ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER

The World as Will and Representation

The purpose of the Cambridge Edition of the Works of Schopenhauer is to offer translations of the best modern German editions of Schopenhauer's work in a uniform format suitable for Schopenhauer scholars, together with philosophical introductions and full editorial apparatus.

First published in 1818, *The World as Will and Representation* contains Schopenhauer's entire philosophy, ranging through epistemology, metaphysics, philosophy of mind and action, aesthetics and philosophy of art, to ethics, the meaning of life and the philosophy of religion, in an attempt to account for the world in all its significant aspects. It gives a unique and influential account of what is and is not of value in existence, the striving and pain of the human condition and the possibility of deliverance from it. This new translation of the first volume of what later became a two-volume work reflects the eloquence and power of Schopenhauer's prose and renders philosophical terms accurately and consistently. It offers an introduction, glossary of names and bibliography, and succinct editorial notes, including notes on the revisions of the text which Schopenhauer made in 1844 and 1859.

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The Two Fundamental Problems of Ethics
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The World as Will and Representation: Volume 1
translated and edited by Judith Norman, Alistair Welchman and Christopher Janaway with an Introduction by Christopher Janaway

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Volume 1

TRANSLATED AND EDITED BY

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with an Introduction by

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General editor's preface

Schopenhauer is one of the great original writers of the nineteenth century, and a unique voice in the history of thought. His central concept of the will leads him to regard human beings as striving irrationally and suffering in a world that has no purpose, a condition redeemed by the elevation of aesthetic consciousness and finally overcome by the will's self-denial and a mystical vision of the self as one with the world as a whole. He is in some ways the most progressive post-Kantian, an atheist with profound ideas about the human essence and the meaning of existence which point forward to Nietzsche, Freud and existentialism. He was also the first major Western thinker to seek a synthesis with Eastern thought. Yet at the same time he undertakes an ambitious global metaphysics of a conservative, more or less pre-Kantian kind, and is driven by a Platonic vision of escape from empirical reality into a realm of higher knowledge.

Schopenhauer was born in 1788, and by 1809 had gone against his family's expectations of a career as a merchant and embarked on a university career. He completed his doctoral dissertation *On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason* in 1813, then spent several years in intensive preparation of what became the major work of his life, *The World as Will and Representation*, which was published at the end of 1818, with 1819 on the title page. Shortly afterwards his academic career suffered a setback when his only attempt at a lecture course ended in failure. Thereafter Schopenhauer adopted a stance of intellectual self-sufficiency and antagonism towards university philosophy, for which he was repaid by a singular lack of reaction to his writings. In 1835 he published *On the Will in Nature*, an attempt to corroborate his metaphysics with findings from the sciences, and in 1841 two self-standing essays on free will and moral philosophy, entitled *The Two Fundamental Problems of Ethics*. A large supplementary second volume to *The World as Will and Representation* appeared in 1844, accompanied by a revised version of the original which now appeared as Volume One; then in 1851 another two-volume work,

Parerga and Paralipomena, a collection of essays and observations. Only in the 1850s did serious interest in Schopenhauer's philosophy begin, with a favourable review appearing in an English journal and a few European universities offering courses on his work. In this final decade before his death in 1860 he published a third edition of *The World as Will and Representation* and a second edition of *The Two Fundamental Problems of Ethics*. After Schopenhauer's death his follower Julius Frauenstädt produced the first six-volume edition of his works in 1873, providing the basis for many subsequent German editions up to the *Sämtliche Werke* edited by Arthur Hübscher, which we use as the basis for our translations in the present edition.

Though Schopenhauer's life and the genesis of his philosophy belong to the early part of the nineteenth century, it is the latter half of the century that provides the context for his widespread reception and influence. In 1877 he was described by Wilhelm Wundt as 'the born leader of non-academic philosophy in Germany', and in that period many artists and intellectuals, prominent among them Richard Wagner, worked under the influence of his works. The single most important philosophical influence was on Nietzsche, who was in critical dialogue throughout his career with his 'great teacher Schopenhauer'. But many aspects of the period resonate with Schopenhauer's aesthetic theory, his pessimism, his championing of the *Upanishads* and Buddhism, and his theory of the self and the world as embodied striving.

Over the last three decades interest in Schopenhauer in the English-speaking world has been growing again, with a good number of monographs, translations and collections of articles appearing, where before there were very few. More general trends in the study of the history of philosophy have played a part here. There has recently been a dramatic rise in philosophical interest in the period that immediately follows Kant (including the German Idealists and Romanticism), and the greater centrality now accorded to Nietzsche's philosophy has provided further motivation for attending to Schopenhauer. Yet until now there has been no complete English edition of his works. The present six-volume series of Schopenhauer's published works aims to provide an up-to-date, reliable English translation that reflects the literary style of the original while maintaining linguistic accuracy and consistency over his philosophical vocabulary.

Almost all the English translations of Schopenhauer in use until now, published though they are by several different publishers, stem from a single translator, the remarkable E. F. J. Payne. These translations, which were done in the 1950s and 1960s, have stood the test of time quite well

and performed a fine service in transmitting Schopenhauer to an English-speaking audience. Payne's single-handed achievement is all the greater given that he was not a philosopher or an academic, but a former military man who became a dedicated enthusiast. His translations are readable and lively and convey a distinct authorial voice. However, the case for new translations rests partly on the fact that Payne has a tendency towards circumlocution rather than directness and is often not as scrupulous as we might wish in translating philosophical vocabulary, partly on the fact that recent scholarship has probed many parts of Schopenhauer's thought with far greater precision than was known in Payne's day, and partly on the simple thought that after half a century of reading Schopenhauer almost solely through one translator, and with a wider and more demanding audience established, a change of voice is in order.

