

SCHOPENHAUER'S PSYCHOLOGICAL WORLDVIEW:
HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY, AND RELEVANCE

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ABSTRACT

The complete philosophical works of Arthur Schopenhauer are explored through a comprehensive psychological reading that intends to highlight the holistic theories of human nature that amount to a pessimistic and metaphysical worldview. A thorough analysis of Schopenhauer's philosophical concepts, theories, and ideas is conducted in order to construct a clear understanding of his worldview and avoid a reductionistic approach to a holistic philosophy. From this I initiate a novel theoretical groundwork derived from Schopenhauer's philosophy that I have termed a "negative psychology". I argue that this negative psychology provides a robust understanding of human nature and has applicability in several domains of psychology such as theory of human nature, education, and therapy.

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INTRODUCTION

Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860) demands of his readers that they carefully study all of his works in chronological order; beginning with his doctoral dissertation *On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason* (*Über die vierfache Wurzel des Satzes vom zureichenden Grunde*), that he refers to as the introduction to his main philosophy which is to be found in his two volume principle work *The World as Will and Representation* (*Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*), followed by his three essays *On the Freedom of the Will* (*Über die Freiheit des Willens*), *On the Basis of Morality* (*Über die Grundlage der Moral*), and *On the Will in Nature* (*Über den Willen in der Natur*), and finally what he referred to as his peripheral works (because it supplements his principle work), the two volume *Parerga and Paralipomena* (*Parerga und Paralipomena*), with the added burden that his principle treatise be read twice for full comprehension (Schopenhauer, 1819/1966). Having met the author's demands I endeavor further to fulfill one of his later wishes, namely that his works be carried forward and developed within a context that is ready to embrace his philosophy and expand from it a theory on human nature.

In Schopenhauer's notebook he once wrote of a desire that his ideas be assembled in some future time when the world would be ready to receive his wisdom, given that his philosophy had not yet attained any popularity at the time (Cartwright, 2010). Although very late in his life Schopenhauer did enjoy some acclaim for his ideas, his mark in philosophy remains somewhat overlooked, especially given the popularity of the German idealists Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831), Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762-1814), and Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling (1775-1854) who shared a particular

interpretation of Immanuel Kant's (1724-1804) philosophy that Schopenhauer adamantly rejected.

I here intend to bring Schopenhauer's wish to fruition for the benefit of psychology, where his philosophy on human nature may find a more appropriate context to be explored than the 19th century philosophical stream of German idealism. According to the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*¹, Arthur Schopenhauer is a difficult figure to categorize within established philosophical streams or branches, primarily because he can be considered a German idealist, though he stood in direct opposition to the figureheads of the movement, and he can also be considered a metaphysician, although he redefined metaphysics as the complete understanding of human nature including experience, epistemology, aesthetics, and ethics (Wicks, 2011). As such, Schopenhauer's philosophy amounts to a *worldview* that attempts to establish the guiding principles toward a complete understanding of human nature, in which he accounts for the subjective experiences of the individual in relation to the objective world; in other words, observable behaviour.

The study of psychology often aims at explaining human behaviour and related phenomena through the rigorous exercise of scientific method. In this process the fundamental ground from which psychologists acquire or create their hypotheses is often philosophy, where theories attempting to explain observable phenomena now gain the benefit of experimentation. I argue that Schopenhauer's philosophy contains great psychological insight, particularly in the areas of education and what psychologists now call behaviour, motivation, and cognition, and resonates with the holistic ambitions of the

¹ I here refer to an encyclopedia entry for a brief overview of Schopenhauer's contributions in philosophy. The author, Robert, L. Wicks also wrote a comprehensive book on Schopenhauer that I refer to later for its biographical content.

humanistic and positive psychology traditions. From this I propose a framework for a psychological theory derived from Schopenhauer's philosophy, that I have termed a "negative psychology" and is explored in the final chapter.

The concepts and theories in Schopenhauer's philosophy are part of an integrated worldview that if broken down in piecemeal fashion under a reductionist lens, will lose explanatory power and prevent psychology from gaining a comprehensive theory on human nature. This is not to suggest that aspects of Schopenhauer's philosophy cannot be studied separately, however, it is a caution to remember that the ambition of this project is to demonstrate that this philosophical worldview is in fact also, if not more so, a *psychological worldview*. In exploring this worldview I also attempt to make connections between philosophical predecessors to psychological theories and concepts, thereby bridging the gap between these once interchangeable fields, so that both may gain the benefit of the other's methods and criticisms.

Short Biography

Arthur Schopenhauer was born on February 22nd 1788 in Danzig, [now Gdansk, Poland], a city that was later annexed by Prussia. The Schopenhauer family then moved their merchant business to Hamburg. Arthur was of German and Dutch ancestry and came from a long line of merchants that led up to his father Heinrich Floris Schopenhauer (1747-1805), who had intentionally groomed his son to take over the successful family business. However, following Heinrich's death (a suspected suicide), Arthur quit his merchant apprenticeship and enrolled at the University of Berlin to pursue studies in medicine and philosophy. His mother, Johanna Henriette Troisiener Schopenhauer (1766-1838) was a respected author and local celebrity, hosting frequent parties at the

Schopenhauer household with esteemed visitors such as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832) (Wicks, 2008).

As a child, Arthur had gone on several cross-European trips with his family and was schooled in France and England, thereby learning the official languages of both countries (Cartwright, 2010)². Throughout his travels he recalls two occasions that had made a profound impact on his outlook on life. The first was a public hanging of three men in England when Schopenhauer was only 15 years old. The scene provided an early encounter with death for the young philosopher, a topic he would dwell on throughout his life. The second, which he would only begin to reflect on seriously while writing *On the World as Will and Representation*, was a sighting of Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821), a figure that, according to Cartwright (2010) had imprinted himself in Arthur's memory as a symbol of the striving of the will at war with itself.

Schopenhauer had an early exposure to the suffering of existence, as noted in his journals throughout his European travels seeing hangings, beggars, post-revolution ruins, and prisoners in galleys. His years abroad as a student in France and England also established a feeling of homelessness and isolation, creating a sense of abandonment from his family. The twelve weeks he spent at the Wimbledon school in England also left a strong aversion to religion; a sentiment that Nietzsche and Freud would later share. Cartwright (2010) argues that the most influential event in Schopenhauer's life was his father's death. This emancipated him financially and vocationally, as he inherited a great sum on money to live on for the rest of his life and also removed the awful fate of becoming a merchant. His father's death, which Schopenhauer believed to be a suicide,

² The present work relies heavily on David, E. Cartwright's biography of Schopenhauer as it is one of the only recent and comprehensive English language biographies on the philosopher.

also left him ruminating over the subject throughout his works, at times considering life to be a joke that those committing suicide simply did not get, while other times considering it an act of will that abolishes all chances of salvation.

Schopenhauer was aware of having a hereditary predisposition toward depression and anxiety; a fact he very much disliked. Cartwright (2010) reports that he was not considered very attractive and thus he frequently engaged in sexual activity with lower-class girls and prostitutes to satiate his strong urges, which he considered a weakness. He had a turbulent relationship with his mother, especially following his father's death, when her frequent social parties proved to be a demonstration of the corrupt and temporary nature of a woman's love. Schopenhauer only once fell deeply in love, however, when she failed to follow him to Berlin the relationship ended badly and left Arthur suffering for a long time. As a result of his issues with women and life spent as a bachelor, much of his philosophy is misogynistic and at times supplemented with blatant diatribes on the inferior nature of women, seeing them as big children with superficial aspirations and endowed only with temporary beauty for the sole purpose of attracting a male and bearing offspring. I discuss this in more detail in the chapter on aesthetics.

In 1809, upon gaining liberty from his familial obligations, Schopenhauer pursued his academic career at the University of Göttingen and later the University of Berlin, where he attended lectures by Gottlob Ernst Schulze (1761–1833), Fichte, and Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834), and was introduced to the works of Plato and Kant. He received a PhD *in absentia* from the University of Jena for his doctoral dissertation, *On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason*. Schopenhauer then went on to publish his principle work, *The World as Will and Representation* in 1819, and in 1820

acquired a lecturing position at the University of Berlin. However, Schopenhauer boldly and intentionally scheduled his lectures at the same time as his esteemed colleague and philosopher G.W.F. Hegel (a man he considered to be a charlatan and mutilator of the Kantian philosophy), resulting in few attendees and ultimately ending his academic career in 1822 (Wicks, 2008).

Schopenhauer published the supplements to his principal work in the *Parerga and Paralipomena* in 1851. He had settled permanently in Frankfurt in 1839 and was famous for having a very habitual lifestyle, waking early to read and study, play his flute, then walk his French poodle (named Atma, meaning universal soul in Hinduism), dine at the *Englisher Hof*, rest, go for a long walk, sometimes take in an evening concert, and finally go to bed reading *the Upanishads*. It was only in 1853, seven years before his death that he would enjoy some popularity as a philosopher due to a favorable article written about his works in the *Westminster Review* by a British author. Schopenhauer passed away calmly in his bed in on September 21st 1860. He donated his estate to help the families of Prussian soldiers killed in the suppression of the 1848 revolution (Cartwright, 2010).

Introduction to Schopenhauer's Philosophy

Schopenhauer's (1819/1966) demand that his works be read chronologically follows from the intent he had in writing them as such, where the foundation of his principle work rests on an understanding of his dissertation, and supplemented with his essays and peripheral works. He also suggests that a thorough understanding of Kant and Plato (427-347 BC) are necessary, however, he does not mention the benefit of being familiar with the works of Rene Descartes (1596-1650), George Berkely (1685-1753), and Brauch Spinoza (1632-1677), whom he frequently cites in his works.

Schopenhauer considered himself a true Kantian, in that he felt he had the correct interpretation of Kant's philosophy while "charlatans" like Hegel, Fichte, and Schelling were perverting it with their naïve interpretations towards ontological arguments for the existence of God (Cartwright, 2010). However, Schopenhauer dedicated over two hundred pages in his principal work to an appendix entitled, *Criticism of the Kantian Philosophy*, in which he presents arguments to improve Kant's philosophy with his own theoretical revisions. Schopenhauer praised Descartes for establishing that our ideas are separate from the real world, from which an array of others like John Locke (1632-1704), George Berkeley, and David Hume (1711-1776) followed, attempting to resolve the issue of the ideal and the real definitively; however, it was only later that Kant put forth the notion that there is a matching real objective world to our ideal representations (ideas) of it, which he called the *thing-in-itself* (Schopenhauer, 1851/1974). The thing-in-itself (*Ding an sich*) is the underlying essence of all ideas, which represents the objective world that Kant claimed we cannot possibly know, but only experience through appearances mediated by forms of intuitions and categories (Kant, 1781/1929). Thereby, Kant managed to combine Descartes's rationalism with British empiricism into his transcendental idealism, which satisfied an ontological explanation of subjective and objective experiences of the world.

