

The Cambridge Companion to
SCHOPENHAUER

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1 Schopenhauer on the Self¹

i the self as will and intellect

In the German language, as in English, the pronoun or pronominal adjective *selbst*, or 'self,' lends emphasis to something or someone previously named. In its nominalized form, *das Selbst*, or 'the self,' the pronoun serves chiefly to identify a human being or person. A specifically philosophical usage of the nominalized form came into currency in England, chiefly through the work of John Locke, in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, from where it seems to have made its way into German philosophical terminology a few decades later. A main function of the philosophical term has been to identify the core or essence of a human being, as opposed to what might be accidental or contingent about him or her. In particular, the self has been identified with a human being's soul or mind as opposed to his or her body. In a secondary usage, the term has been employed to distinguish between constituent parts or aspects of one and the same being, in particular to articulate the special status of someone's or one's own 'better self.'

In German philosophy the term and concept of the self plays a systematically foundational role in the works of Kant and several of his idealist successors. In Kantian and post-Kantian thinking, the self is no longer a being alongside other beings but rather is that due to which all beings and the world that encompasses them first come into view.²

The development of the term and concept of the self in Schopenhauer occurs against the background of the general discourse on the self in modern philosophy and the particular significance accorded to the self in the recent German tradition. Schopenhauer continues

the usage of the term 'self' to designate the core or essence of the human being; he employs the term to distinguish between different, and differently valued, levels of human existence; and he partakes in the post-Kantian elevation of the self to the rank of the nonworldly necessary correlate of the world.

Yet, while Schopenhauer takes over the key functions of the term 'self' from the philosophical tradition, he has a radically different understanding of what is the core of the human being designated by the word self, of what constitutes the form of human existence referred to as the better self, and of what it means for the self to underlie the world and everything in it. The basic disagreement between Schopenhauer and the philosophical tradition on the self concerns the standard identification of the self, as the core of the human being, with the intellect (understanding, reason) or the faculty of cognition. On Schopenhauer's account, the intellect is neither the sole nor necessarily the main factor of the self. In addition to the rational side or aspect of the self, Schopenhauer countenances an altogether different essential feature of the self, which he designates as *will*.

Unlike earlier accounts of the self, which subordinate the human will to reason by construing the will as applied or practical reason, Schopenhauer insists on the will's original independence from reason and understanding. The will in the human self is seen as arational, 'blind' striving. Moreover, the will for Schopenhauer not only supplements the intellect in the constitution of the human self. The will underlies that self, including its intellectual side, as the source of the self's very being. Finally, in stressing the centrality of the will in the self, Schopenhauer radically revises the status of the human body by rethinking the traditional mind-body relation as a will-body identity.

Yet, rather than simply replacing the earlier primacy and monopoly of the intellect with that of the will, Schopenhauer provides a subtle and detailed account of the complex relations between the intellectual and volitional sides or aspects of the human self. Moreover, Schopenhauer stresses the dynamic interaction between intellect and will in the self. He distinguishes two alternative but complementary conceptions of selfhood: one in which the will forms the core of the human being and one in which the human being achieves selfhood through the cultivation of the intellect.

The two contrasting conceptions of selfhood in Schopenhauer are linked through the notion of the self's possible or ideal development from a will-centered to an intellect-centered self. According to Schopenhauer, the agency behind the development of the self away from the will is none other than the will itself. The self-realization of the will may take the form of the will's radical self-negation. The psycho-machia of the self in Schopenhauer is rendered more dramatic yet through the role that the self plays in relation to the world. More specifically, the cosmo-machia involving self and world turns on the twofold role of the self as intelligence and as will. As intelligence, the self is the ineliminable and indispensable formal condition of objects of all kinds. As will, the self is the most articulate manifestation of the blindly striving drive that underlies all reality.