In the present edition the translators have striven to keep a tighter rein on philosophical terminology, especially that which is familiar from the study of Kant – though we should be on our guard here, for Schopenhauer's use of a Kantian word does not permit us to infer that he uses it in a sense Kant would have approved of. We have included explanatory introductions to each volume, and other aids to the reader: footnotes explaining some of Schopenhauer's original German vocabulary, a glossary of names to assist with his voluminous literary and philosophical references, a chronology of his life and a bibliography of German texts, existing English translations and selected further reading. We also give a breakdown of all passages that were added or altered by Schopenhauer in different editions of his works, especially noteworthy being the changes made to his earliest publications, *On the Fourfold Root* and the single-volume first edition of *The World as Will and Representation*. A further novel feature of this edition is our treatment of the many extracts Schopenhauer quotes in languages other than German. Our guiding policy here is, as far as possible, to translate material in any language into English. The reader will therefore not be detained by scanning through passages in other languages and having to resort to footnote translations. Nevertheless, the virtuoso manner in which Schopenhauer blends Latin, Greek, French, Italian and Spanish extracts with his own prose style is not entirely lost, since we have used footnotes to give all the original passages in full.

CHRISTOPHER JANAWAY

Editorial notes and references

Three kinds of notes occur in the translation:

(1) Footnotes marked with asterisks (*, ** and so on) are Schopenhauer's own notes.

(2) Footnotes marked with small letters (a, b, c) are editorial notes. These either give information about the original wording in Schopenhauer's text (in German or other languages), or provide additional editorial information. All (and only) such *additional* information is enclosed in brackets [ ]. All footnote material *not* in brackets consists of words from the original text.

(3) Endnotes marked with numerals 1, 2, 3. The endnotes are placed at the back of the book, and indicate variations between the different texts of the essays published during Schopenhauer's lifetime.

Schopenhauer's works are referred to by the following abbreviations:

Hübscher *SW* 1–7	*Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Arthur Hübscher (Mannheim: F. A. Brockhaus, 1988), vols. 1–7.
BM	*On the Basis of Morals* [*Über die Grundlage der Moral*].
FR	*On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason* [*Über die vierfache Wurzel des Satzes vom zureichenden Grunde*].
FW	*On the Freedom of the Will* [*Über die Freiheit des Willens*].
PP 1, 2	*Parerga and Paralipomena* [*Parerga und Paralipomena*], vols. 1 and 2.
WN	*On the Will in Nature* [*Über den Willen in der Natur*].
WWR 1, 2	*The World as Will and Representation* [*Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*], vols. 1 and 2.

Unpublished writings by Schopenhauer are referred to thus:

GB	*Gesammelte Briefe*, ed. Arthur Hübscher (Bonn: Bouvier, 1978).
HN 1–5	*Der handschriftliche Nachlaß*, ed. Arthur Hübscher (Frankfurt am Main: Kramer, 1970), vols. 1–5.
MR 1–4	*Manuscript Remains*, ed. Arthur Hübscher, trans. E. F. J. Payne (Oxford: Berg, 1988), vols. 1–4 [a translation of *HN* vols. 1–4].

Passages in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* are referred to by the standard method, using A and B marginal numbers corresponding to the first and second editions of the work. Other writings by Kant are referred to by volume and page number of the monumental '*Akademie*' edition (Berlin: Georg Reimer/Walter de Gruyter, 1900–), in the form Ak. 4: 397. Translations are based on those in the relevant volume of the Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant. References to works of Plato and Aristotle use the standard marginal annotations.

Introduction

Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Representation* was first published in Leipzig at the end of 1818 (with 1819 as the date on its title page). It consisted of a single volume, and aimed, as its 30-year-old author stated in his preface, 'to convey a single thought'. He went on to confess, however, that 'in spite of all my efforts, I could not find a shorter way of conveying the thought than the whole of this book', a book that ran to over 700 pages and was not a little ambitious, ranging through epistemology, metaphysics, philosophy of mind and action, aesthetics and philosophy of art, to ethics, the meaning of life and the philosophy of religion, in an attempt to account for nothing less than *the world*: the nature of our cognition or knowledge of reality and how it relates to reality itself, the nature of our existence and the existence of everything in the world, what is and is not of value in existence, the pain of the human condition and the possibility of deliverance from it. Schopenhauer rounds off his book with a detailed and incisive critique of the philosophy of Kant, whom he admired and respected, but to whom he boldly applied Voltaire's saying '*C'est le privilège du vrai génie, et surtout du génie qui ouvre une carrière, de faire impunément de grandes fautes*' (It is the privilege of true genius, and above all the genius who opens a new path, to make great errors with impunity) – words we may well have occasion to apply to Schopenhauer himself.

This book is the major achievement of Schopenhauer's life, and the backbone of his intellectual career. What we have provided here is an English version, not of that 1818 text, but of the text as Schopenhauer reworked it cumulatively on two later occasions. In 1844 he republished *The World as Will and Representation* as a two-volume work, whose second volume runs parallel with the themes in the first and consists of fifty 'supplementary essays', some of them substantial and powerfully written pieces in their own right. At the same time he revised the original *World as Will and Representation*, which henceforth became known as Volume 1. Many passages are rewritten in this 1844 version and whole paragraphs are added, along

with elaborations of Schopenhauer's original argument that were suggested by his copious reading of philosophy and literature – ancient, mediaeval and modern – and his knowledge of many of the expanding disciplines of the nineteenth century, including the perhaps unlikely pairing of the biological sciences and oriental scholarship. In 1859, the year before he died, Schopenhauer revised the book once more, and Volume 1 acquired yet more scholarly additions and clarificatory changes, though still without altering the essentials of his train of thought. The twice-revised version is longer, richer and denser than the original. Schopenhauer's approach is to accumulate inter-connecting passages and parallels, channelling a wide variety of cultural sources into a single synthetic vision, and by the same token directing the reader outwards to a wealth of intellectual reference points. The text we have used for this translation is essentially this last edition, subject to certain further revisions by various editors, starting with Julius Frauenstädt in 1873, through Paul Deussen's edition of 1911, to Arthur Hübscher's of 1988 which we treat as the standard text. Our endnotes give detailed information about changes between the different editions of Schopenhauer's lifetime.

The nature of the 'single thought' that Schopenhauer alleges is contained in this weighty work (and presumably also in the even greater supplementary material of later years) has been the subject of some slightly perplexed debate.[1] If there is a single thought, it must be highly elusive or highly complex, or both. But we can perhaps make an initial approach towards what Schopenhauer means if we examine the framework of four Books into which *The World as Will and Representation* is divided. Their titles and discursive subtitles are as follows:

(1) The world as representation, first consideration. Representation subject to the principle of sufficient reason: the object of experience and science.
(2) The world as will, first consideration. The objectivation of the will.
(3) The world as representation, second consideration. Representation independent of the principle of sufficient reason: the Platonic Idea: the object of art.
(4) The world as will, second consideration. With the achievement of self-knowledge, affirmation and negation of the will to life.