The problem with Kant's thing-in-itself, as first pointed out by Schulze, is that it cannot follow that an unknowable mind-independent thing-in-itself can be causally responsible for our sensory perceptions. Schopenhauer agreed that our knowledge of sensory experience cannot be caused by something epistemologically unknowable and thus proposed to resolve the issue by positing the will as the knowable thing-in-itself. He

denied that there is a causal relationship between the will (thing-in-itself) and the representation (objects of experience), and argued instead that they are merely two sides of the same coin where the perceivable representation, such as an action, is simultaneous with its will, much like the visible spark of electricity is simultaneous with the invisible flow of the electric current (Wicks, 2008). For humans, the only epistemological evidence we have of the will is the representation of our bodies in space and time, which grants us the only instance of experiencing the will simultaneously with its representation, where all other representations in the world have their will hidden from us (Schopenhauer, 1819/1966).

Schopenhauer also argued that Kant's twelve categories of understanding that form individual objects out of our sensory experiences, can be consolidated into a single causal category, along with space and time, to account for all human experience. He described this causal theory as *the principle of sufficient reason* in his doctoral dissertation (Wicks, 2008).

The principle of sufficient reason outlines that all things in the Universe have a sufficient reason or explanation for their existence, which also presupposes that all objects exist out of necessity and have causal relations to one another. The principle of sufficient reason has a fourfold root, by which he means that it governs *objects* in relation to the *subject* by four methods. The first is an explanation of material objects for which we reason in terms of cause and effect (*principle of sufficient reason of becoming*). The second is of abstract concepts for which we reason by way of logic (*principle of sufficient reason of knowing*). The third is of mathematical and geometrical constructions for which we reason through space and numbers (*principle of sufficient reason of being*). The last is

of psychologically-motivating forces for which we reason by means of intentions and morality (*principle of sufficient reason of acting*) (Schopenhauer, 1813/1974). This principle that governs the *subject-object* distinction can offer explanations for philosophical questions such as ‘Why is there something rather than nothing?’ and ‘Why can’t two identical things exist?’ without appealing to cosmological and ontological arguments for the existence of God (Wicks, 2011).

The fourth principle, namely *the principle of sufficient reason for acting*, is Schopenhauer’s most relevant as it became the foundation of his metaphysics and principal philosophy of the world as will and representation (Cartwright, 2010). Schopenhauer (1813/1974) formulated his law of motivation that accounted for behaviour by establishing that human character produces, through an unconscious process, an action. As such, from looking within oneself and understanding the nature of causality, the causal nature of the universe becomes knowable. Humans are part of the universe and the same energies flow through all existing things, in this case the primary force and underlying essence is called *the will* (Wicks, 2008).

Unlike the German idealists, Schopenhauer did not consider the will to be an introspective self-consciousness, but rather a blind, aimless, non-rational force at the core of all representations and instinctual drives, striving (*Streben*) for existence (Schopenhauer 1819/1966). As such, given his law of motivation as the sufficient explanation and cause of human action guided by a blind will, it follows that humans do not have free will but are necessarily bound to causes, in this case, motives (*Motiv*, sometimes *Beweggrund*). Therefore Schopenhauer considers free will to be an illusion; however, he explains that we can learn to avoid certain motives and consequently actions

by working with our only available and malleable resource, the intellect (*Intellekt*) (Cartwright, 2010).

Given that the will is at the core of all existing things, what explains the individual striving of the will in each person is what Schopenhauer referred to as the *principium individuationis* (the principle of individuation), which is an aspect or effect of the principle of sufficient reason when human cognition enters the world. The will is a unified force and without a subject (human) the world would not become objectified and individuated through the principle of sufficient reason. The result of the objectification and individuation of the will is that this striving force is now turned against itself, fighting and consuming itself. This marks Schopenhauer's pessimistic worldview where humans are the result of their own epistemological creation, in a world of appearances (representations) that exists in their minds, striving against others to obtain more than they are able to have. As such, the world is violent and full of suffering, which is caused by the eternal striving within humans that can never be satiated (Wicks, 2008).

In dealing with Schopenhauer's philosophy there are many concepts, such as the will, representations, intellect, motives, and character that must be explored at length to provide a sufficient understanding of his worldview. From these concepts there are also many questions and objections that must be answered in order to comprehend a coherent philosophy, such as: 'Is there a material world beyond the will and its representations?', 'How can the intellect be improved and how will it alter behaviour if actions are necessarily determined by motives?', 'How does a causal theory of sensory experience constitute a metaphysics?', etc. It is through exploring these concepts and answering these types of objections that I clarify Schopenhauer's philosophy and from it

demonstrate a coherent theory that is relevant to psychology. First, however, I outline several existing psychological studies that have attempted to study or borrow from Schopenhauer's theories.

Psychological Studies on Schopenhauer's Philosophy

In my research on Schopenhauer in the context of psychology I have come across several studies, however, the majority have been directed only toward specific theories or concepts found within his body of work, largely ignoring his complete philosophy as a worldview. Incidentally, Schopenhauer desired to propagate his philosophy as a cohesive theory on human nature, as he believed it had sufficient explanatory power to cover epistemological, metaphysical, aesthetic, ethical, and even psychological concerns. Nevertheless, I will here discuss some of the existing studies as they may pertain to the intention of this thesis, namely to integrate Schopenhauer's philosophy into psychology.

Schopenhauer has a famous parable about a group of porcupines in the winter huddling together for warmth. The issue is that the animals must find the perfect distance from one another so that their quills do not prick each other, yet remain close enough to survive the cold. This is then analogous to a comfortable and necessary distance that we as humans must keep from one another in order to find each other tolerable. Riera (2009) compares this theme to fields of psychology and their relevant research, beginning with Freud, who described a similar analogy to arrive at the same conclusion about human closeness and the balance between mutual intimacy and harm. In cognitive science implicit memory systems store information about comfortable psychical distance from other individuals. In neuroscience implicit memory is shown to store synaptic responses through repeated exposure to stimuli such as that in the parable of the porcupines, the

animals through a series of positive (warmth) and negative (pricks) stimulation create neural maps for optimal physical distance. In evolutionary biology the discovery of intersubjective sharing, an agreement between individuals about social meaning (common sense), is synonymous with the optimal distance of the porcupines. In infant research the same intersubjective sharing shows that babies develop optimal physical interaction with parents to maintain homeostasis and body temperature. These theories and studies have offered some psychological application of Schopenhauer's view about human social interaction, however, it does very little to expand on the consequences this has on social behaviour and whether this is congruent with Schopenhauer's view of the will.

Schopenhauer (1844/1966) stated that, "talent is like the marksman who hits a target which others cannot reach; genius is like the marksman who hits a target, as far as which others cannot even see" (p. 391). Lavazza and Manzotti (2013) interpret this passage in the context of psychology to argue that a semantic extension theory of creativity better explains the creative process than a symbolic recombination theory. In the former, the creative process relies on semantic processes to access information from outside oneself (in the world) in order to conceive a creative solution to a problem, while the latter relies only on process and information within the individual to arrive at a creative solution. It appears here that the authors may have misinterpreted Schopenhauer's meaning because he adamantly put forth that nature is discovered from within oneself, not oneself from nature (Cartwright, 2010). Here I have noted a relatively minor misinterpretation, however, it does support the argument that by ignoring the entire philosophy and focusing on small pieces we run the risk of misunderstanding the source.

Hunt (2011) suggests a solution to the “hard problem” of consciousness, which is a form of the old philosophical mind-body problem that has remained prominent in psychology, by appealing to Schopenhauer’s philosophy. What Hunt refers to as the “panpsychist” solution discusses Schopenhauer’s conception of the will as thing-in-itself being objectified as representation where the object in question has a dual-aspect but is not divisible into two separate substances. Hence, the solution proposed (panpsychism) is that consciousness is merely a part of the dual-aspect of the physical brain, and that the two are indivisible as substances where consciousness is merely the internal aspect of the physically observable brain (Hunt, 2011). Here a more pronounced value of Schopenhauer’s philosophy to psychology becomes evident. This is explored in more depth later.

Bodis-Wollner (2008) argues that Schopenhauer’s definition of the will can be operationalized in neurobiology and studied in the context of pre-emptive perception (PEP). In his study, Bodis-Wollner found two PEP phases for decision making, the first deselects all options excluding the one intended to execute and the second puts forth the intent to execute the selected option; however, all of these PEP processes occur outside of conscious awareness, thus corroborating Schopenhauer’s notion of the will unconsciously reacting to the strongest of a selection of motivations and leading to action. Bodis-Wollner (2008) incorrectly assumes that the first phase (selection phase) of PEP cannot represent Schopenhauer’s will, but that the second phase (execution phase) can. He makes this error on the basis of the definition of the will in which will and action are simultaneous, thus the selection phase being a process prior to the actions itself would not be compatible with the will; however, Schopenhauer (1966/1819) believes that every

action of the will is determined by prior motives. In the strict sense Bodis-Wollner is correct in stating that the first phase of PEP is not a *part* of the will, because the will and the action are one event, however, the necessary prelude and determining cause of the willed action is the motive that is unconsciously selected from an array of motives. Here I note another issue with taking Schopenhauer's philosophy apart, as it can lead to these kinds of *type I errors*. Nevertheless Bodis-Wollner (2008) proposes that, "...Schopenhauer's definition of The Will manifesting itself as executed action provides a fertile ground for designing further neurobiological studies" (p. 473).

Some in the field of psychology have considered Schopenhauer's aesthetics to be highly interesting, especially as related to eastern philosophy and religion, music, and the wisdom of life. Hansen (2007) outlines a brief history of the introduction of Buddhism to western thought, and suggests that Schopenhauer's philosophy, which is congruent with Buddhism, helped develop later psychological notions of the unconscious and its effects on behaviour, as documented in the works of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) and Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961). As such, Hansen (2007) suggests the psychological value of the will; "Schopenhauer, however, moves toward a psychological point of view by attributing will to the cognition of self, the singular 'I.' By pairing will and 'the thing-in-itself' that we perceive as 'representation,' Schopenhauer offers a metaphysical view with obvious Buddhist parallels" (p. 191).

Bergsma (2008) studies Schopenhauer's recommendations for a happy life and also takes into consideration how his pessimistic worldview influenced his philosophy. The results of the study elucidate some parallels between Schopenhauer's (1819/1966) pessimism and New Age research on conducting a happy, fulfilling life. Schopenhauer

considers the world to be full of suffering and that the only recourse humans have is a life of asceticism or to immerse ourselves in aesthetics. Bergsma (2008) finds that much of the New Age literature, which stems from Buddhist notions, is congruent with Schopenhauer's recommendations for asceticism and an appreciation of aesthetics as a re-creation of the self and a removal from the suffering of daily life; however, Schopenhauer's suggestion that people ought to avoid friendships and relationships is found to be inconsistent with studies on happiness and reflect the philosopher's neuroticism. I discuss more on Schopenhauer's aesthetics and psychology later.