Thus the account of the self is not a clearly demarcated, specialized topic in Schopenhauer's overall philosophy but, in essence, is co-extensive with his portrayal of 'the world as will and representation'. Accordingly, an account of Schopenhauer on the self best orients itself after the overall organization of *The World as Will and Representation* (1818; second edition 1844; third edition 1859) – more specifically that of the first, one-volume edition and of the corresponding first volume of the subsequent two-volume editions – by moving from the role of the intellect in the epistemology of Book One, through the function of the self in the manifestations of the will in the philosophy of nature of Book Two, to the role of the pure intellect in the contemplation of the Ideas in the aesthetics of Book Three and the self-recognition and self-denial of the will in the ethics of Book Four. This order of presentation also captures the developmental nature of Schopenhauer's thinking, which he himself portrays as the successive unfolding of a 'single thought' (*der eine Gedanke*), which, however, can only be stated through the system in its entirety.³

The selective reading of the main work will be preceded by a discussion of pertinent aspects of Schopenhauer's relation to Kant and a more detailed consideration of the systematic basis of *The World as Will and Representation* in general and its theory of the self in particular in Schopenhauer's doctoral dissertation *On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason* (1813; second edition 1847). Further writings of Schopenhauer that supplement the account of selfhood in the main work and the dissertation include *On the Will*

in Nature (1836; second edition 1854) and the *Prize Essay on the Freedom of the Will* (1841; second edition 1860).⁴

ii from kant to schopenhauer

The starting point for the post-Kantian discussion in general and post-Kantian theories of the self in particular is Kant's 'critical distinction'⁵ between things as they appear (appearances [*Erscheinungen*]) and things as they are in themselves (things in themselves [*Dinge an sich*, also *Sachen an sich*]). On Kant's view, the basic formal features of experience and of its objects, such as space, time, and causality, do not pertain to the things themselves but only to our human ways of cognitively encountering things. On Kant's view, it is exactly the restriction of all humanly possible cognition of objects to appearances that guarantees the latter's reference to actual or possible empirical objects.⁶ Kant's doctrinal term for the inapplicability of the human cognitive forms to the things in themselves is 'transcendental idealism'; his term for the correlated doctrine of the applicability, indeed the necessary application, of the cognitive forms to appearances is 'empirical realism'. For Kant transcendental idealism ensures empirical realism, while any doctrine ignoring the distinction between the things in themselves and the appearances ('transcendental realism') results in skepticism about the knowability of objects ('empirical idealism').⁷

Kant's doctrinal dualism poses some difficulties when it comes to determining the status of the self. The role of the self as the bearer and contributor of the a priori forms of cognition seems to elude the distinction between the self as empirically known appearance and the self as unknowable thing in itself. In addition to the empirical self, whose study Kant assigns to empirical psychology and anthropology, and the non-empirical self traditionally entertained by the metaphysical study of the soul (rational psychology), there is a third self, or third sense of self, that is neither empirical nor metaphysical but transcendental or 'pertaining to the conditions of the possibility of experience.'⁸

Schopenhauer takes over the Kantian distinction between things in themselves and appearances with two modifications, one of them more a matter of emphasis, the other one quite substantial. More consistently and explicitly than Kant,⁹ Schopenhauer argues that the

appearances are nothing but ‘representations’ (*Vorstellungen*) in the human mind with no independent extramental existence. In a radical departure from Kant’s agnosticism regarding the things in themselves, he identifies the latter with the will as revealed to the human mind in conative and affective self-experience and subsequently recognized as the essence of all reality, human as well as non-human.

Such purported intimate knowledge of the ultimate reality behind or beneath the appearances seems to transgress the critical interdiction against seeking knowledge of the unknowable things in themselves and therefore to constitute a relapse into pre-Kantian dogmatism or transcendental realism, thus turning Schopenhauer’s work into a puzzling conjunction of transcendental philosophy and transcendent metaphysics of the will.¹⁰ But what might appear as the uncritical reestablishment of a previously destroyed metaphysics is actually yet another step in the direction taken by Kant himself – that of limiting all our knowledge in general and philosophical knowledge in particular to the realm of experience and the sum total of the latter’s pure forms or conditions. With his restriction of reason to the faculty of cognition (theoretical reason) and his vehement rejection of a rational metaphysics of morals and its associated practico-dogmatic postulates of an immortal soul and a personal God,¹¹ Schopenhauer is even less of a metaphysician than Kant himself, who had sought to compensate for the metaphysical poverty of pure theoretical (‘speculative’) reason with the otherworldly riches of pure practical (‘moral’) reason.