What we first notice here is an oscillation between the two key terms from the book's title. At the core of the single thought, then, is this: one and the

[1] For one substantial discussion see John E. Atwell, *Schopenhauer on the Character of the World: The Metaphysics of Will* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 18–31.

same world has two aspects, and we can learn about it by considering it as representation, then as will, then as representation in altered fashion, then as will in altered fashion. The two alterations in question introduce two more vital oppositions. With the world as representation, we can either consider it subject to the principle of sufficient reason, or independently of that principle. With the world as will, we can either consider it descriptively for what it is, or we can consider it on an evaluative dimension – with respect to its affirmation or negation. This, however, leaves us with an immense amount to explain. Let us next try to flesh out these bare bones a little, keeping in mind the four-part dynamic structure that any would-be 'single thought' really needs to have if it is to map on to the work as a whole.

Schopenhauer uses 'representation' (German *Vorstellung*) in the same way as his predecessor Kant uses it. It stands for anything that the mind is conscious of in its experience, knowledge, or cognition of any form – something that is present to the mind. So our first task in *The World as Will and Representation* is to consider the world as it presents itself to us in our minds. In ordinary human experience, and in the extension of this in the realm of scientific enquiry, we encounter objects, and these are ordered for us, necessarily, by space and time, and by relations of cause and effect. All the ways in which the world is thus ordered for us are species of the single principle 'Nothing is without a ground for its being rather than not being', otherwise known as the principle of sufficient reason. Every object is experienced as related to something else which grounds it. Everything in space and time has a determinate position in relation to other things in space and time, everything that happens has a determinate cause, every action relates back to a motive and to its agent's character, every truth is grounded in some other truth or in the evidence of the senses. So starting, as we must, from the world *as we find it* in everyday experience and empirical investigation, we see a multiplicity of objects related in necessary ways. But all of this tells us how the world must *appear* to us as subjects; it does not tell us how the world *is* when we try to consider it apart from the way it presents itself to our minds. We must next move on to consider the aspect of the world beyond representation, the world as 'thing in itself'.

In a word, Schopenhauer argues in his Second Book that the thing in itself – what the world is beyond the aspect of it that appears to us – is *will*. His guiding thought is that there is one single essence that underlies all objects and all phenomena, ourselves included, one single way in which the 'riddle' of all existence can be deciphered. The single world manifests itself to experience as a multiplicity of individual objects – Schopenhauer calls this the *objectivation* of the will – and each member of this

multiplicity, embodying the same essence, strives towards existence and life. Human individuals are primarily beings who will and act, and share their ultimate nature with every other being in the world. Human rationality and consciousness are extremely useful, and give us an instrumental superiority over other beings, but are really only a froth on the surface, and do not distinguish humanity from the rest of nature at the most fundamental level. Indeed, our advanced capacities for cognition can be explained, for Schopenhauer, as serving the ends of willing: our ability to perceive and investigate the world functions primarily to enable us to manipulate objects that confront us, in order to continue existing and to reproduce ourselves. If we are really to understand the world and our place within it, we must not remain at the surface of the world as representation, but must delve into this deeper and darker aspect of reality, the world as will – darker because everything that wills or strives is necessarily at the mercy of suffering, and because this suffering has neither point nor end. As long as we will, we suffer; but that we will, and ultimately what we will, is a function of our inescapable essence, not something rationally chosen, and not something we have the means to put an end to by willing.

At the mid-point of *The World as Will and Representation* we return to a new, and brighter, consideration of the world as representation. It can happen, according to Schopenhauer, that we confront objects in a kind of experience that is out of the ordinary. We find all the usual kinds of relation – space, time and cause and effect – suspended, and lose ourselves in contemplation, forgetful of ourselves and of the distinction between ourselves and what we perceive. This is aesthetic experience, an extreme form of disinterestedness, a passive 'mirroring' of the world in which we cease to grapple with the world of objects, cease striving, and find temporary release from pain. While becoming as free as we can from subjectivity, we apprehend nature in a manner that takes our cognition as close as possible to the true essence of things: we perceive timeless features than run throughout nature, which Schopenhauer calls Ideas, intending us to take this notion in a sense close to Plato's (or to what are often called Platonic Forms nowadays). Art provides the best opportunity for this kind of experience because it gives us a view of nature mediated through the exceptionally objective mind of a genius. Art enables in us as spectators a state of calm passivity and enhanced objectivity, and the various art forms allow us to recognize diverse aspects of the will's manifestation in the world, from, as it were, a vantage point where our individual own will is not engaged.

The transition to the Fourth Book of *The World as Will and Representation* takes us back to the world as will, considered now with respect to its

'affirmation and negation', or at any rate the affirmation and negation of the 'will to life' that Schopenhauer finds to be the essence of each individual. This final part – by far the longest and, in Schopenhauer's words, the 'most serious' – is concerned with ethics, in both a narrower and broader sense. Building on the descriptive account of the will from the Second Book, Schopenhauer gives his own answers to conventional ethical questions: What are morally good and bad actions and characters? What is the nature of right and wrong? What constitutes compassion, and the virtues of justice and loving kindness? In what sense, if at all, are our actions free? But the main thrust of the Fourth Book is a broader ethical treatment of the value of human existence as such – a profound and troubling discussion that borders on religious territory while remaining resolutely atheist in its conviction. Schopenhauer has argued that the life of the human individual is inevitably one of striving and suffering, unredeemed by any final purpose or resting point for the will that is our essence. Now he argues that some salvation is needed from such an existence, but that it can only come from the restless will's becoming 'tranquillized' by a deep metaphysical insight that reveals individuality itself to be an illusion. The world in itself, outside of the forms of space and time that govern the world as representation for us, cannot be separated into individuals. The truly wise human being would comprehend this and would cease to be attached to the strivings of the particular individual manifestation of will he or she is. Such a redemptive state – sometimes reached intuitively through the painful experiences of life itself – is the will's 'self-negation' or 'self-abolition'. The will that is the human being's essence recoils from pursuing any of its goals, and the sense of individuality weakens to the point where reality can be contemplated with a serenity that is void of the usual pains of existence because the subject has become void of all striving and void of the usual sense of self.