Osborne and Kennedy (1985) study Schopenhauer's theory of the universality of emotional expression in music and aesthetic experiences, and how this influenced the famous composers Gustav Mahler (1860-1911) and Richard Wagner (1813-1883). It is noted that both composers were familiar with the works of Schopenhauer and were directly influenced by the pessimism, conceptions of the will, and the liberating experience of aesthetics. Schopenhauer (1851/1974) considers music to be the highest aesthetic expression, as it is not a manifestation of the will but rather a universal expression of primordial human emotions and ideas (Platonic Ideas), making it a universal language. Using musically inclined participants in a survey, Osborne and Kenney (1985) conclude that their results are congruent with Schopenhauer's theory of music. There are many other studies on Schopenhauer's theory of music within psychology (see also, Pratt 1939, and Olof-Ahlberg 1994).

The majority of the research in psychology focusing on Schopenhauer's philosophy does comparative studies between Schopenhauer and Freud, and how the former's philosophy directly influenced the creation of psychoanalysis. Some of these are

explored later in the chapter on *Schopenhauer's Influence on Freud* in order to differentiate between psychoanalytic theory and Schopenhauer's philosophy, as well as to support the thesis that the philosophical concepts have psychological value and application. I hope to have shown with this small sample of studies that Schopenhauer's work is both relevant to psychology but also insufficiently explored, especially in its totality as a worldview and theory on human nature as intended by the author.

The following chapters are arranged systematically to first introduce Schopenhauer's philosophy in its own context by engaging in a hermeneutic study of the principle works, followed by an assessment of his pessimistic worldview and its potential value to psychology as a comprehensive theory on human nature, and finally I will consider the ethical implications of his philosophy as well as the objections and limitations of introducing his theories into psychology.

The first five chapters are expository for the purposes of outlining Schopenhauer's philosophical concepts, their origins, their impact, and some objections to them, without which, an understanding of his psychological worldview becomes impossible. I stress and argue here and throughout that a comprehensive and holistic understanding of his philosophy is necessary due to the interdependence between his metaphysics, epistemology, aesthetics, and ethics; a fact that becomes evident throughout the exposition. Furthermore, a detailed understanding of Schopenhauer's ideas in their philosophical context provides the reader with a better grasp of how these concepts lend to psychology and how a psychological theory can be drawn from them. The sixth chapter begins to show the psychological nuances in Schopenhauer's philosophy by discussing his direct and indirect influences on psychoanalysis through comparisons with

Freud's works. This section intends simply to demonstrate the potential and actualization of Schopenhauer's philosophy as useful to psychology and a psychological understanding of human nature. In the final chapter I introduce a novel idea, namely "Schopenhauer's negative psychology", which is derived from his philosophical worldview as a psychological theory on human nature with practical implications in various fields in psychology. In this final section I make suggestions for future research in psychology based on Schopenhauer's philosophy, such as a comprehensive theory on human nature, a potential for a metaphysical psychology, and practical implications on therapy, education, and cognition.

CHAPTER 1-THE WORLD AS REPRESENTATION

In *The World as Will and Representation*, Schopenhauer (1819/1966) opens the book with, “The world is my representation” (p. 3), which borrows from George Berkeley (1713/1979) and Vedanta philosophy (Upanishads, in Navlakha, trans. 2000), to explain that as subjects we can only interpret the objective world through our subjective lens, and thus our world is a projection of our will from which we apprehend motives in order to conduct action.

The term representation (*Vorstellung*) is sometimes also translated as idea because the German term does not have an exact English equivalent. In the English translation of *The World as Will and Representation* it is explained that the primary meaning of *Vorstellung* is to ‘place before’, where the translation into ‘idea’ (*Idee* in German) does not capture the intended nuance even though Schopenhauer had used this English translation in his dissertation; however, explaining that it is meant to be understood as ‘Idea’ in the strict Platonic sense (Schopenhauer, 1819/1966).

Schopenhauer wanted to capture a complex notion of idea with the term *Vorstellung*; an idea that places before us what is represented by us in our cognizing of the world through the subject-object relation. He notes that the emergence of consciousness (the subject) and philosophical discernment brings a clear notion of the world as representation to the individual for whom the world is only a reference to himself as subject (Schopenhauer, 1819/1966). It is here worth repeating the importance of the principle of sufficient reason, as it is the cognitive method by which we as subjects, through the principle of individuation (*principium individuationis*), form the subject-object relation by objectifying and organizing the world into individuated ideas called

representations. Without the subject and the principle of sufficient reason, the world would not be objectified and individuated and the will would remain unified. Therefore the absence of consciousness in the world would mean an absence of strife and conflict between individuated forms of the will, and thus would also entail the absence of suffering. According to Schopenhauer (1819/1966) it would also mean that space and time would not exist as these distinctions only arise when being conditioned by the subject and for the subject. This final consequence may pose some difficulties and I attempt to deal with is later on in this chapter.

Plato and Platonic Ideas

Schopenhauer takes for granted that the world as representation is an *a priori* truth, as no other experience is more certain to us than the presupposition of space, time, and causality, and hence this assertion therefore requires no additional proof (Schopenhauer, 1819/1966). In order to bring the notion of representations to light, I must first track Schopenhauer's footsteps back to the origin of this concept in Platonic Ideas before returning to representations and their place within his philosophy. For clarity I capitalize every instance of the word 'Idea' when referring to Platonic Ideas to disambiguate from the common use of the term.

Plato considers humans to be comprised of a body and soul, the former being defective in its capacity to experience the world through the senses while the latter retaining the pure capacity to 'recollect' the *a priori* Ideas (Kraut, 2013). This process of recollecting the *a priori* Ideas (sometimes also translated as 'forms') stems from the belief that they are universal, not subject to space or time, and manifested in perceivable objects. Plato (380 BC/2000) considers the abstract entities he referred to as Ideas to

correspond to universal truths that philosophers were dutifully bound to rediscovering from their own mind, independent of experience with the material world. As such, the experience of material objects through the senses is an illusory and inaccurate method of discovering the inner essence and true Idea behind objects. From this premise, Plato (380 BC/2000) creates a distinction between our perception of qualities such as beautifulness, largeness, virtuousness, etc. that we attribute or perceive in the world, and the absolute nature of the Idea of beautifulness, largeness, virtuousness, etc. Therefore, truly enlightened individuals must inquire into the nature of an Idea in order to arrive at the truth concerning such Idea and from there begin to conduct existence based on that truth.

The paradoxical nature of the Platonic Ideas is that one is uncertain as to how to gain access to the pure Idea or whether it is at all possible given the defective senses of the body that naturally limit our ability to access these *a priori* truths (Kraut, 2013). In fact Plato (380 BC/2000) at times considers it impossible to know these Ideas, or to name them, or even to grasp what it means to know anything at all. The unsatisfactory explanation leads many to criticize the works of Plato, while others embrace the philosophy as a participatory enterprise in which readers must facilitate their own knowledge in order to arrive at solutions to these philosophical problems. Schopenhauer was one of these readers and his solution to the underlying problem of the Platonic Ideas was to allow at least one representation to be known completely.

The representation of the body is our only access to the knowledge of the will, as we experience the full manifestation of the Idea along with its being or inner nature (the will) (Schopenhauer, 1819/1966). Schopenhauer therefore explains that we have access to the most self-evident *a priori* truth, namely that the world is our representation, because

we perceive it and all its relations to ourselves, where we have direct access to the only dual experience of the will and representation that is constituted by our *being* as subjects.

Descartes and Cartesian Duality

Along with the notion of Platonic Ideas, Schopenhauer also admires Descartes for distinguishing ideas as separate from the real world (Cartwright, 2010). Note that Schopenhauer does not express praise for Descartes's distinction of the mind and body as separate substances. There are several ideas in Descartes's *Meditations on First Philosophy* that resonate well with Schopenhauer's views, however, and as is the general case with Schopenhauer, he believes he has carefully selected the truths among the various misconceived philosophical musings and combined them masterfully into his own magnum opus.

Descartes is considered by many to be the first modern philosopher, primarily for putting forth the mind-body distinction, and notoriously for reintroducing skepticism into philosophy (Smith, 2012). Descartes ventures to prove the existence of God by introspecting and calling everything he knows into doubt. From this process he arrives at the conclusion that the only thing he is certain of is that he exists, and thus announces the famous "I think therefore I am" (*cogito ergo sum*) argument (Descartes, 1641/2003, p.32). However, by calling all things into doubt Descartes commits himself to the belief that the mind, as independent of the body, is the only certain thing known, where even the existence of the body is left in doubt. As such, this makes the distinction between ideas and material objects, but does not resolve the problem of skepticism which is Descartes's method of doubting (Smith, 2012).

Descartes uses an example of a piece of wax, that when first perceived through the senses indicates the qualities of being hard, coloured, floral scented, honey flavoured, and produces a sound when tapped; however, after placing it near a fire the wax melts and loses all of the initially perceived properties. From this exercise Descartes deduces that our mind must have an idea of the wax independent of sense perception, for if all the sensed properties have changed and we can recognize it as the same piece of wax it must be the case that our mind does not depend on the material object for its idea or knowledge of it (Descartes, 1641/2003). In much the same way Schopenhauer argues that our Ideas or representations of the material world are a product of our mind and cognition independent of the physical objects we perceive (Cartwright, 2010).

The two ideas most commonly attributed to Descartes, namely the mind-body duality (Cartesian duality) and skepticism, are also the two ideas he failed to resolve in his philosophy and have since remained open problems. The mind-body problem is that it posits two substances, one material and the other immaterial that are causally linked. Empirically we cannot prove that an immaterial substance can cause an effect in a material substance because we cannot follow the causal chain, thus the mind that is supposed to control the body rests only on a belief of a mind and not evidence of its existence. Conversely, the issue with skepticism is that it takes the idea that one can justifiably believe they exist because they are a thinking being, but that only provides them with evidence of having a mind and no evidence of having a body or existing in a material world (for all we know we are merely brains in vats being stimulated to believe we exist in a material world).

Schopenhauer attempts to resolve both of these problems in his treatise. The mind-body problem is resolved through his notion of the unity between the will and representation as being indivisible phenomenon, two sides of the same coin, the internal and the external. According to Schopenhauer (1819/1966), if we believe that we exist because we think, and we call this internal notion of being the will, then we recognize that the physical manifestation of this internal being is our material body as a representation of the will that is simultaneous in all of its activity with the internal willing. Schopenhauer therefore makes the mind dependent on and indivisible from the physical representation that is the human body. Incidentally this also resolves the problem of skepticism for him because it offers evidence in both directions, that the mind requires the material body and vice-versa. I revisit this subject later on in the chapter with more arguments in support of Schopenhauer's claims.