Accordingly, Schopenhauer’s immanent metaphysics of the will should be seen as part and parcel of his transcendental philosophy rather than as a heterogeneous and oversized appendix.¹² Schopenhauer expands the scope of the transcendental project by including non-theoretical, conative self-consciousness and its affects and emotions in the evidential basis for the reflection on experience in general that is philosophy.¹³ The subjectivism and idealism that inform the view of the world of cognition as one of representation (‘world as representation’) are matched by the view of the world of feeling as one of will (‘world as will’). Both cases involve the world *as experienced*. Schopenhauer’s work is as much about the self that experiences the world in either of those two forms as it is about the world or worlds so experienced.

Schopenhauer’s radical reworking of crucial Kantian positions is also evident in his reconceptualization of the two key ingredients of

the self, viz., the intellect and the will.¹⁴ The will in Schopenhauer is radically dissociated from reason and a power *sui generis*, thus marking Schopenhauer's radical departure from the Kantian conception of will as practical reason.¹⁵ In his account of the faculty of cognition, Schopenhauer emphasizes the difference between understanding (*Verstand*) and reason (*Vernunft*), which he explains as the difference between the capacity for preconceptual, intuitive knowledge and the capacity to form and employ concepts based on the prior intuitive grasp of things.¹⁶ Unlike Kant, who had severed the tie between intuition and intellection by declaring all humanly possible intuition to be sensible, Schopenhauer argues that our intuition of objects (including the intuition of ourselves taken as object) is informed not only by the forms of intuition (space and time) but also by the prereflective employment of the category of causality, which conditions a priori the mind's spontaneous transition from sensible affection to the positing of a corresponding affecting object in space.¹⁷ Schopenhauer holds that the causally informed intuition of spatial objects pertains in principle to all animal life. Only the formation and use of concepts in rational knowledge, and its associated capabilities of deliberative thought, language, and science, set human mentation apart from the mental life of our prerational fellow creatures.¹⁸

In addition to the intellect, Schopenhauer countenances the will as the second of the two key ingredients in the constitution of the human self. 'Will' is here used as a covering term for the entire affective and volitional side of the self, effectively grouping together what Kant had distinguished as the faculty of desire and the feeling of pleasure and displeasure.¹⁹ Schopenhauer provides a negative characterization of the acts of the will by stressing the non-representational nature of all such 'feelings'.²⁰ Unlike the intellect, which generates images and thoughts of things (representations), the will is not about anything else and outside of itself but is the domain of our affective self-experience – something that is felt or lived rather than being by nature something representing or something represented.

iii the subject of cognition and the subject of willing

As the two structuring forms underlying the self's cognitive and conative life, the intellect and the will in Schopenhauer have the

status of the 'subject of cognition' (*Subjekt des Erkennens*) and the 'subject of willing' (*Subjekt des Wollens*), respectively.²¹ Every cognition is had by the intellect qua subject, and every conation is had by the will qua subject. Moreover, neither the subject of cognition nor the subject of willing is given *as such*.²² The subject of cognition is the knower in everything known and is never itself known, except in the attenuated sense that the states of the subject of cognition may be known through reflection. Analogously, the subject of willing is that which feels in all feeling (wills in all willing) but is never itself felt, except in the attenuated sense that the states of the subject of willing may be felt internally. The cognitive and conative subject functions of the self have the status of non-empirical conditions of all experience, inner as well as outer, cognitive as well as affective.

In addressing the unity of the self amidst its composition out of two radically different constituent subjects, Schopenhauer maintains that the subject of willing functions as the internal, 'immediate' object of the subject of cognition.²³ In the original, internal, subjective subject-object relation there are united a subject of cognition, which is itself empty and without any object to be known, and a subject of willing, which is itself blind and without any awareness of itself. Only the conjunction of the will's content and the intellect's vision permits the proper functioning of each of the two constituent parts of the self. Citing a fable by the eighteenth-century Swiss writer J. F. Gellert, Schopenhauer likens the compensatory co-operation between will and intellect to the strong, blind one carrying the lame, seeing one on his shoulders.²⁴

The particulars of the subject-object relation between intellect and will in the self belong to the wider context of Schopenhauer's account of the overall structure of consciousness and its objects under the 'principle of sufficient reason' (*Satz vom zureichenden Grund*).²⁵ In its four manifestations as the principle of becoming, of being, of knowing, and of acting, this supreme transcendental principle governs the relations of ground and consequent (of *ratio* and *rationatum*) between objects of all kinds (physical, mathematical, logical, and psychological objects), always in correlation to the subject of cognition in one of its capacities as understanding, pure intuition, reason, and inner sense or empirical self-consciousness, respectively. Accordingly, the principle specifies the real, mathematical, logical, or psychological connections among objects as so many instances

of the principle's general point that nothing is without a reason or ground.