THE WORLD OF OBJECTS AND SCHOPENHAUER'S 'INTRODUCTORY ESSAY'

From 1809 to 1813 Schopenhauer attended the universities of Göttingen and Berlin, studying philosophy among other subjects. He specialized early on in the work of Kant and Plato, both of whom had a profound formative influence on his thinking. He prepared *The World as Will and Representation* in the years 1814 to 1818, during which time he also began a life-long interest in Indian thought, starting with extracts from the *Upanishads* in a Latin version by A. H. Anquetil-Duperron entitled *Oupnek'hat*. In a notebook

entry of 1816 Schopenhauer acknowledged the uniqueness of the mixture of influences on him: 'I do not believe my doctrine could have come about before the Upanishads, Plato and Kant could cast their rays simultaneously into the mind of one man.'[2]

Schopenhauer had published two works before *The World as Will and Representation*: a short treatise entitled *On Vision and Colours* (1816), and his doctoral dissertation *On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason* (1813). The latter is especially important to us here. In the first edition of *The World as Will* Schopenhauer referred to *On the Fourfold Root* throughout as 'the introductory essay', and went so far as to demand 'that the introduction be read before the book itself, even though it is not located inside the book but rather appeared five years earlier' (Preface to the first edition, 7). It will be helpful, therefore, to give an outline of the argument of the essay.

Two relatively simple ideas set the framework for *On the Fourfold Root*. One is the principle of sufficient reason itself – that 'nothing is without a ground for its being rather than not being'. In fact this principle could be translated more literally, if less conventionally, as 'principle of sufficient ground' (in German *Satz des zureichenden Grundes*). The idea is that everything is grounded in, explained or justified by, something else to which it is related in a variety of distinct ways. The second main idea is that all representation consists in the relation of subject and object. All cognition is by a subject and of an object. While the subject has cognition, and is presupposed wherever there is cognition, the subject itself is never cognized. What the subject is conscious of is always some object, but all objects are representations: 'To be an object for the subject and to be our representation are the same. All of our representations are objects for the subject, and all objects for the subject are our representations.'[3] Thus if we investigate the way our representations are organized, we shall at the same time be understanding the basic structure that pertains to objects of any kind. Schopenhauer now points out that our experience of objects is always of them in relation to one another. We never have cognition of anything 'subsisting for itself and independent . . . single and detached'. And whatever the particular content of our consciousness, there are certain kinds of relation between objects that are fundamental and necessary: 'all our representations stand to one another in a lawlike connection in respect of form, which can be determined *a priori*'. Discovering the necessary

[2] *MR* 1, 467 (*HN* 1, 422).
[3] *FR* § 16 (Hübscher *SW* 1, 27). Following quotes are from the same passage.

kinds of connection between representations is discovering the necessary connections of all objects; and all these are connections of ground and consequent. All are forms of the principle of sufficient reason.

Schopenhauer shows how the principle of sufficient reason covers quite different species of ground–consequent relation and complains with some justification that previous philosophers have tended not to distinguish them clearly. Perhaps the most obvious of such species is the law of causality, the principle that everything that happens is the effect of some cause. This is the first form of the principle of sufficient reason for Schopenhauer, and it governs all our empirical representations in space and time. Everything we experience is spatially and temporally ordered, and whenever anything happens at a place at a time, something must have occurred to determine its happening. The relation between ground and consequent is always one of necessity, according to Schopenhauer. Hence any alteration, anything at all that 'becomes' or happens in the empirical realm of space and time (i.e. in our empirical representations) happens necessarily, according to a law, as a consequence of some particular cause which is also in space and time.

However, we human beings do not simply represent the spatio-temporal world to ourselves perceptually; we are able to form abstract concepts and use them to think, to make judgements and to perform sequences of reasoning. Any judgement we make, if it is to count as true, must also be grounded; but this form of grounding is quite distinct from that of causality, and so constitutes a second form of the principle of sufficient reason. It concerns what would usually be called not explanation, but justification. Under this second heading Schopenhauer locates in turn four ways in which judgements can be grounded, and expresses them also as four kinds of truth. There is logical (or formal) truth, where a judgement is grounded in another judgement from which it can be deduced. There is empirical truth, when a judgement is grounded in an immediate non-conceptual representation of experience. Then there is transcendental truth, for which Schopenhauer adopts the Kantian idea that we can know something to be true because it is a condition of the possibility of experience. These transcendental truths, for Kant, are synthetic *a priori*: known without requiring confirmation through experience, yet not deducible merely from concepts, i.e. neither logical nor empirical truths. Schopenhauer follows Kant closely here, giving the same sorts of examples of transcendental truth as Kant had done in the *Critique of Pure Reason*: 'Two straight lines do not enclose any space', 'Nothing happens without a cause', '$3 \times 7 = 21$'. Such judgements, Schopenhauer claims, have their truth grounded not in experience, nor in logical deduction, but in the conditions of the possibility

of experience. Finally, he puts forward a fourth kind of truth, which he calls 'metalogical truth'. Truths of this kind supposedly express the conditions that make thinking possible as such, but they do not play any very prominent further role in Schopenhauer's philosophy.[4]

The third form of the principle of sufficient reason also trades directly on a position that Kant espoused in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Schopenhauer has much to say in criticism of Kant, as we shall see, but the opening section of the *Critique* called the Transcendental Aesthetic is one for which he always has high praise. There Kant discusses space and time, and argues that they are, in effect, features contributed to experience by our own mind. Any world we can represent to ourselves must be in space and time: they constitute the formal structure that any objective world must take for us, whatever its particular content. Thus they are the subjective forms of all experience that we can gain through our senses, and we can know *a priori* that all experience must conform to them. All of this Schopenhauer adopts. But space and time, as well as providing this necessary framework for all experience, also give rise to another principle: that each part of space and of time is determined by its relation to the other parts. Every spatial position is determined by spatial positions distinct from it, and determines them, and likewise in the case of sequences of times. All parts of space and time stand in necessary relations to one another. Schopenhauer follows Kant in suggesting that there is a non-empirical, *a priori* form of cognition of the necessary properties of space and time, to be had in geometry and arithmetic. So he finds here a kind of ground–consequent relationship that is not one of causality, and not a matter of the relationship between judgements. This might be put by saying that a part of space or time is neither caused nor justified by its relation to other parts of space and time, but rather is constituted by such relations. So Schopenhauer talks here of the principle of the sufficient ground of *being*.