Modern theories in the philosophy of mind have gained sufficient consensus that what we refer to as mental states are equivalent to neural brain states, and this has transferred over into cognitive psychology and neurology. Anthony Damasio (2003) explains that modern neuroscience has resolved the mind-body problem by relating the mental states we experience to a neural-map level; however, this ultimately resorts to removing the 'mind' out of the equation and replacing it entirely with brain/neural states. He explains that this fails to account for consciousness, a sense of self, and mental images, all of which are integral to human survival and have been demonstrated through a variety of studies (e.g. suspension of the sense of self in adults results in regression to a state of dependency similar to a child). Currently there is no evidence for these mental states (consciousness, sense of self, and mental images); however Damasio (2003) refers

neuroscience to Spinoza's philosophy on the mind-body issue as a potential theoretical resolution. It is the same philosophy that had influenced Schopenhauer in creating his theory of the will and representation.

Before moving on to Spinoza it is here worth mentioning an additional theoretical premise explored by Descartes that is quite similar to Schopenhauer's view, though the latter does not directly mention it in his work. I surmise that Schopenhauer may have disagreed with Descartes on his fundamental philosophy and thus elected to disregard this similar view because it may have had implications in the Cartesian philosophy that he did not want to import into his own. If my understanding of Descartes with regard to this notion is correct, then it does provide another parallel between the two philosophers on their understanding of human "behaviour". In the fourth meditation Descartes (1641/2003) explains that actions are limited by the intellect and the will, where the intellect can extend greater freedom to actions by restricting the will. With a strong intellect our actions can be inclined toward God, making them freer because they require less deliberation and produce moral good, whereas mistakes are the product of a weak intellect that directs actions away from God and causes strife, deliberation, and sometimes immoral results.

Then as long as I restrict the will in such a way that, in making judgments, it extends only to those things that the understanding shows it clearly and distinctly, it is evidently impossible for me to be mistaken because every clear and distinct perception is certainly something and, consequently, cannot come from nothing but necessarily has God for its author (Descartes, 1641/2003, p.50-51).

What I note as parallels between Schopenhauer and Descartes is their similar consideration of the controlling forces of action, namely the intellect and the will, and how the freedom of actions is determined to a great extent by these. I can see where Schopenhauer would disagree with Descartes, primarily in the latter's belief that God is the author of our ideas that prompts our intellect to guide action in that direction, whereas Schopenhauer saw motivation as the trigger of the will's blind response followed by the cognitive assessment of that action (representation). Nevertheless, both seem to agree that human action is best guided through a restriction of the will by the intellect, though their methods of doing so differ.

Spinoza and the Mind-Body Problem

Returning to Spinoza, a figure Schopenhauer frequently cites, at times to offer praise and other times to contradict what he believed to be a well-intended but ultimately misunderstood view, we can gain some insight into Schopenhauer's philosophical influences.

Spinoza is one of the most important philosophers of the 17th century and much of his work still has relevance today. He follows many of Descartes's principles but establishes a naturalistic perspective of God, humans, and reality, and guides his philosophy toward moderation and self-control, in order to maintain sensibility, reduce the passions, and lead a virtuous and happy life (Nadler, 2013). In this way, Schopenhauer finds Spinoza much more appealing than Descartes, given the naturalistic view of God and the commitment to a life of self-control for the prospect of happiness and virtuosity; a commitment Schopenhauer shares and elaborates on in his own works but with a pessimistic tone.

Brann (1972) describes the amount of effort and study Schopenhauer had devoted to Spinoza during his lifetime, with multiple copies of his books filled with notes and comments, the many quotes and references to Spinoza found throughout his works, and ultimately the similarities between their philosophies. Schopenhauer often credits Spinoza for his innovative ideas, his denial of Cartesian duality, and his interpretation of human action, but criticizes him for his pantheism and optimism, though in an unusually sympathetic tone. Schopenhauer often excuses what he considers to be Spinoza's mistakes as a consequence of the time and conditions the man lived in, with the additional pity that he did not have access to Kant and Hinduism. It is suggested that Schopenhauer's philosophy could be considered a synthesis of Spinoza and Kant.

The most significant similarity between Spinoza's philosophy and Schopenhauer's is their resolution of the mind-body problem that Descartes had initiated around Spinoza's time. In Spinoza's works he regards the mind and body to be one and indivisible, where each functions to control the other in a mutually dependent process (Damasio, 2003). Spinoza (1677/2008) argues that, "the object of the idea constituting the human mind is the body" (p.32). This is almost identical to Schopenhauer's assertion that the body is the object for the cognizing subject, where the mind and body are but one substance seen from two different perspectives, one the one hand as will and on the other as representation (Schopenhauer, 1819/1966).

Another subject that both philosophers agree upon is the idea of determinism and the relative lack of freedom in human action. Schopenhauer greatly praises Spinoza for being among the first to acknowledge and accept that all action is subject to determinism out of necessity, and that free will is only a convenient illusion making people believe

they had really chosen the actions they performed (Brann, 1972). Schopenhauer quotes Spinoza on the subject of determinism by referring to an ironic statement, that if a rock were thrown and in its flight developed consciousness it would surely believe that it was flying of its own accord (Schopenhauer, 1819/1966).

The two philosophers seem to part ways significantly in only two categories, namely their views on religion and the purpose of life. In the former case, Schopenhauer finds Spinoza to be influenced by Jewish mysticism in incorporating a notion of a naturalistic God as the underlying substance in all things (pantheism), and instead he substitutes this with the far more secular notion of the will, as borrowed from Kant's thing-in-itself. In the latter case, Schopenhauer agrees with Spinoza that we ought to control our passions through abstaining from indulgences and becoming virtuous by nurturing the intellect; however, Spinoza's system is inherently optimistic about life and aims at happiness while Schopenhauer's system is pessimistic and aims at the denial of the *will-to-live* through asceticism in order to reduce immanent and ever present suffering (Brann, 1972). This subject is explored in more depth in the following chapters.

Berkeley and Idealism

George Berkeley is considered one of the most important philosophers of the early modern period for putting forth a unique theory of idealism that followed from, but also defied the tradition of Descartes, Nicolas Malebranche (1638-1715), and Locke (Downing, 2013). Berkeley is also famous for his influence on the philosophies of Hume and Kant; however, few consider his influence on Schopenhauer.

Berkeley's response to Descartes's realism is to introduce a rather counter-intuitive argument for the non-existence of matter. Through this perspective he concludes

that the only existing things are ideas that reside in our minds. Strangely he does not commit himself to skepticism, because he offers an explanation for the existence of humans by considering them ideas in the mind of God. As such, he provides a philosophical stance against materialism and dualism by introducing his brand of idealism (Beck, 1966a).

In the *Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous*, Berkeley (1713/1979) first sets out to disprove the existence of matter by claiming that all sensible qualities we attribute to physical objects are merely ideas in the mind, for it cannot be presumed that real objects contain sensible properties such as pain, pleasure, heat, extension, uneasiness, etc. Therefore all of the sensible properties exist as ideas in the mind and this leaves nothing behind to constitute matter, which results in the conclusion that matter cannot exist mind-independently. Another testament to the notion that sensible qualities are but ideas in the mind is that individuals perceive objects differently depending on their dispositions, distance, angle, or state of mind. Similarly, Schopenhauer (1844/1966) explains that our sensations of objects outside of ourselves are merely felt in the brain as “outside”, though the sensation is entirely internal. He gives an example of what psychology has come to call ‘phantom limb syndrome’, where an amputee continues to feel the presence or pain of their severed limb, demonstrating that the sensation of objects outside ourselves is truly localized in the brain.

In the same dialogues, Berkeley then counters the charge of skepticism laid against his anti-materialist view by claiming that he is not doubting the existence of matter but rather providing a positive affirmation of its nonexistence. He continues by claiming that all ideas in the mind are caused by God and that there is no real world other

than the idea of it that God had created, further claiming that to posit the existence of matter commits one to atheism. He argues that matter is not substance, accident, thinking, extended, cause, instrument, or occasion, and thus it must be an unknown entity or nothing at all, for it is a contradiction for an unthinking and inactive thing to contain ideas and sensations (Berkeley, 1713/1979). Here Schopenhauer (1844/1966) disagrees, primarily with the notion that ideas are caused by God, and instead posits that,

The fundamental mistake of all systems is the failure to recognize this truth, namely that the intellect and matter are correlatives, in other words, the one exists only for the other; both stand and fall together; the one is only the other's reflex. They are in fact really one and the same thing, considered from two opposite points of view; and this one thing—here I am anticipating—is the phenomenon of the will or of the thing-in-itself (p. 15-16).

By this, Schopenhauer establishes the relation of the object to the subject where the former is called the *known* and the latter the *knowing*. Thus, in order for an object to be known it necessitates a knowing subject, and this also follows from his *principium individuationis* (principle of individuation) that through the cognizing subject and the application of the principle of sufficient reason the unified world as will is objectified and individuated causing plurality. I also noted earlier that Schopenhauer deals with skepticism in his own way by considering the experience individuals have of their will and representation as unified in the human body proper. However, and unlike Berkeley, Schopenhauer (1844/1966) also allows for matter to exist mind-independently as thing-in-itself,

At the same time, everything that exists in this way may still have an existence for itself, for which it requires no subject. This existence by itself, however, cannot be extension or activity (together space-occupation), but is necessarily another kind of being, namely that of a thing-in-itself, which, purely as such, can never be object (p. 7).

Mazard (2005) argues that Schopenhauer is a critical idealist, in that he significantly deviates from the speculative idealism of Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, which constitute the tradition of German idealism. In Schopenhauer's critical idealism there is a strong use of empiricism in order to support his views through observable verification as opposed to the mere use of abstractions. As such, Schopenhauer follows more so in the tradition of Locke and Kant with his critical idealism rather than German idealism proper.

Kant and Transcendental Idealism

German idealism is a philosophical tradition that began with Kant as transcendental idealism and was later radicalized by figures such as Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel into absolute idealism. Transcendental idealism, as conceived by Kant, is also referred to as critical idealism because it attempts to combine the philosophies of rationalism and empiricism. Absolute idealism, as advanced by Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, is also called speculative idealism because it removes the empiricist principles and takes an entirely idealistic stance (McQuillan, n.d.).

Rationalism, as attributed to Descartes, Spinoza, and Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz (1646-1716), argues that knowledge is generally gained independent of experience, whereas British empiricism, as attributed to Locke, Berkeley and Hume, argues that knowledge is generally gained through experience. However, these

distinctions are not absolute in any sense because each philosopher has certain views that constitute them as more or less rationalist or empiricist in their outlooks. Nevertheless, it is Kant who first proposed a synthesis of rationalism and empiricism through his transcendental idealism that attempts to reap the advantages of both (Markie, 2013). It is this system that most influenced Schopenhauer, and it is important here to relate Kant's philosophy in brief to note the similarities between their views prior to engaging the differences and what sets Schopenhauer's philosophy apart from his contemporaries.

Kant argues that our experience of objects is our method of learning through interaction; however, it is our *a priori* knowledge that predisposes us to these experiences in the first place. He provides an example where if one were to remove all the properties from an object there would remain a space this object once occupied that cannot be taken away, and it is likewise in removing all experience from an object that one would be left with an *a priori* seat in the mind (Beck, 1966b). "All appearances, as possible experiences, thus lie *a priori* in the understanding, and receive from it their formal possibility" (Kant, 1781/1929 p. 148).