The principle of sufficient reason, which governs the relations among objects, is borne and applied by the subject, more specifically the subject of cognition. Accordingly, the subject itself, from which issues this basic law, does not stand under the principle in question. For Schopenhauer the relation between the subject and any and all of the objects which are subject to the principle is not a relationship of one-sided dependence but a *correlation* in which none of the members can be what it is without the other ones. This also holds for the special case of the self's internal subject-object relation between the subject of cognition and the subject of willing.²⁶

In the case of the principle of sufficient reason of acting, also called the 'law of motivation,' the subject-object correlation obtains between the subject of cognition under the form of empirical self-consciousness or inner sense, on the one hand, and the will or faculty of volition in its manifestations as particular acts of willing, on the other hand. According to Schopenhauer, the cause of an act of willing is in each case a cognition which necessarily moves the will to the respective act of willing – hence the very term 'motive' (*Motiv*). The causal connection between a given cognition that functions as motive and the resultant act of volition is experienced internally, through empirical self-consciousness or inner sense.

In locating the intellect-will relation of the self in the context of Schopenhauer's theory of motivational causation, it is imperative to realize that the relation of ground and consequent holds only among the different kinds of objects correlated to the subject of cognition in any one of its capacities (as understanding, pure intuition, reason, and inner sense) – and not between the relata of the basic subject-object correlation itself, which underlies all objects and their sufficiently grounded relations among each other. Specifically, the intellect qua subject of cognition does not ground the will qua subject of willing. Rather, the two subjects are the inseparable poles of an original complex unity on the basis of which all intellection and volition comes to pass. In motivation the relation of grounding obtains between some cognition and the particular act of the will which that cognition motivates. Hence it is not the will as such but the particular act of willing that is grounded or psychologically caused. The will itself, as well as the intellect, are not subject to the principle of sufficient reason.

For Schopenhauer the non-causal structural correlativity that holds between the subject of cognition and the subject of willing ultimately amounts to their identity.²⁷ This claim can be taken to convey the thought that in the original subject–object relation between the subject of cognition and the subject of willing, the knower (subject of cognition) and the known (subject of willing) are one and the same being. It is not some being other than the one exercising the function of the subject of cognition that is being known as the subject of willing but that very same being, only in a different though correlated function.²⁸ Hence the ultimate identity of the subject of cognition and the subject of willing in the basic subject–object relation is constitutive of the very unity of the self, which is not the unity of a whole encompassing constituent parts but a unity established by the identical bearer of mutually supplementary basic functions.

Schopenhauer does not claim any further insight into the identity underlying the self. He contents himself with declaring this identity to be the ‘miracle “par excellence”’²⁹ and to represent nothing less than the ‘knot of the world,’³⁰ suggesting that in it, self and world are deeply intertwined and inseparable. The metaphor of the world knot further indicates the wider significance that the miraculous identity underlying the human self takes on in Schopenhauer’s transcendental theory of the world in its relation to the self.

iv the identity of body and will

The wider cosmological perspective of Schopenhauer’s theory of the self is further informed by a second identity claim involving intellect and will, this one specifically directed at the twofold nature of the self as intelligence and will. Schopenhauer maintains that in the case of the human self, the double perspective on the world as will and representation takes the form of a twofold experience of ourselves, one as object given to the intellect operating under the principle of sufficient reason, the other as will and its affective life, and hence largely independent of the forms and functions of the intellect.³¹ The self as object of our own and others’ cognitive relation to ourselves is the ‘living body’ (*Leib*).