With the fourth class of grounds and consequents Schopenhauer broaches for the first time the subject of *willing*, which later becomes so central in his philosophy overall. He is here concerned with the relation of motive to action, which, however, turns out to be a special case of the first class, an example of cause and effect. Schopenhauer has much more to say about action and motive in his two later essays on ethics, as well as in

[4] There are four such truths, which Schopenhauer lists in *FR* § 33 (Hübscher *SW* 1, 109): 'a subject is identical to the sum of its predicates, or a=a'; 'a predicate cannot at the same time be attributed to and denied of a subject, or a=–a=o'; 'Of any two contradictory, opposing predicates one must belong to any subject'; 'Truth is the relation of a judgement to something outside it as its sufficient ground.'

The World as Will. The chief points he makes on the topic of willing in *On the Fourfold Root* are as follows. We have inner cognition as well as outer. That is, we not only have consciousness of the world of objects in space and time, but we have self-consciousness. And in this self-consciousness, Schopenhauer suggests, we are aware of ourselves as willing in different ways: acting, trying, deciding, desiring and registering a range of positive and negative affects and feelings that can also be called movements of the will. Outer consciousness and self-consciousness are quite distinct. And yet, when the will of which we are inwardly conscious is moved by some experience coming from outer consciousness (which is what Schopenhauer calls a *motive*: an experience that moves me to action), and when an act of will occurs, this sequence is at bottom no different from any relation of cause and effect. Motivation, he says, in a memorable phrase 'is causality seen from within'.[5] The insight that what we thus see from within (our will reacting to motives) belongs to the more general class of events being determined by their causes, and that the law of motivation is a version of the law of causality which governs the world of objects – this, he says, is the foundation stone of his whole metaphysics.

With this very quick sketch of the 'introductory essay' in place, let us now return to the four Books of *The World as Will and Representation*.

FIRST BOOK

Schopenhauer uses his first consideration of the world as representation to give a comprehensive account of cognition and its relation to reality. Three principal themes are worth commenting on here: idealism, the relation of subject and object, and the distinction between intuitive and conceptual cognition. All three themes are announced clearly in §§ 1–3. Schopenhauer firstly allies himself with *transcendental idealism*. According to this doctrine, originally developed by Kant in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the objects that we experience as outside of us in space and time, causally interacting in lawlike ways, constitute a world of *appearance*, and we do not experience them *in themselves*. The objects of which any subject has conscious experience are a species of the subject's representations. The familiar world of empirical things is a world of objects *for a subject*, which is to say a world consisting of the subject's representations, and not a world that can be regarded as existing in itself, independently of the way it appears and must appear to an experiencing mind. The form of the mind itself necessarily

[5] *FR* § 43 (Hübscher *SW* 1, 145).

limits or shapes what this realm of objects can contain. The mind must organize its objects as related to one another in space, as contemporaneous or succeeding one another in time, and as entering into regular patterns of cause and effect. These, for Kant, and for Schopenhauer, are truths *a priori*, truths that we can know independently of confirmation through experience. They are ground rules for the possibility of experience itself.

Schopenhauer has various ways of arguing for transcendental idealism, but places his main trust in the proposition 'No object without subject'. This proposition, he says, is so obviously true that anyone who understands it must agree with it, and it establishes the truth of idealism at a stroke (had Kant acknowledged as much he would have saved himself and his readers a great deal of trouble, in Schopenhauer's view). There is more than a suspicion that Schopenhauer understands by 'object' simply something that presents itself to the mind of a subject – in which case 'No object without subject' is virtually a tautology – but that at the same time he takes the proposition to make a substantive claim by letting 'object' mean something like 'thing in the world', or at least 'cognizable thing in the world'. It is one thing to say that anything's being an object of cognition for me depends on my being there as subject of the cognition; it is another thing to say that anything I have cognition of could not exist except as cognized by me, or that anything human beings in general have cognition of could not exist except as cognized.

Representation, for Schopenhauer, consists essentially in the relation between subject and object, which are 'necessary correlates'. They are necessarily distinct: the subject of cognition can never itself be cognized as an object, and is rather the elusive 'point of view on the world' that we all, as experiencing individuals, 'finds ourselves as'. Subject and object are also mutually presupposing for Schopenhauer. 'No subject without object' is just as firm a truth, in his eyes, as 'No object without subject' – in other words, the subject cannot be there without having some cognitive content. 'Subject' does not mean the same for Schopenhauer as 'person' or 'human individual'. These terms refer to items in the world of objects. The body that each of us experiences as our own is likewise an object in space and time. But the subject is not an item in the world. So as person or embodied human individual each of us is in and of the world, something existing as an object among objects. But in addition we are the subject in whose consciousness all objects are present, but which cannot itself be conceived as existing among them. The notion that our existence and sense of self are poised between embodiment and pure subjecthood plays a vital role at many subsequent junctures in *The World as Will and Representation*:

different forms of consciousness are available to us as our sense of self alters.

For Schopenhauer, the human mind, and indeed any conscious mind, receives data through the bodily senses and structures them using what he calls the understanding (*Verstand*) or intellect (*Intellekt*). Without this structuring we would register only a conglomeration of subjective sensations, but with it we attain a picture of material objects persisting in time, occupying space and serving as the casual origins of observed changes and of our sensations themselves. However, Schopenhauer's account of cognition differs from Kant's superficially similar account, in that for Schopenhauer the understanding or intellect cognizes the world in a manner that is non-conceptual. Adopting another technical term of Kant's, but altering its use, Schopenhauer maintains that what the understanding gives us is intuition (*Anschauung*), which essentially means perceptual awareness of particular objects in space and time. For Kant, the senses give us an array of intuitions, and the understanding provides concepts under which it actively ordered the intuitions to produce an experience of a world of objects. Only creatures capable of forming concepts and making judgements could have such experience in the full sense. But for Schopenhauer animals such as a dog or a horse, who are incapable of forming concepts, are as much aware of a world of objects as any human subject: they perceive objects in space and time as we do, being simply incapable of making judgements, forming thoughts or carrying out reasoning, and hence being unable to comprehend anything more than what is immediately present in their perception.