Kant further explains that we have analytical judgments; which applies to representations (appearances) and does not extend knowledge but only makes something evident to the subject, and synthetic judgments; which are *a priori* judgments combined with the experience of an object to form a synthesis. "The highest principle of all synthetic judgment is therefore this: every object stands under the necessary conditions of synthetic unity of the manifold of intuition in a possible experience" (Kant, 1781/1929, p. 194). Intuition is given to us by our sensibilities of objects and pure intuition is our *a priori* conception of the form of objects that exists regardless of whether we have

experienced these objects or not. To our intuition belongs space and time, known *a priori*, which allows all objects to be experienced and have temporal relations (Beck, 1966b).

According to Kant, all representations of objects go through a synthesis in the mind by a process of imagination, thereby revealing their features in order to formulate knowledge. For this purpose Kant creates categories that synthesize the relation of representations in the mind to formulate a unified consciousness, by their; quality, quantity, relation, and modality. These categories form a law of intuition that predisposes all empirical experiences *a priori*, such that we hold representations of objects in conformity with the categories for our experiences of these objects to constitute knowledge and be congruent with our being. Otherwise, all experiences would be a flood of stimuli accosting our senses without the possibility of being synthesized into knowledge. The world does not make nature conform to our intuition; rather the world is comprised of phenomena that we synthesize as representations of objects (Kant, 1781/1929).

Kant believes that reason is a faculty sufficiently grounded *a priori* that it alone can explain any pure concept prior to experience, and if a single concept cannot be explained, then the whole system is flawed and must be discarded. If reason were to fail in understanding nature, with the addition that it is our only method of understanding, then it follows that humanity is at all times in error and our understanding is incurably flawed. Reason determines the representation of objects *a priori* but cannot access any knowledge of the thing-in-itself, although it can provide awareness that the thing-in-itself exists without direct knowledge of it. The world of appearances (representations) follows

laws and principles of reason, whereas the thing-in-itself is free of any laws and principles and thus cannot be known through reason (Kant, 1781/1929).

It is because Kant considers the thing-in-itself to be unknowable that his followers criticize him and opt for an absolute (speculative) idealism. Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, borrow from Schulze's criticism of Kant to argue that the thing-in-itself is a contradiction because a mind-independent object that is beyond all human experience cannot serve as the cause of all human sensory experience (Wicks, 2013). Schopenhauer agrees that this is indeed a contradiction, but heavily criticizes his peers for dispensing with the thing-in-itself and replacing it instead with God as the source of ideas. Schopenhauer vehemently argues that the post-Kantian German idealists corrupt everything that is good about Kant by denying the thing-in-itself and reintroducing the worst aspect of Spinoza's philosophy, namely his pantheism. He sees their speculative idealism as a rejection of reason and promoter of religion by introducing notions of a spiritual world, an eternal soul, free will, and the development of self-consciousness (Cartwright, 2010). Schopenhauer is especially critical of Hegel and blames him for ruining an entire generation of philosophical minds, "In short, are not the youth who have grown to maturity in the incubator of Hegelry like men intellectually castrated, incapable of thinking, and full of the most ludicrous presumption?" (Schopenhauer, 1851/1974, p. 166).

Schopenhauer considers himself the only true Kantian of his time and that his philosophy is meant to improve on and finish what Kant had begun, in light of his belief that his contemporaries are completely mistaken in their interpretations (Cartwright, 2010). Schopenhauer preserves the thing-in-itself and attempts to deal with the objection that Kant had faced, namely that it is unknowable but acts as the cause of our

experiences. I have already mentioned Schopenhauer's defense and revival of the thing-in-itself as the knowable will, the direct access of which we experience in our living bodies as will and representation, simultaneous in all of our actions. "Therefore, in a certain sense, it can also be said that the will is knowledge *a priori* of the body, and that the body is knowledge *a posteriori* of the will" (Schopenhauer, 1819/1966 p. 100). Or more precisely,

My body and my will are one; or, What as representation of perception I call my body, I call my will in so far as I am conscious of it in an entirely different way comparable with no other; or, My body is the objectivity of the will; (Schopenhauer, 1819/1966 p. 102-103).

Representations

As mentioned earlier, a second criticism of Kant that Schopenhauer believes would improve his philosophy is the reduction of Kant's twelve categories of human understanding (unity, plurality, totality, reality, negation, limitation, substance, causality, reciprocity, possibility, actuality, and necessity) into a single principle-the principle of sufficient reason-along with space and time (Wicks, 2013). The principle of sufficient reason, as our cognitive process for understanding the world through its fourfold root, must also facilitate space and time as representations in order to hold the representations of objects in the mind and in succession. "For time is the mere possibility of opposed states in the same matter; space is the mere possibility of the persistence of the same matter in all kinds of opposed states" (Schopenhauer, 1819/1966, p. 135). As such, space and time are merely representations that provide the possibility of causal relations between objects in the mind, and therefore do not belong to or affect the will as thing-in-

itself. “It is the doctrine that space, time, and causality belong not to the thing-in-itself, but only to the phenomenon, that they are only the forms of our *knowledge*³, not qualities of the thing-in-itself” (Schopenhauer, 1819/1966, p. 134).

Schopenhauer (1819/1966) clarifies that all matter is only constituted as existing because it holds cause and effect relations for which space and time become necessary, hence he proposes that change is constant and allows succession to exist, which institutes time. As such, he is of the belief that time requires change (this is congruent with modern metaphysics). He goes further to say that time and space can exist independent of matter, so it is not that space and time presuppose matter but the other way around. He also states that time and space are dependent on one another and each requires the other for causality to work (this is congruent with modern views of space-time as a continuum and the special theory of relativity). Causality is therefore the succession of events in some space and at some time simultaneously. Matter is the combination and coexistence of space, time, and change, all of which gives rise to representations. Causality makes objects perceivable first to our senses that belong to our body as an object where they are felt and then interpreted intellectually as an inquiry into their cause.

What the eye, the ear, or the hand experiences is not perception; it is mere data.

Only by the passing of the understanding from the effect to the cause does the world stand out as perception extended in space, varying in respect of form, persisting through all time as regards matter. For the understanding unites space

³ Schopenhauer used the term “knowledge” (*Wissen*) as a subset of “cognition” (*Erkenntniß*); the former refers to conceptual knowledge that language-using rational creatures facilitate, while the latter is a broader category that also applies to non-human animals and represents an intuitive kind of knowledge synthesized by the understanding (*Verstand*) (Shapshay, 2011). The E. F. J. Payne translation used here refers to both *Wissen* and *Erkenntniß* as “knowledge”, thus I have attempted to clarify the distinction where possible throughout the text.

and time in the representation of matter, that is to say, of effectiveness (Schopenhauer, 1819/1966, p. 12).

Schopenhauer (1819/1966) also argues that his philosophy avoids other objections because it begins with representations as a metaphysical truth and presupposes the subject and object therefrom, as opposed to other philosophies that begin either from the object to infer the subject or vice-versa. He claims that philosophies beginning from the object such as a materialism or empiricism are in fact begging the question, for they assume that objects really do exist as absolutely granted and build theories therefrom. Similarly, he acknowledges Fichte as the first to start from the subject, and argues that he also begs the question in assuming the subject to exist as the 'I' and from this inferring the object as the 'Not I'. Incidentally, by starting from the representation, that which presupposes subject and object, one begins with an empty phenomenon unless both subject and object already exist, for it requires a thinking subject to form a representation of an existing object. Schopenhauer claims that our first perception gives direct *a priori* confirmation of the representation, for perception initiates without assistance or prior intent.

For Schopenhauer (1819/1966), the process for the acquisition of truth or knowledge is that perception (intuition) offers evidence toward an absolute truth, whereby the shortest path to such truth is not in further observation and testing but rather in the intuitive process that initiated the recognition of evidence. It is important to recall that by perception Schopenhauer means that which is sensed (imported through the senses) and in combination with reason. This is taken from Kant's synthetic judgments that also combine *a priori* judgments with experience. The *a priori* forms or ideas that both Kant and Schopenhauer refer to are Platonic Ideas, and these constitute a part of our

cognition that in combination with experience form knowledge or understanding of the world. “Outside time lie only the will, Kant’s thing-in-itself, and its adequate objectivity, namely Plato’s Idea” (Schopenhauer, 1819/1966, p. 366). Though he distinguishes here between the will and thing-in-itself, Schopenhauer does not consider them separate phenomena but establishes that the will is the *knowable* thing-in-itself (his “correction” of Kant’s theory). The Platonic Ideas are not subject to the principle of sufficient reason, and they are the objects for the pure subject of cognition. Schopenhauer considers them to be gradations of the will’s objectification. These Ideas are non-spatial, non-temporal, and not subject to change. They are everywhere instantiated in particular real objects in imperfect ways (Cartwright, 2010).

Schopenhauer (1819/1966) divides representations into two categories, namely intuitive and abstract, the latter of which constitutes concepts held by individuals that differ from person to person (reason), and the former constituting the visible world that we experience, where empirical experience depends on *a priori* intuitions (*Anschauung*) and not vice-versa. Of these, time and space belong to our intuitions and time is regarded as illusory (the *Maya* in Vedic philosophy) for the past and future are empty, while the present holds no duration or extension. Therefore, the abstract representations that differ between individuals are due to the faculty of reason that is logically supposed to have variation between individuals. However, the intuitive representations that make up the whole visible world are intended to be shared in the same way by all subjects so that the empirical experiences we have of the world depend on universal *a priori* intuitions.

Schopenhauer (1819/1966) explains the notion of plurality when it comes to representations by taking a Vedic concept of unity to express that all subjects are whole

and indivisible, so that they share a common representation, and should there be one or many subjects this representation would not change. Should the last subject perish, the world of representation would also perish, for it is contingent upon the perceiving subject. Subject is defined by Schopenhauer as an immaterial consciousness that is dependent on neither space nor time, but constitutes the conscious apprehension of these conditions (space and time) that are applicable to all objects and allow plurality, extension, and duration. A further explanation of Schopenhauer's holistic approach to communal representations is that the intuited *a priori* forms of the representations are given to every subject in the same way, however, our senses and perception may be distorted to form alternative and sometimes defective representations of the world. It is from these perceptions that we form abstract representations that constitute our knowledge, which here can be shown to be diverse, correct, or incorrect, depending on one's senses, perception, and intellect.