Schopenhauer holds that for each of us our own body is the intellect’s ‘immediate object’.³² Any knowledge of other objects is mediated by our bodily self-experience and is a result of the (typically

unconscious) inference from given bodily sensations to their causal origin in some object or objects other than ourselves or our own body. In Schopenhauer, one's own body taken as object of one's own cognition thus occupies a peculiar position. It is the original object of all our knowledge and is known in a most immediate manner, but it is still an object and as such is subject to the formative rules of the intellect. In principle, the knowledge that we each have of our own body is not different from the knowledge that we have of other bodies or the knowledge that others have of our own body.

Yet according to Schopenhauer, our own body is not only an object of knowledge for our and others' intellect but also something that we each *are*, and that moreover belongs to the very core of our existence. The account of our body's relation to our intellect is to be supplemented by the account of our body's relation to our will and the latter's acts or volitions. We each relate to our own body not only cognitively and intellectually but also practically and affectively. A given movement of our body is not only an object of knowledge to us (and others) but also an act of ours which we experience *from within* as relating to our own act of volition. Schopenhauer rejects a causal account of the relation between volitional act and bodily act. Instead he considers the two acts to be the different sides of one and the same underlying reality that precedes the overt distinction between the mental and the physical.³³

It should be stressed that, on Schopenhauer's understanding, the aspect duality of the self, as innerly felt will and outerly observed body, is not the product of some artificial, specifically philosophical reflection but occurs naturally in each and every one of us. For Schopenhauer the self is not just *regarded* or *considered* in alternative ways but *shows itself*, prereflectively, in this twofold manner and with these two sides. The 'lived' character of the self's two aspects in Schopenhauer marks a crucial difference from the philosophical reflection that goes into drawing the 'critical distinction' between things in themselves and appearances in Kant. While Kant's is a distinction between two ways of philosophically considering the same things,³⁴ Schopenhauer's is a distinction between two ways of experiencing oneself and, by extension, the world. In standard philosophical terminology, Schopenhauer's dual-aspect account of the self is concerned with the relation between the mental and the physical, and provides an identity theory for their relation: the body is the

mind (will) experienced externally, and the mind (will) is the body experienced internally.³⁵

v the primacy of the will over the intellect

Yet the philosopher's distinction between things in themselves and appearances is not altogether lost in Schopenhauer's dual account of the self as will and body or volition and action. For in addition to the twofold experiential perspective on the self, there is the level of philosophical reflection on this self-experience, which results in the recognition that the two kinds of experience, while phenomenologically distinct, are about one and the same human being. More important, there is the further recognition on the part of the self reflecting upon itself that the two sides or aspects of the self are not of equal rank. The phenomenological dualism of the self as will and body is supplemented by a monistic doctrine regarding the deep structure of the self that underlies the latter's overt division into will and body.

According to Schopenhauer, the reality underlying the dual appearance of the self is not some indeterminate and indeterminable generic stratum; it is none other than the root of one of the two phenomenological constituents of the self, viz., the will. In a move that follows the idealist privileging of the inner or mental over the outer and physical, Schopenhauer traces the duality of will and body to its origin in the will, thereby granting the will primacy over the body. Ultimately, the self is will – will that manifests itself internally as particular acts of will (*Willensakt*) and externally as particular bodily acts (*Aktion des Leibes*). The duality of will and body in the self forms part of a three-tiered structure of will, act of will, and bodily action.

When Schopenhauer sums up the complex relation between our will and our body by maintaining that the two are the same or identical,³⁶ this points further to the 'ultimate identity' of that which appears (our acts of willing) and that as which it appears (our voluntary bodily acts), with the will as the self's kernel out of which everything else grows and develops. More specifically, Schopenhauer maintains that what underlies our mental and physical existence is the immutable nature of our *individual* will or our *character*, which

informs all of our activity as the underlying force. Schopenhauer here builds on Kant's notion of the intelligible character of a human being as the thing in itself underlying all the person's deeds.³⁷ For Schopenhauer the core of the self or its character constitutes our individuality, as well as our personal identity over time. Moreover, he considers an individual's character to be established from the beginning ('innate') and unchanging ('constant') and to be known by ourselves as well as by others only over the course of time ('empirical').³⁸

