin. *Science and the Akashic Field, An Integral Theory of Everything*. Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions, 2007.

Lovejoy, Arthur. *The Great Chain of Being*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001.

Magee, Bryan. *The Philosophy of Schopenhauer*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983.

Mayr, Ernst. *One Long Argument; Charles Darwin and the Genesis of Modern Evolutionary Thought*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991.

Marcin, Raymond. *In Search of Schopenhauer's Cat: Arthur Schopenhauer's Quantum-Mystical Theory of Justice*. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2006.

Moore, Walter. *A Life of Erwin Schrödinger*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Musès, Charles. *East-West fire; Schopenhauer's optimism and the Lankavatara sutra; an excursion toward the common ground between oriental and Western religion*. Indian Hills, Colorado: The Falcon's Wing Press, 1955.

Neill, Alex. and Christopher Janaway. *Better Consciousness; Schopenhauer's Philosophy of Value*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.

Norton, John D. "Chasing the Light, Einstein's Most Famous Thought Experiment." In *Thought Experiments in Philosophy, Science, and the Arts*, edited by Mélanie Frappier, Letitia Metnell, and James Robert Brown. New York: Routledge, 2013.

Masson, Raphaël. Mattiussi, Veronique. *Rodin*. Translated by Deke Dusinberre. Paris: Flammarion, 2004.

Planck, Max. *The Philosophy of Physics*, translated by W.H. Johnson. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1936.

Rosenblum, Bruce, and Fred Kuttner. *Quantum Enigma; Physics Encounters Consciousness*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Russell, Bertrand. *A History of Western Philosophy*. New York: Simon and Schuster: New York, 1972.

Safranski, Rüdiger. *Schopenhauer and the Wild Years of Philosophy*. Translated by Ewald Osers. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989.

Saunders, T. Bailey. *Studies in Pessimism: The Essays of Arthur Schopenhauer*. Kessenger Publishing, 2004.

Singh, Raj R. *Death, Contemplation and Schopenhauer*. Ashgate New Critical Thinking in Philosophy. Hampshire, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2007.

Sklar, Lawrence. *Space, Time and Spacetime*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977.

Sullivan, J.W.N. *Beethoven, His Spiritual Development*. New York: Vintage Books, 1960.

Sutton, Florn Hiripescu. *Existence and Enlightenment in the Lankāvatāra-sūtra; A Study in the Ontology and Epistemology of the Yogācāra School of Mahāyāna Buddhism*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991.

Vandenabeele, Bart. "Schopenhauer on Aesthetic Understanding and the Values of Art." *European Journal of Philosophy*, vol. 16, no. 2, 194-210.

Wicks, Robert. *Schopenhauer*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell Publishing, 2008.

---*Schopenhauer's The World as Will and Representation*, *A Reader's Guide*. London & New York: Continuum, 2011.

Young, Julian. *Schopenhauer*. London: Routledge, 2005.

VITA

Eugene Richard Nasser, Jr.

New Orleans, Louisiana, July 11, 1975

Eugene and Maria Nasser

Monroe Township High School Monroe, New Jersey High Scholl Diploma 1995

Rutgers University New Brunswick New Jersey B.A., Philosophy 2001

Monmouth University West Long Branch, New Jersey M.A., History 2004

Monmouth University West Long Branch, New Jersey M.A.T., Education 2006

Drew University Madison, New Jersey D. Litt., Arts and Letters 2015