§§ 4–7 fill out the picture of the world of objects that is available to the subject in empirical intuition. Empirical objects occupy space and time and causally interact with one another. The causally efficient occupant of any particular portion of space/time is simply *matter*. So if one were to take one's philosophical departure solely from the point of view of the object, one would arrive at *materialism*. However, to adopt this starting-point is one-sided: in this way one cannot account for the subject and its consciousness. Just as subject and object are mutually dependent and correlative, so too there is a correlativity between subjective and objective views of reality. Although he thinks materialism is correct as an account purely of objects, Schopenhauer argues that transcendental idealism is the only consistent view that takes the subject as its point of departure. For him it is also a mistake to contend that the subject is caused by objects or objects by the subject; they are not causally related at all, merely correlative components of representation. Causality is the form we impose on the

interaction of objects with one another, but it has another function in Schopenhauer's account of cognition. When we register alterations in our bodily sense organs our understanding interprets these as the effects of external causes, thus giving rise to genuine representation of objects as opposed to mere sensations.

In §§ 8–15 Schopenhauer gives us a protracted discussion of reason and the kind of representations it gives rise to, namely concepts. Reason (*Vernunft*) for Schopenhauer is the capacity to form and manipulate concepts discursively to frame thoughts and arguments, and is quite distinct from understanding or intellect. Reason is closely linked to language, and is unique to human beings. For Schopenhauer concepts are secondary representations abstracted from the primary material given in intuition, i.e. immediate cognition through the senses of objects in space and time. Concepts are a kind of mediate cognition: they represent the world in a general way by omitting the particularities of immediate intuition, but remain dependent for any genuine content on those immediate intuitions from which they are abstracted. Reason itself is instrumental in value: it enables us, unlike other animals, to be guided in our actions by a vast range of motives that involve thoughts about what is not present immediately in intuition. Parts of Schopenhauer's discussion of reason and concepts are somewhat textbook-like in character, as he explains the way concepts combine into judgements, and the way judgements build up into syllogistic reasoning. He also puts forward an account of the manner in which the connotations of different concepts overlap and how this can be exploited in rhetorical persuasion, and talks about the vicissitudes peculiar to rational beings, such as foolishness, stupidity, pedantry and laughter.

The distinction made in § 12 between two kinds of cognition (*Erkenntniß*) has an importance that resonates throughout *The World as Will and Representation*. With concepts and judgements we are capable of *knowledge* (*Wissen*). Animals have immediate cognition of the world of object, but do not *know*. Reason confers on human beings, its sole possessors, many advantages. Because of it they can acquire, communicate and store knowledge, perform logical reasoning, be scientific investigators, found societies and undertake vast communal projects. Unlike animals, they can reflect and act upon past experience, work out likely future consequences and have a wide range of goals. However, this opens human beings to a much greater range of sufferings than animals; at the same time reason confers on humans no special 'dignity', nor does it have any special connection with freedom or morality. Schopenhauer rejects entirely Kant's conception of 'practical

reason'.[6] The effective demotion of reason from any foundational role in characterizing human behaviour or explaining what has moral worth, and the consequent levelling that occurs between human beings and all other animals, are notable distinguishing features of Schopenhauer's philosophy. In § 16 Schopenhauer's positive account of the relation of reason to ethics limits it to the calm reflection of the Stoic stage, and the First Book ends, rather surprisingly, with a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of Stoic ethics, full of characteristically scholarly citations from ancient texts.

SECOND BOOK

In the first of his oscillations between aspects, Schopenhauer now maintains that the account he has given of the world as representation, though true, is seriously inadequate. For by definition it does not tell us what we are in ourselves, nor what anything in the world apart from us is in itself. All this remains a 'riddle'. § 17 opens the Second Book by portraying the enquirer as searching for an 'inner essence' or a 'meaning' to the world. Already in § 18, probably the most important pivotal section in the whole of *The World as Will and Representation*, Schopenhauer proposes to solve the riddle, or decipher the meaning, by claiming that the essence, the very being in itself of all things, is will (*Wille*). The world that appears to us as representation is, in itself, will. Representation gives us the world as it is empirically, diverse, plural, spatio-temporal, lawlike and open to investigation. But we must make sense of the world and ourselves from within, not merely experience its manifestations from a detached standpoint. Will is what that same world and we ourselves are metaphysically – one and the same essence underlying all the many empirical appearances. This is the central message of the Second Book of *The World as Will and Representation*, and of Schopenhauer's philosophy as a whole.

In § 18 Schopenhauer begins by arguing from our immediate cognition of our own actions. Schopenhauer suggests that whenever we are conscious of ourselves, we are immediately conscious of ourselves as willing something. This is a unique inner consciousness, distinct in character from our 'outer' awareness of the world in representation, and it gives us the vital clue to our own essence: it is that we strive towards ends. The intrinsic core of our being is will. Schopenhauer makes a close connection between this and our essential embodiment. When we will, the action of our body in pursuit of

[6] This is best seen from the Appendix: Critique of the Kantian Philosophy (see 552); and from ch. 2 of *BM*.

an end is not the separate effect of an 'act of will': rather the body's action is the act of will become manifest in the objective realm of space and time. Even the body as such, whose function is to strive for ends, must be regarded as will become concrete, will become object, as Schopenhauer says in § 20. Thus the will that is our essence manifests itself in our body and its many functions, including the brain and nervous system, with the result that the self-conscious subject of cognition around which Kantian epistemology (and Schopenhauer's own First Book) is structured is to be explained as the result of physiology, but that physiology is ultimately explicable in metaphysical terms as the manifestation of an underlying striving force in nature. In the continuous discussion of §§ 19–22 Schopenhauer argues for an extension of the term 'will' to cover the essence of everything in the world. In the human case 'will' embraces not only desires, but actions, emotions and affects, and non-conscious or 'blind' physiological processes that can be described as end-directed. Schopenhauer then extends this idea to the whole of nature, claiming that we can make sense of the world as such by seeing its essence as a kind of blind striving manifesting itself in multiple instances within our experience. Thus, again, the one world is both representation and will.