The plural manifestations of the will's unitary character are not to be regarded as so many effects of an underlying unitary cause or so many consequents of a given ground. The absolute, non-representational nature of the will's intelligible character eludes the principle of sufficient reason and any of its ground-consequent relations. Schopenhauer seeks to ban any notion of grounding from the relation between the thing in itself (the will qua intelligible character) and its temporal appearances (acts of will available to the subject's immediate experience) or its spatio-temporal appearances (overt bodily acts). In his alternative conception of the relation between the will and its manifestations, the latter is the objectivity (*Objektivität*) in general or the specific objectification (*Objektivierung*) of the will.³⁹ The appearances (acts of will, voluntary bodily motions) are the thing in itself (will qua intelligible character) as *objectified*, as rendered object for a subject through the a priori cognitive functions of the intellect. Thus Schopenhauer affirms the constitutive role of the intellect in the spatiotemporal realization of the will. Even our own will is not known to us as it is 'in itself' but only as it appears to us under the intuitional form of the multiple successive states that we undergo internally and observe in their outward manifestations.⁴⁰

Yet while the necessary correlation between intellect and will in inner as well as outer experience suggests a radical *equiprimordiality* between the constitutive poles of the self, Schopenhauer also insists on the *primacy* of the will over the intellect. The intellect is supposed to be secondary or derivative, and derived from the will at that. The details of the subordination of the intellect to the will are part of Schopenhauer's more comprehensive account of the subordination of the world of the intellect (world as representation) to the metaphysically conceived will. In that account the ultimate nature of the human self as will serves Schopenhauer as the key to unlocking the

secret nature of the world as a whole, viz., that – in addition to being of the nature of representation – it is will through and through.⁴¹ The world is here understood on the model of the human self: the role of the intellect in the illumination of the human will is likened to the role of intelligent and rational life forms in providing self-knowledge to the otherwise blind cosmic will.⁴² As in the case of the human self, the dual nature of the world-self in Schopenhauer goes together with the primacy of the will over the intellect. The will can be said to bring forth the intellect, initially to better guide the will's blind striving⁴³ – but with the eventual result that the intellect breaks loose from its origin in the will, first supplanting the tyranny of the will with the free realm of disinterested cognition through artistic production and enjoyment⁴⁴ and ultimately attempting the very negation of the will – a self-negation in which the very distinction between self and world collapses.⁴⁵

vi t h e s e l f i n t h e w o r l d

The internal, radically immediate perspective on the essence of the self afforded by the latter's self-experience as will serves a crucial function that further extends the scope of selfhood in Schopenhauer. In turning to the consideration of the external, physical world, as it appears under the causal version of the principle of sufficient reason, Schopenhauer notes the limits of an externalist understanding of the causal relations among empirical objects, including the causal interactions involving one's own body. In particular, he stresses that the externally observed lawful relations between causes and effects disclose nothing about the actual causal nexus involved. No matter how accurate and predictive of the future course of events the knowledge of external causal relations may be, such knowledge remains forever at the surface of things and cannot explain how some cause brings about an effect.⁴⁶

There is only one case, according to Schopenhauer, in which we have deeper insight into the causal connections involved. This is the case of the causation involved in human volition. To be sure, the causality of the will is not a matter of some willing causing some acting. For in the self the willing does not cause the acting but the two are identical, the acting being nothing but the will as viewed externally, mediated through the operations of the understanding or

intellect. The causality peculiar to the will concerns not the relation between a given act of willing or volition and the respective acting but the very coming about of the particular volition (along with its bodily manifestation) in the first place. In the case of willing, the causal relation obtains between some cognition functioning as motive or motivational cause and some act of willing together with the corresponding bodily activity as its effect.

Considered from the outside, motivational causation between cognition and willing qua acting is not different from a causal relation that does not involve human volition. In each case, the merely external lawful sequence of causing and effected events leaves the actual generation of the effect entirely unexplained. But, as Schopenhauer points out, one's internal experience of volitional causation is entirely different and outright revelatory about the dynamics of causation. In the process of willing we *feel* the cause qua motive solicit the respective manifestation of our will. We experience internally and immediately the interaction of motive and will: the will is all ability and potential waiting to be called forth and realized through the approach of the motive. What remains a 'secret' or 'mystery'⁴⁷ from the external perspective – how the effect comes out of the cause – is disclosed in the inner experience of the self's willing: the causes (motives) do not actually generate the effect but call it forth, bring it out, produce it from the underlying will qua character. The motive as cause merely provides the occasion for the specific manifestation of the will.