It is through a revision of Kant's philosophy and the adaptation of novel concepts that Schopenhauer devises his own philosophy. In this section I have outlined Schopenhauer's conceptualization of representations, which formulate the world as we experience it-or more precisely the explanation of the object in relation to the subject. I have also attempted to show how Schopenhauer dealt with objections to both his philosophy and Kant's. In the former, Schopenhauer believes to have done away with skepticism by starting his philosophical inquiry from the representation and then inferring the subject and object, thereby avoiding the burden of proof for each by demonstrating that representations are metaphysically and *a priori* true. Likewise, he avoids subjectivism (truth relativity) by holding that *a priori* intuited representations are for

everyone the same, by appealing to Platonic Ideas as the metaphysical and universal source of these pure intuitions. In the latter, he attempts to save Kant's thing-in-itself by allowing the causal source of all human sensory experience to become knowable through the most direct experience, namely one's own body as will (being) and representation, simultaneously experienced in human action. With the consolidation of human understanding into one fourfold principle (the principle of sufficient reason), Schopenhauer also explains how humans organize representations in the mind in a uniform, unified, and ultimately synthesized manner (the *a priori* with the *a posteriori*). Hence, Schopenhauer's goals are to revise the Kantian philosophy while maintaining the benefits of transcendental idealism (combination of realism and empiricism), to remove religion from philosophy (or at least to use philosophy for truth as opposed to a cosmological proof), to resolve the Cartesian mind-body problem, and to modify metaphysics to explain human experience. This essentially constitutes the critical idealism that makes up Schopenhauer's philosophy, as seen from the side of representations. I now turn to the opposite side of the coin to consider Schopenhauer's philosophy as seen from the side of the will.

CHAPTER 2-THE WORLD AS WILL

“...For this world is, on the one side, entirely representation, just as, on the other, it is entirely will” (Schopenhauer, 1819/1966, p. 4). I now come to the other aspect of Schopenhauer’s philosophy that on the one side was shown as representation, which defines his epistemology, and on the other will be shown as the will, which defines his metaphysics. However, as it may have already become clear, Schopenhauer’s distinction between his epistemology and metaphysics is not by any means traditional and in fact the two are intimately connected. Where on the one hand he has described representations as mental phenomena organized through cognition by the principle of sufficient reason, he has already given away the underlying essence of all representations as the knowable thing-in-itself, namely the will, which links his epistemology to a metaphysical ground.

Just because the subject of willing is immediately given in self-consciousness, it is impossible further to define or describe the nature of willing. Indeed it is the most immediate of all our knowledge; in fact this immediacy must ultimately throw light on all other branches of knowledge which are very mediate (Schopenhauer, 1813/1974, p. 212).

In this passage Schopenhauer reveals the ground of our most immediate knowledge to be of the will seeing as we are all subjects of willing. This defines his fourth class of objects for the subject (the principle of sufficient reason of acting) as part of the fourfold root of the principle of sufficient reason, which is tied to his first class of objects (the principle of sufficient reason of becoming), in that the first class of objects is our representation of the real world and the fourth is our actions in the world. Schopenhauer (1813/1974) explains that his first class of objects constitutes his law of causality, whereas his fourth makes up

his law of motivation, and these are intimately connected to form the ground of his metaphysics. Schopenhauer (1813/1974) concludes that, “motivation is causality seen from within” (p. 214). As such, it is not only that his epistemology is connected to his metaphysics, but more importantly that he defines metaphysics in a non-traditional way where it becomes causally connected to human action and experience. Therefore, Schopenhauer’s metaphysics accounts for human experience, epistemology, and morality, as will be understood when his philosophy is seen as intended, in other words, when it is looked at as a whole. It is through cognition that humans apprehend representations of the world and interpret them as motives toward action, whereby the will blindly reacts to the strongest motive resulting in the observable representation of human action (Cartwright, 2010). As such, when Schopenhauer (1813/1974) explains the foundation of his metaphysics with the short statement, “motivation is causality seen from within” (p. 214), he successfully bridges metaphysics with epistemology, for the ground of being becomes also the ground of knowing.

Though in philosophy this non-traditional theory of metaphysics can be problematic, because by definition it exceeds that which metaphysics is intended to explain, it may be of benefit to psychology, where the objective is often to understand being through observable behaviour and the corresponding mental processes. In the final chapter I attempt to go into more depth about the possibility of a metaphysical psychology, and suggest where Schopenhauer’s version of metaphysics may be more conducive to psychology than traditional forms that have been abandoned. First, however, I explain Schopenhauer’s complete conception of the will and its many

consequences on behaviour, morality, and volition in order to facilitate an understanding of his philosophy prior to determining its psychological nuances.

Definition and Genealogy of the Will

The first task in defining Schopenhauer's will is to consider the former uses of the term in philosophy and related domains. This would normally be a superfluous enterprise if the terminology had been preserved throughout philosophy in the same way; however, the definition of *will* has been problematic throughout philosophy and theology for different reasons, and Schopenhauer's definition is certainly unique in comparison to these.

Hume (1748/2007) describes the will as, "the question of liberty and necessity; the most contentious question, of metaphysics, the most contentious science" (p. 68). This is primarily because the first conceptions of the will, normally attributed to Plato, were formulated under the assumption that humans had free will, or in other words, that humans had the capacity to make conscious decisions based on which way they chose to act voluntarily to satisfy some desire (O'Connor, 2013). Aristotle also outlines three categories for human action, voluntary, involuntary (not by choice), and non-voluntary (chosen because other options are worse) (Aristotle, 350 BC/1999). The ensuing debates over free will have been numerous, exhaustive, and as yet inconclusive.

The major recurring theme around the philosophical debate over free will is one of morality, namely whether people are responsible for their actions or not. With the early philosophical distinction between rational and animal parts of human nature, it was safe to assume that reason, as a faculty for judging the world, was available to humans for the purpose of making decisions, thus implying voluntary action. Our judgment about what

good or bad decisions are may constitute a sense of morality, or alternatively a subjective means of satisfying personal desires. The debate over free will resulted in two main philosophical camps that commit to a deterministic view of causality as either compatible or incompatible with free will. The former, called compatibilism, holds that determinism and free will are compatible only insofar as we acknowledge that we could have acted differently on the condition that we were in a different state of mind, had different motivation, or faced different circumstances. The latter, called incompatibilism, holds that free will is more absolute in nature than what compatibilists allow, and hence humans are capable of acting freely according to their desires without external causal influences on their will (Honderich, 1996).

Descartes (1649/1989) famously states that “the will is by its nature free in such a way that it can never be constrained” (p. 41). The implications of this statement, however, are that causal factors in the environment have no effect upon human will, where human volition is independent enough to cause changes in the environment but seemingly not the other way around. This creates a problem in philosophy as it means that free will must have at least some restrictions imposed by the external world, otherwise it would seem that humans are completely unaffected by their experiences of the world. Alternatively, assuming that there is no free will and that all human actions are completely determined by external causes seems intuitively problematic because it would mean that consciousness and reasoning have no power over our decisions, and that all our actions are ready made for us in advance (Timpe, n.d.). “But the failure of philosophers to work the account out in a fully satisfactory and intelligible form reveals that the very idea of free will (and so of responsibility) is incoherent or at least inconsistent with a

world very much like our own” (O’Connor, 2013, Do We *Have* Free Will section, para. 1).

Not only in philosophy, but also theology, the freedom of the will has been debated, however, with different implications, namely, whether God’s will is extended into human will. Here, the famous problem of evil arises, for if human will is God’s will then it follows that all acts of evil committed by humans are God’s will, which is inconsistent with religious depictions of God as benevolent. However, if God had granted humanity free will, then it follows that God either cannot prevent humans from committing evil, or He does not intervene; both stances serve as objections to God’s omnipotence, omniscience, and omnibenevolence (Cain, 2004). St. Augustine (354-430) had first proposed that human will is God’s will, and later revised his argument to be in favour of free will, acknowledging the problem of evil (Mendelson, 2012). St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) had similarly revised his beliefs to accommodate for free will in order to resolve the problem of evil (O’Connor, 2013). Schopenhauer (1840/2010) criticizes St. Augustine and Martin Luther (1483-1546) for revising their theories on human will to accommodate for their religious beliefs by accepting free will simply to explain sin as a human phenomenon unrelated to God’s benevolence. He also commends Spinoza, Joseph Priestly (1733-1804), and Voltaire (1694-1778) for giving up their belief in free will and advocating in their later works for a will that is necessarily caused but cannot be its own cause or cause actions.

Freedom of the Will

In 1837 Schopenhauer wrote the essay *On the Freedom of the Will* for a contest held by the Norwegian Society of Sciences which asked, “can the freedom of the will be

demonstrated from self-consciousness” (as cited in Cartwright, 2010, p.475). He won the prize, received a gold medal, became a member of the society, and had his essay published in 1840, being remembered as his clearest written work. In it, he argues that the will cannot be free because it is immediately occasioned by the external world. Freedom of the will assumes the absence of the principle of sufficient reason and thus lacks a cause for the will to act, where the will must be taken as inseparable from the material world and thus functioning together (Cartwright, 2010). To tie this together with Schopenhauer’s philosophy it is important to remember that the will and representation are simultaneous, that human perception of representations is apprehended through the principle of sufficient reason in cognition, and that this cognitive process organizes certain representations into motives, from which the will instinctually reacts to the strongest motive as manifested in human action. The action is then perceived by humans, through cognition, as yet another representation simultaneous with its willing, or being.

Schopenhauer (1819/1966) avoids using the German word *Willkür* to indicate free will and opts for the Latin phrase *liberum arbitrium indifferentiae* to precisely define a will that has absolute metaphysical freedom and is not dependent on any other factor. This distinction makes a big difference when considering his rejection of free will.

Through my presentation, then, freedom is not suspended, but merely elevated, namely, from the realm of individual actions, where it is demonstrably not to be encountered, up to a higher region, but one not so readily accessible to our cognition; that is, it is transcendental (Schopenhauer, 1840/2010, p. 117).

Here, Schopenhauer explains that the will is absolutely free in itself, in that it is a blind force; however, human actions are not free because they are necessarily determined by

motives acting upon the individual will. Therefore, in self-consciousness, that which we refer to as our free will or volition is merely an illusion, but serves to create the feeling of individual authorship over our actions. Schopenhauer commends Kant for having made the same observation,

One can therefore allow that were it possible for us to have such profound insight into a human being's way of thinking, as shown by inner as well as outer actions, that we would know every, even the least, incentives to actions as well as all the external occasions affecting them, then one could calculate a human being's conduct for the future with as much certainty as a lunar or solar eclipse (Kant, 1788/2004, p. 177).

Schopenhauer's worldview sees humans a part of nature, with the exception of consciousness that is used to understand nature from within. Nevertheless, this makes us subject to the same natural laws that are observable in all nature, to the same causal relationships with other physical matter, and ultimately subject to causal determinism. Therefore, our interaction with the world must follow from the same natural causes governing all of nature, and hence limit our freedom of action to what is already congruent with the ensuing and determined causes. In Schopenhauer's view, it is both contradictory and impossible to assume free will, given causal determinism. As such, he would agree with compatibilism insofar as actions are necessarily determined yet given a different motivation, character, or situation, the outcome could have varied.