A number of wide-reaching claims are made in § 23. One concerns the principle of individuation, or in the Latin phrase Schopenhauer likes to use, the *principium individuationis*. The issue here is what distinguishes one individual thing from all others, and hence what makes plurality, the existence of many distinct things, possible at all. For Schopenhauer the principle in question is that things are distinguished from one another by their position in space and time. But by the same token if we removed space and time there could be no distinct individuals, no multiplicity. Schopenhauer reasons that if the world as thing in itself must be conceived as existing outside the subjective forms of space and time, then the world as thing in itself must not be split up into separate individuals. This thought becomes of ever greater importance as *The World as Will and Representation* progresses, and the illusoriness of the individual is especially important in the ethics of the Fourth Book. Another central thought introduced in § 23 has to do with freedom. Nothing in the empirical realm of individuals is free, because everything is subject to cause and effect: everything that happens happens necessarily as the consequence of some ground. There are three different species of cause–effect relationship found in nature, in Schopenhauer's view: simple cause and effect, which occurs throughout nature at the level of physical and chemical explanation; stimulus and response, found in plants and animals; and finally motivation,

where an effect is brought about by an event that occurs in cognition, a perceptual experience or thought. However, all these species are united in that in each of them the effect follows the cause with necessity, as specified by the principle of sufficient reason. On the other hand, once we reflect that the cause–effect relationship pertains only to the realm of the subject's representation, we can think of the world beyond its aspect as representation, the world in itself, as being free – another thought that Schopenhauer will capitalize on below in the Fourth Book.

In the latter half of the Second Book, in §§ 24–28, Schopenhauer confronts his account of the world as will with the accounts of nature given in the natural sciences. He is not hostile to science, and uses as many scientific findings as he can to support his metaphysical account. But science's picture of nature runs up against a crucial limitation, in his view. Its explanations always end with forces such as gravity or electricity which are capable of no further explanation. He argues that a single, comprehensive metaphysical explanation of all forces is needed. Schopenhauer's view of the natural world falls into the vitalist camp – there is a life force that can never be reduced to any form of mechanistic process – but, for him, the life force is just one manifestation of a universal unconscious end-seeking or striving that is present in all the forces of nature. He introduces the notion that nature is unified because it falls into certain universal kinds or Ideas (on a more or less Platonic model) that express the same essence at different degrees of clarity. Timelessly existing natural forces and natural species form a system of expressions of the will that has internal and external purposiveness (*Zweckmäßigkeit*): the parts of each organism fit together to enable it and its species to function, and the whole of nature exhibits a purposive fit between all the parts of the organic realm and between the organic and inorganic realms.

It is of the greatest importance to note that the will is nothing remotely like a mind or divine being for Schopenhauer: it lacks cognition or consciousness, cannot set itself goals or seek ends that are conceived as good. Nor is the will itself in any sense good. It merely strives away in perpetuity, producing countless transient individuals along the way as a matter of sheer brute fact. As *The World as Will and Representation* progresses the tone becomes more sombre. Willing goes on perpetually and without final purpose: it is built into us and into the whole fabric of the world. The individual's existence is dominated by will: incessant desires and needs shape all our perception and understanding of the world, ends can never finally be fulfilled, suffering is ever-present, but the will drives us on to strive and want more things that can never properly satisfy us even if we attain them.

Throughout nature one being dominates and destroys another, the world-will tearing itself apart, says Schopenhauer, because it is a hungry will and there is nothing for it to feed on but itself. This vision of existence, painted most vividly in § 27, has played a major part in earning Schopenhauer the title of the philosopher of pessimism.

§ 29 ends the Second Book by posing the following fundamental question: 'Every will is the will to something, it has an object, a goal of its willing: now the will that is presented to us as the essence in itself of the world: what does *it* ultimately will, or what does it strive for?' (187). And the answer is: Nothing. The very question is misplaced because the will, though always moving, is never really going anywhere:

> In fact the absence of all goals, of all boundaries, belongs to the essence of the will in itself, which is an endless striving . . . [T]he striving of matter can always be merely impeded but never fulfilled or satisfied. But this is just how it is with all the strivings of all the appearances of the will. Every goal that is achieved is once again the beginning of a new course of action, and so on to infinity. The plant raises its appearance from the seed, through the stem and leaf to the flower and fruit, which is again only the beginning of a new seed, of a new individual which will run the whole course once again, and so on through infinite time. It is just the same with the life course of the animal: procreation is its highest point, and after this is attained the life of the first individual fades slowly or quickly away, while a new life repeats the same appearance and guarantees for nature that the species will be continued . . . [E]ternal becoming, endless flux belong to the revelation of the essence of the will. Finally, the same thing can also be seen in human endeavours and desires, which always delude us into believing that their fulfilment is the final goal of willing; but as soon as they are attained they no longer look the same and thus are soon forgotten, grow antiquated and are really, if not admittedly, always laid to the side as vanished delusions; we are lucky enough when there is still something left to desire and strive after, to carry on the game of constantly passing from desire to satisfaction and from this to a new desire, a game whose rapid course is called happiness and slow course is called suffering, so that the game might not come to a end, showing itself to be a fearful, life-destroying boredom, a wearied longing without a definite object, a deadening languor. (188–9)

The claim that 'the world is will' is fruitful and innovative in many ways, particularly for the historically forward-looking picture it allows Schopenhauer to paint of human life and its place within the natural world. But it is also frustrating for the reader. The term 'will' takes on such a wide use that we begin to wonder what sense it has, given that Schopenhauer asks us, on the one hand, to construe all the processes of nature as analogous to what we recognize in ourselves as willing, yet on the other hand rightly insists that it would be foolish to think of the rest of nature as acting on

conscious motives in the way human beings do. Another much-discussed problem concerns the possibility of our having any cognition of the thing in itself. If it is beyond our cognition, how could we succeed in knowing anything about it? This question is not really addressed in Volume 1 of *The World as Will and Representation*, but Schopenhauer turns to it in chapter 18 of Volume 2, where he makes an important qualification: we cannot know the world *absolutely* in itself, beyond all the forms of our cognition, but we can make a generalization about the essence common to all the phenomena we meet with in representation. Commentators have suggested that, despite the terminology of 'gaining cognition of the thing in itself', Schopenhauer might best be viewed, not as attempting to delve into a realm of existence entirely beyond the empirical, but as offering a figurative description of the empirical realm which allows us to make sense of it and our own existence within it – though, as he reminds us from time to time, that intended sense or meaning will not be fully available to us until we reach the end of the book as a whole.