In his philosophy of nature Schopenhauer generalizes the occasionalist account of motivational causation by introducing the notion of *force* as the generic term corresponding to the specific role of the will qua character in the willing self. According to Schopenhauer, force is that in nature which manifests itself in predetermined and lawfully governed ways when subject to the influence of corresponding 'occasional causes'.⁴⁸ More specifically, Schopenhauer distinguishes three main kinds of forces and associated types of causes: the physicochemical forces of inorganic nature that operate through cause in the narrow sense; the forces of plant life that operate through stimulus; and the forces of animal life, including human life, that function through motivating cognition (motives).⁴⁹

But the self's self-experience as willing provides not only the decisive 'clue'⁵⁰ about the generic structure of causation involving

occasioning causes and underlying forces. Schopenhauer goes on to claim that the otherwise unknown forces in nature are essentially akin to the human will *as such*, that is, the human will considered in separation from the intellect which always accompanies the will in the dual unity of the human self. The notion of will that is thereby attributed to each and every force in nature is that of sheer drive or striving, without any consciousness and a fortiori without the cognition of some end to strive for.

The radical use of the inner experience of one's own willing to capture the inside or inner essence of the world outside the self may seem to further extend the foundational role that the self plays in the constitution of the world. Previously Schopenhauer had worked out the function of the self qua subject of cognition as the necessary condition for the consciousness of objects of all kinds. Now he might be seen as supplementing or consolidating the centrality of the self in epistemological matters with the self's centrality *in ontologicis*. But the apparent parallelism of cognitive and volitional idealism does not quite hold. Rather than promoting the subject qua will to the status of the world's inner being or essence, Schopenhauer's conception of the 'world as will' in effect demotes the self from the epistemic centrality occupied by the subject of cognition to the complete integration of the subject of willing into the dynamic totality of nature. After all, the specific notion of the will supposedly shared by the human will and the 'will in nature' is that of a force that is essentially 'blind' or operating without consciousness either of itself or of any other object. The cosmic expansion of the self's will leads to the conception of a will without self.

The integration of the self qua will into the world as will also affects the self qua intellect. Schopenhauer shows in great detail how the human intellect, which on his own previous view functioned as the necessary correlate of the world as representation, is entirely part of the world as will as one of the many and varied manifestations of the will in nature. Adopting an explicitly evolutionary perspective, he places the emergence of intelligence in animals at the top of a scale of increasingly complex organization of natural life. More specifically, he notes the appearance of cognition as the medium of causal efficacy in animals; animals are motivated, and their bodies are moved accordingly, under the causal influence of perceiving relevant objects in their environment.⁵¹

In human animals, cognition and its ensuing volition-cum-motion are no longer limited to the *perception* of actually present objects but can also operate through the mere *conception* of things, by means of thought and its recording in speech and writing, and without those objects being sensorily given. Still, the human perceptual and conceptual abilities have an entirely natural origin and serve the biological purpose of providing a highly complex organism with the detailed grasp of the environment required for the maintenance of its life. Accordingly, the human cognitive abilities, including the exclusively human ability of conceptual thought, are best suited to practical, that is, biological tasks and ill-equipped for the merely theoretical usage, including the philosophical one, to which those abilities have eventually and occasionally been put in the history of the human animal.⁵²

Schopenhauer's naturalization of the human self, especially the unprecedented frankness with which he discusses the sexual manifestations of the will,⁵³ have been compared to other major displacements of the human being from the central position in the universe that it was thought to occupy, such as its astronomical decentralization through the work of Copernicus.⁵⁴ But within the overall account of the self in Schopenhauer, the integration of the human will into the cosmic will and the subordination of the self to the world as will is neither the starting point nor the end point of the inquiry.