I can do what I will: I can, if I will, give everything that I have to the poor and thereby become one myself-if I will!-But I am not able to will it because opposing motives have too much power over me for me to be able to do it. Whereas, if I had a different character, and indeed, to the extent that I were a saint, then I would be able

to will it; however, then I would also have no choice but to will it: I would, thus, have to do it (Schopenhauer, 1840/2010, p. 69-70).

It is important to note that Schopenhauer (1840/2010) believes that free will cannot reside in the subject or the object, otherwise in the former case the environment would have no effect on action and in the latter the environment would completely control all human actions. As such, the environment occasions the will's reaction, but does not cause it, and the individual action is the will as caused by a motive and not by the volition of the subject. It is the interaction between the subject's perceptions of the object that creates motives in cognition from which the will reacts as human action.

Character and Will

Another important concept in Schopenhauer's philosophy is his notion of "character" (*Charakter*), which is essentially one's individual will. For Schopenhauer there is no distinction between individual and character (or will). Atwell (1990) explains in his book, *Schopenhauer the Human Character*, that,

We cannot conceive of persons prior to their having a particular character; we cannot discern their identity distinct from their characters; and we have no idea what "characterless" persons might be, that is, "persons" whose environment has not yet graced them with character. To suppose otherwise is to suppose that persons and their characters are two very different, and easily separable, things (p. 24).

Schopenhauer believes that character is inherited from the father, and the intellect from the mother. Character, unlike the intellect however, is fixed and immutable, where individual actions are a product of one's character through motives (Cartwright, 2010). Schopenhauer defines the properties of character as; individuality (uniqueness),

empiricallity, constancy, and inbornness (Atwell, 1990). These qualities amount to a character that is distinct and unique to the individual; defined by one's conduct, disposition, and temperament; demonstrates stable conduct, disposition, and temperament over time; and is inherited. Here it is evident how Schopenhauer avoids the problem of free will as well as that of environmental determinism, which suggests that external causes in the world are responsible for human actions, removing human agency completely. It is this latter problem that gives rise to the issue of individual and moral responsibility in philosophy. Schopenhauer (1840/2010) attempts to provide an answer to resolve this issue by stating that,

Each person acts as he is, and the necessary action, always in accord with him, in the individual case, will be determined solely by motives. Freedom, which is not then to be met with in doing, must lie in the being. At all times, it has been a fundamental error, putting the last first, to attribute the necessity to the being and the freedom to the doing. Conversely, in the being alone lies freedom, but from being and motives, the doing follows of necessity: and from that which we do, we know what we are. On this, and not from the presumed *libero arbitrio indifferentiae*, rests consciousness of responsibility and the moral tendency of life. Everything depends on what someone is: from what he is, what he does will follow as a necessary corollary (p. 116).

He then explains that through actions we learn who we are (our character) by observing and assessing these representations through cognition and the intellect. He further examines the feeling of moral responsibility by stating that,

The character is the empirically recognized, constant, unalterable nature of an individual will. Now since this character is just as much a necessity factor of every action as a motive, this explains the feeling that our deeds proceed from ourselves, or it explains each 'I will' which accompanies all of our actions and by virtue of which everyone must recognize them as his deeds for which he then feels morally responsible (Schopenhauer, 1840/2010, p. 114).

The problem of moral responsibility is addressed again later when I discuss Schopenhauer's conception of character in relation to his basis of ethics and moral action in the next chapter.

Early on, Schopenhauer distinguishes between the "intelligible character" and the "empirical character", the former representing the acting will and the latter its phenomenon or representation. "The empirical character is entirely determined by the intelligible that is groundless, that is to say, will as thing-in-itself, not subject to the principle of sufficient reason (the form of the phenomenon)" (Schopenhauer, 1819/1966, p. 158). It is further explained that the empirical character will be a copy of the intelligible character by the end of one's life where all essential aspects are the same but inessential aspects can differ, such as aspects subject to external circumstance. The nexus of character will not change but some of its actions can so long as it does not contradict its essential nature; or as Schopenhauer (1819/1966) calls it, variations on the same theme. However, this interpretation is problematic for a variety of reasons and does not fit well with the rest of his philosophy, primarily because the empirical character causally depends on the intelligible where the former is will and the latter representation, and these are supposed to be simultaneous, indivisible, and two sides of the same coin, in

other words, not subject to a causal relationship. In the same book, Schopenhauer (1819/1966) writes,

The act of will and the action (or movement) of the body are not two different states objectively known, connected by the bond of causality; they do not stand in the relation of cause and effect, but are one and the same thing, though given in two entirely different ways, first quite directly, and then in perception for the understanding. The action (or movement) of the body is nothing but the act of will objectified, i.e., translated into perception (p. 100).

If the empirical character as representation is determined by the intelligible character as will, his philosophy contradicts itself. As a result, Schopenhauer later writes that this distinction is intended to be understood only metaphorically (Cartwright, 2010). Thus, we discover the essence of our character through analyzing our actions in cognition, but do not really form a separate empirical character through this process that mirrors our intelligible character. What remains here to be discussed is the notion of agency in human action, considering an immutable character that acts in accordance to motives.

The Intellect and Motives

In general the sphere and realm of all correction and refinement lies only in knowledge. Character is unalterable; motives work of necessity, but they must work through cognition as that which is the medium of motives. Cognition, however, is capable of a manifold expansion, of constant correction, in countless degrees: toward this all education works (Schopenhauer, 1840/2010, p. 77).

This becomes one of the most interesting aspects of Schopenhauer's philosophy that saves it from being fatalistic, namely that he affords the human intellect the power to expand,

reason, interpret motives, and even deny the will. I talk more about the *denial of the will-to-live* in the chapter on aesthetics.

Before discussing the nature of the intellect and its purpose, I should first make a few comments on motives though they have been consistently brought up throughout the present work. First, it is important to recall that Schopenhauer (1819/1966) considers motives to be causality passing through cognition, or as seen from within, and what he means by this is that our cognition recognizes certain representations as motives or causes, and the will then reacts to these causes. Some motives are abstract, which are those processed through the intellect thoroughly, while others are mere motives of perception, such as external stimuli that cause humans to react without judgment. Motives work to cause action or movement in the body in accordance with one's character (or will). As such, the conglomerate of actions, their effects, and moral consequences makes up what he considers the character of human beings, or in other words, their will.

The role of the intellect in the processing of motives and revealing of one's character is to assess the actions one has performed as either congruent or incongruent with one's character (or will). As mentioned earlier, it is possible for us to act out of character, primarily when our senses are obscured by some form of intoxicant, mental instability, temperament, exhaustion, or as a result of being deceived. Therefore, the motives that most easily influence our will are also those that are most congruent with it, and as a result are perceived by the intellect as the actions most revealing of our character (Schopenhauer, 1819/1966).

Another important implication of the intellect in Schopenhauer's philosophy, due to the fact that it is the only malleable resource available to humans, is that it becomes the key to self-control, even though it is an inherited capacity within which education facilitates the growth to its optimum limits. Schopenhauer (1819/1966) argues a distinction between intellect and genius, where both are inherited though the latter simply has a superior capacity than the former. Incidentally, he also argues that the more we nourish and grow the intellect the more sensitive it becomes to suffering, where genius reaches the pinnacle of this susceptibility.

Then in this world the capacity to feel pain increases with knowledge, and therefore reaches its highest degree in man, a degree that is the higher, the more intelligent the man (Schopenhauer, 1819/1966, p. 581).

Finally the intellect also resolves one of the issues mentioned earlier, namely the problem of moral responsibility when denying the freedom of the will and opting for determinism and compatibilism. Atwell (1990) argues that Schopenhauer's notion of the intellect suggest intellectual freedom, which then offers humans the ability to assess the types of motives they perceive and the ensuing actions they perform to better understand their conduct and moral consequences that they can then learn to either pursue or avoid in order to live more affluent lives. In this way we are able to gain a sense of self-control through the awareness of our moral character, and if nothing more, we can in the least have knowledge of how to avoid strong motives that have shown to lead to actions we find unpleasant, unwanted, or immoral.

The intellect is then also responsible for a third form of character not previously mentioned. The distinction outlined earlier between intelligible and empirical character

was shown to be rather problematic and finally intended only as a metaphor. Perhaps the metaphor, namely that we discover our character through our actions, is what Schopenhauer (1819/1966) refers to as the “acquired character”. Atwell (1990) explains that the acquired character is the *result* of one who is *acquiring* character, by which is meant a learning of one’s dispositions, temperaments, and resolutions, and adhering to principles that employ the necessary self-control to live congruently with one’s character. The concept of acquiring character is intimately connected to one’s moral character, where the former represents self-knowledge to act in accordance with one’s moral character. Schopenhauer (1819/1966) explains that the will is morally neutral, however one’s actions are perceived as their moral character, and the feeling of repentance is a sign that one did not act in accordance with their will; “Therefore I can never repent on what I have willed, though I can repent of what I have done, when, guided by false concepts, I did something different from what was in accordance with my will” (p. 296). This ties in to what was said earlier regarding the intellect’s correct and clear apprehension of motives, where Schopenhauer (1819/1966) explains,

Thus, for example, it is possible for me to have acted more egotistically than is in accordance with my character, carried away by exaggerated notions of the need in which I myself stood, or even by the cunning, falseness, and wickedness of others, or again by the fact that I was in too much of a hurry; in other words, I acted without deliberation, determined not by motives distinctly known in the abstract, but by motives of mere perception, the impression of the present moment, and the emotion it excited (p. 296).

In this way, poor decision making is the result of a poor intellect incapable of properly analyzing motives and acting upon those not in accordance with one's will due to a mistake in judgment. Similarly, a genius capable of knowing the consequences of motives reacts to those most in accordance with their will resulting in a greater feeling of self-control, even if their character is immoral, for their actions need not be in accordance with the world, but merely in accordance with their nature (Schopenhauer, 1819/1966). This line of reasoning causes some problems in Schopenhauer's notion of morality that are addressed in the following chapter.

Will-to-Live and the Denial of the Will-to-Live

Thus far it has been shown that the will is the metaphysical and knowable thing-in-itself, the underlying essence of the whole world, the single and universal force that constitutes being. That is the will taken in general, but as I have shown, Schopenhauer (1819/1966) discusses the will in a variety of contexts, and focuses primarily on the individuated will in humans in order to explain being through action, perception, and cognition. The individuated will, because it is striving, is often referred to as the "will-to-live", which encompasses instincts for life preservation, survival, procreation, and the satisfaction of basic desires.

The strongest manifestation of the will-to-live is in the act of procreation, and for this our sexual instinct is the most pronounced in our conduct. Through the product of generation in creating offspring, "the will-to-live has affirmed itself anew" (Schopenhauer, 1851/1974, p. 316-317). Schopenhauer (1819/1966) explains that the strongest objectification of the will-to-live is seen in the genitals, for it opposes knowledge and serves the single purpose of reproduction through the sexual act. "The

sexual impulse is proved to be the decided and strongest affirmation of life by the fact that for man in the natural state, as for the animal, it is his life's final end and highest goal" (Schopenhauer, 1819/1966, p. 329).