THIRD BOOK

The central notion of the Third Book of *The World as Will and Representation* is that of a transformed consciousness that removes us from the everyday concerns of the will. Here the Platonic ancestry of Schopenhauer's thought comes most clearly to the fore. In the alleged transformed consciousness we perceive a timeless Idea, one of the degrees in which the will manifests itself throughout nature. To avoid confusion with Kantian or Hegelian uses (or, as he thinks, misuses) of the word 'Idea' Schopenhauer typically adds a parenthesis and talks of '(Platonic) Ideas'. We can think of the Ideas as universals that permeate nature and are accessible to human cognition through the out-of-the-ordinary experience of will-less consciousness. Schopenhauer's key thought is that in moments of intense contemplation we lose our normal sense of self as an individual striving after ends and employing cognition as a means to attain them, and instead we 'mirror' the world passively, thereby coming to see the universal in the particular object of intuitive perception (rather than attaining knowledge of it through concepts or abstract reasoning). This kind of experience has a higher cognitive value than that of ordinary everyday consciousness, which is taken up with particular objects and their spatial, temporal and causal inter-connections. Indeed, will-less consciousness is a more objective kind of cognition than that of science, which only makes inferences about the universal forces of nature, and does not intuit them directly. While this

elevated contemplative consciousness lasts, our will is in abeyance. We do not seek to understand the object we perceive in relation to what it can do for us, whether we desire or need it, what associations it has with other objects or with our emotions:

> we stop considering the Where, When, Why and Wherefore of things but simply and exclusively consider the *What* . . . we devote the entire power of our mind to intuition and immerse ourselves in this entirely, letting the whole of consciousness be filled with peaceful contemplation of the natural object that is directly present, a landscape, a tree, a cliff, a building, or whatever it might be, and, according to a suggestive figure of speech, we *lose* ourselves in this object completely, i.e. we forget our individuality, our will, and continue to exist only as pure subject, the clear mirror of the object, so that it is as if the object existed on its own, without anyone to perceive it, and we can no longer separate the intuited from the intuition as the two have become one, and the whole of consciousness is completely filled and engrossed by a single intuitive image. (201)

In such a state nothing troubles us, because no felt lack or need moves us at all. We are free of the will for some blissful moments, attaining a peace without which, Schopenhauer tells us, true well-being would be impossible.

The opening sections of the Third Book (§§ 30–32) provide a somewhat uneasy discussion of Ideas, which were introduced in the Second Book, but whose relationship to the will was left in some obscurity. Schopenhauer now links Ideas with the Kantian thing in itself. He says that the two 'are certainly not identical, but are nonetheless very closely related' (193), and then (quite implausibly) that Plato and Kant are 'compelled and inspired by the same world-view to do philosophy' and that 'both doctrines clearly mean exactly the same thing and have exactly the same ultimate goal' (196, 197). The positive use that Schopenhauer makes of this alleged trans-historical unanimity is as follows: the Ideas are to be construed as that form of cognitive representation that takes us *nearest* to the thing in itself. They are 'the most *adequate objecthood* of the will or thing in itself . . . the whole thing in itself, but in the form of representation' (198). When we are seeing the world most selflessly, in the out-of-the-ordinary kind of contemplation, we still cannot have cognition of the world purely in itself, but we are experiencing it in the most objective way.

After these preliminaries Schopenhauer embarks on an account of aesthetic contemplation. §§ 33–34 prepare for a stark contrast between aesthetic contemplation and 'viewing things in the ordinary way', where cognition is thoroughly imbued with the needs and perspectives of the will. In the transition from the ordinary cognitive state to that of will-less

contemplation, both subject and object are transformed. The object is now not the individual thing, but a timeless Idea apprehended in the process of perceiving the individual thing. The subject also ceases to be the human individual or person, and becomes 'pure subject, the clear mirror of the object'. A will-less, disinterested consciousness is one in which, for a time, we are able to forget the self from consciousness altogether. After some evocative portrayals of the difference between timeless Ideas and their ever-changing, inessential appearances (§ 35), Schopenhauer reaches the core of his argument in this Book, the claim that Ideas come to be cognized uniquely in *art* (§ 36). The true artist is a genius, for Schopenhauer: someone who has to an abnormal degree the ability to remain in the state of will-less objectivity, to experience the world with an intensity of perception that enables him to transmit his knowledge of universals to the rest of humanity. Ideas are quite different from concepts (a contrast that Schopenhauer picks up later in § 49). Concepts are human abstractions from the experience of individual things through the senses. Ideas are features of reality discovered purely in immediate intuition, and are not (*contra* Plato) accessible to discursive, judgemental thought or reasoning. Hence, for Schopenhauer, genius proper is not found in science or mathematics, nor can one become an artistic genius by learning rules or precepts. Schopenhauer gives a generic character-portrait of the genius, and then (§ 36) moves sideways to an interesting account of madness, which he conceives as closely akin: 'Great wits to madness sure are near allied', as Dryden said.[7] On the other hand, he argues, the capacity for will-less, objective consciousness must be in all of us to some extent, since otherwise the artist would not be able to communicate the vision of the Ideas and enable us to see nature through his eyes (§ 37).

One of the most frequently cited passages in *The World as Will and Representation* occurs in § 38 where Schopenhauer brings to a climax the contrast between aesthetic contemplation and the ordinary way of viewing things, and evokes the peculiar worth of the out-of-the-ordinary experience for the human subject:

> as long as our consciousness is filled by our will, as long as we are given over to the pressure of desires with their constant hopes and fears, as long as we are the subject of willing, we will never have lasting happiness or peace. Whether we hunt or we flee, whether we fear harm or chase pleasure, it is fundamentally all the same: concern for the constant demands of the will, whatever form they

[7] Though Schopenhauer misremembers this as from Byron. One should always be on the look-out for misquotation, misattribution and loose paraphrase in Schopenhauer's references.