Still, even limiting the scope of the naturalized self in Schopenhauer to that of a phase or moment in a more comprehensive account leaves open the question of how the self qua intellect can be both the a priori condition of the world and part of the world as one of its evolutionary products. There seems to be a vicious circle here: the world rests on the self qua intellect, and the intellect in turn rests on the world. The circle seems especially problematic for the relation between the self's intellect and the self's own worldly part or aspect, viz., the body: the intellect conditions the body and the body conditions the intellect. Pointing out that the world is regarded differently in each case – once as world of representation, once as world of will – will not suffice. Either of those worlds is supposed to involve the intellect, in one case as the world's ultimate condition, in the other case as one of its entities. It is not the duality of worlds that creates the circle but the dual occurrence of the same intellect in regard to both worlds.

The apparent circularity between self and world in Schopenhauer has long been noted and has typically been attributed to Schopenhauer's oscillating between a post-Kantian transcendental idealism and a materialist realism.⁵⁵ Yet the alleged materialism in Schopenhauer's account of the world and the self as will does not hold up to closer scrutiny. Schopenhauer clearly distances himself from a materialist explanation of world and self and traces apparently independently existing physical objects to the will, which he considers 'something spirit-like' or 'mind-like' (*ein Geistiges*).⁵⁶ There is a close structural similarity between the cognitivist reduction of the world *as representation* to the intellect and the conative reduction of the world *as will* to some originally arational mind or spirit. In both cases, what appears to exist on its own (world) is shown to exist only in relation to something that is first and foremost given as or in some subject (intellect and will, respectively). Moreover, both basic forms of subjectivity and the corresponding worlds have a common origin in the absolute reality of the will itself.

The apparent problem of the circle between the intellect conditioning the world, including the body, and the world, including the body, conditioning the intellect can be solved by recognizing that the body and the intellect each are to be taken in two senses and can therefore pertain differently to each of the two worlds: the body that conditions the intellect pertains to the world as will, which *as such* is not subject to representation and its forms, while the body that is conditioned by the intellect belongs to the world as representation. Analogously, the intellect as manifestation of the will belongs to a reality outside and independent of the order of representation, while the intellect objectively considered, as brain, belongs to the world as representation.⁵⁷ To be sure, the identity of the self amidst the twofold occurrence of its intellect as well as body remains unexplained in Schopenhauer. It is considered an inexplicable basic fact.

vii the self by itself

The dual membership of the intellect in the world as representation (as physical object) and the world as will (as metaphysical force) is rendered more complex yet by the role that the intellect plays in the possible gradual emancipation of the self from the world, from the will, and from itself. In addition to arguing for the dependence

of the world as representation on the self qua intellect and the embeddedness of the self qua will in the world as will, Schopenhauer seeks to demonstrate the potential for an altogether different form of selfhood, one that would disengage the self qua intellect from the subservience to the will, including the self's own will. The portrayal of the emancipation of the self from the primacy of the will does not take back Schopenhauer's own earlier account of the self but enlarges the picture of the self to include forms of consciousness and self-consciousness that have been neglected in the focus maintained so far on the cognition of nature and the nature of cognition. Moreover, the extension of Schopenhauer's thinking about the self does not simply add further features to an already established body of knowledge but significantly alters the overall assessment of the self by providing a unifying perspective on the relation of intellect and will in the self.

Schopenhauer distinguishes two basic ways in which the self can undergo – and to some extent even actively bring about – a radical alteration both in its internal composition and in its external relation to the world. The first kind of alteration concerns the role of the self as intellect in the world as representation; the second kind involves the relation of the self as will to the world as will. According to Schopenhauer, the altered intellect comes into play in the self's *aesthetic* attitude to the world, while the altered will comes to the fore in the *ethical* outlook of the self.

In addition to the intellect's ordinary relation to individual objects, which are distinguished from each other and related to each other according to the principle of sufficient reason, Schopenhauer countenances an extraordinary relation or correlation between subject and object independent of the principle of sufficient reason.⁵⁸ The relation in question is extraordinary in that, with the falling away of individuality and hence the lack of ground-consequent relations between individual objects, both the subject and the object become disengaged from the will-dominated interconnectedness of the world. Schopenhauer likens the preindividual, isolated, 'eternal' object or objects to the 'Forms' (*Ideen*) in Plato. The Forms or Ideas are the unchanging forces, laws, and structures that govern the myriad individual manifestations of the will. Like the will itself (the thing in itself), the Ideas are beyond the scope of the principle of sufficient reason and hence outside of time, space, and causality. Yet