The only competing instinct with the sexual is the "denial of the will-to-live", which in its basic form rejects life due to the amount of suffering endured, however, this is a mistake in cognition to assume that through death one is absolved of the will, for it only affects the representation and not the will itself, which continues to strive (Schopenhauer, 1851/1974). It is difficult to see here why Schopenhauer (1819/1966) claims that suicide is not an escape from the suffering of the will but rather an affirmation of the will-to-live, for even if the will continues to strive, the human consciousness no longer exists to bear the suffering. This theoretical move may have been a product of his desire to cope with his father's suicide, or a rationalization to prevent him from committing the same act, considering his frequent laments about the suffering of existence. Cartwright (2010) remarks that it is rather odd for Schopenhauer to have regarded suicide as a foolish notion of escape from suffering, yet to make concessions for one particular type of suicide that can indeed bring about salvation, namely the Buddhist religious practice of starving onto death. In the latter, Schopenhauer sees it as a renunciation of the will-to-live through self-control and contemplation rather than an emotional and violent attack on one's will.

Nevertheless, Schopenhauer (1819/1966) explains that the will-to-live faces the inevitability of death but reacts to it as granted because it is not an extinction of the will but merely one of its representations;

We saw that it is not troubled by death, because death exists as something already included in and belonging to life. Its opposite, namely generation, completely balances it, and, in spite of the death of the individual, ensures and guarantees life for all time to the will-to-live (p. 330).

Here, the parallels between Schopenhauer and Freud already become evident with the similar notions of death and sexual instincts driving human behaviour. This is something I return to later in the chapter on *Freud and Psychoanalysis*.

In order to ameliorate the striving of the will-to-live, Schopenhauer (1819/1966) proposes the denial of the will-to-live as the only salvation from assured suffering. This, however, is not to be regarded as death or suicide as an escape from the world of suffering.

Contrary to silly objections, I observe that the denial of the will-to-live does not in any way assert the annihilation of a substance, but the mere act of not-willing; that which hitherto willed no longer wills (Schopenhauer, 1851/1974, p. 312).

As such, the will-to-live is to be taken as willing, and the denial of the will-to-live is to be taken simple as not willing. However this seems to run into a contradiction.

“The affirmation of the will presupposes the restriction of consciousness to one’s own individuality...” (Schopenhauer, 1851/1974, p. 316). Thus the denial of the will-to-live must be the expansion of consciousness to all living things, to the unified consciousness that relates to Vedic philosophy in Hinduism and Buddhism that Schopenhauer frequently cites. This may be a way to save the denial of the will-to-live from what appears at first to be a contradiction, in that it implies a cessation of willing, for if the actions and movements of the body as representation are inseparable from the

will, then the denial of the will to live would mean a cessation of action or movement, which is not what Schopenhauer intends to imply. Originally I would have suggested that we take his denial of the will-to-live as a metaphor in the same vein as the distinction between the intelligible and empirical character, however, Schopenhauer does not seem to require this. It appears to be the case that one does not deny the will altogether, but merely denies their own individuated will, the same individuated and objectified force that causes strife and suffering, and instead connects back to the totality of will that is completely free and untroubled by desire, need, and striving.

I wish to reiterate here that the suffering and striving of the will is caused by its objectification (individuation), which is the result of human consciousness and cognition when applied to the world that individuates and causes plurality. This plurality is then in competition to occupy matter, constantly striving against its divided self, and thus leading to suffering (Schopenhauer, 1819/1966). In this way, it makes sense for Schopenhauer to claim that the cessation of suffering is the denial of the will-to-live, for our actions are then a product of a universal consciousness as opposed to a self-serving consciousness. This, of course resonates clearly with Buddhism and Hinduism as the highest goal, sometimes referred to as moksha (emancipation, self-realization), other times as nirvana (freedom, aversion of desire), or in simple terms enlightenment; a state of being one with the universe (Navlakha, 2000). Of course, Schopenhauer regards this as the ascetic life and one of the most difficult life tasks to accomplish that is reserved for the very few (Cartwright, 2010).

The will itself cannot be abolished by anything except knowledge. Therefore the only path to salvation is that the will should appear freely and without hindrance,

in order that it can *recognize or know* its own inner nature in this phenomenon. Only in consequence of this knowledge can the will abolish itself, and thus end the suffering that is inseparable from its phenomenon. This, however, is not possible through physical force, such as the destruction of the seed or germ, the killing of the new-born child, or suicide. Nature leads the will to the light, just because only in the light can it find its salvation (Schopenhauer, 1819/1966, p. 400).

In this way, it appears that Schopenhauer may be suggesting that the will is naturally led toward this self-knowledge, as though it intends to arrive at salvation. Perhaps what is meant here is that death brings forth this salvation regardless of one's intentions, but it would seem that the early preparation for this liberation not only reduces suffering in existence but possibly makes finding a good death as life's purpose. Schopenhauer (1851/1974) praises the monastic life for holding strictly to these virtues through practices of renunciation, devotion, and commitment to chastity, though he proclaims himself an atheist.

Another form of the denial of the will-to-live discussed by Schopenhauer (1819/1966), although in a very temporary sense, is the appreciation of the aesthetic. He explains that when we immerse ourselves in the aesthetic we become pure subjects of knowing, consciously concerned only with the Platonic Ideas, which are the core of all aesthetics. This also conforms to his argument that knowledge is the only resource for the abolition of the will. I go into more depth about this in the chapter on Schopenhauer's aesthetics, where I also consider the moral implications, according to his system of thought, on character, the will-to-live, and the denial of the will-to-live.

Will-in-Nature

Schopenhauer published *On the Will in Nature* in 1836 and with it attempted to revive interest in his principle work as well as to demonstrate to science that his philosophy verifies with their view of nature but adds to it a meaningful metaphysical ground that the “shallow empiricists” ignore (Cartwright, 2010).

Schopenhauer attempted to demonstrate in *On the Will in Nature* that “unprejudiced empiricists,” who were unaware of his philosophy, had articulated from a posteriori sources theories that corroborated his fundamental idea: namely, that which we recognize in ourselves as will is that which is expressed in all natural phenomena (Cartwright, 2010, p. 467).

He wanted to show the practical application of his philosophy in other fields of inquiry to confirm that he had in fact discovered a truth in nature and is not merely speculating.

Not only did Schopenhauer hold that his metaphysics was compatible with the best findings of science, but also he argued that his philosophy provided a grounding explanation for the scientific worldview. This was a natural stance for Schopenhauer, because he held that both philosophy and science ultimately had to appeal to experience to justify and meaningfully express their claims (Cartwright, 2010, p. 467).

In this essay Schopenhauer (1836/1992) tackles the natural sciences, such as physiology, pathology, anatomy, botany, and astronomy, to demonstrate the inner workings of the will, and here first explains that all voluntary and involuntary body functions are regulated by the unconscious will.

Cartwright (2010) explains that Schopenhauer outlined his clearest conception of causality as per his principle of sufficient reason with the discussions of the will-in-nature as manifested in all organic and inorganic matter, in all physical forces, and all vital forces. As such, he completes the definition of his will to match exactly what Kant had referred to as the thing-in-itself, the underlying essence in all natural phenomena and also in ourselves, the absolute nature of being. This again relates to his metaphysics, in which he makes use of epistemology through our experience to be able to account for all human experience and therefore extend from our understanding of ourselves an understanding of nature.

Schopenhauer's (1836/1992) explanation is that the same will we have immediate knowledge of in ourselves through the expression, action, and movement of our body, is to be found in all of nature that we have only mediate access to. Similarly, our cognition that perceives causality immediately through the processing of motives into bodily action and movement, has mediate access to the causality perceived in nature. Therefore, because his world of representations is identical to his world of will, what is known to the subject immediately can apply to the mediate knowledge as well, for the same forces of causality run through both in the same way.

Finally it is worth mentioning that Schopenhauer had initially enrolled in university for medicine and kept up with scientific literature, imbuing him to write *On the Will in Nature*. He read and criticized an extensive review of Darwin's *Origin of Species* (Cartwright, 2010); however, Darwin quoted Schopenhauer's *Metaphysics of Sexual Love* in *The Descent of Man* to support the idea that love is instinctually driven by the need to procreate in the species;

...for, as the German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer remarks, 'the final aim of all love intrigues, be they comic or tragic, is really of more importance than all other ends in human life. What it all turns upon is nothing less than the composition of the next generation...It is not the weal or woe of any one individual, but that of the human race to come, which is here at stake' (as cited in Darwin, 1871/2004, p. 653).

CHAPTER 3-ON ETHICS

In Schopenhauer's ethics we first encounter a definitive psychology that is grounded in metaphysics but goes to explain moral actions through virtue ethics and character, as well as the implications these have on the individual and their interaction with other people. The majority of the psychological nuances in his philosophy are found in his ethics, and I delve into this more deeply in the final chapter.

One year after Schopenhauer had written and submitted *On the Freedom of the Will* to the Royal Norwegian Society of Sciences, he came across yet another prize essay contest offered by the Royal Danish Society for Scientific Studies (Cartwright, 2010), which asked,

Are the source and basis of morals to be sought in an idea of morality which is immediately contained in conscience, and in the analysis of the remaining fundamental moral notions originating from this, or in another cognitive principle (Schopenhauer, 1840/2010, p. 123)?

Schopenhauer's answer was submitted to the Royal Danish Society in 1839 in his essay *On the Basis of Morality*, which was rejected for allegedly not answering the essay question and insulting other acclaimed philosophers such as Fichte and Hegel, along with criticizing Kant, although his essay was the only submission to the contest. Schopenhauer was unaware that the principal judge of the contest was Hans Mertensen, a Hegelian; however, this did not prevent him from referring to his essay as a *Prize Essay on the Basis of Morals*, and compiling his two "prize essays" into a book entitled *The Two Fundamental Problems of Ethics* (Cartwright, 2010).

Cartwright (2010) explains that the rejection from the Royal Danish Society may have been prompted more so by Schopenhauer's severe criticism of Kant's ethics, where he denies the categorical imperative moral laws and considers them contradictory to evidence and inapplicable to the way humans actually interact, proposing instead a moral system that stems from human experience and also has metaphysical implications (for more on this see also, Cartwright 1999, and Schopenhauer 1840/2010). Schopenhauer is not interested in what we ought to do, but rather in the human will that constitutes our character in action and in accordance to motives. This relates back to his essay *On the Freedom of the Will*, in which it was explained that all human action necessarily stems from the interaction of one's will and the motives that pass through cognition. I have created a simple formula for clarification, [action/motion = stimulus/motive (external or abstract) + will]. Once again, Schopenhauer's method for his ethics is the same that he employs with the rest of his philosophy, namely the explanation of human experience, in this case the moral experience.

Schopenhauer (1836/1992) argues that "all people have recognized that the world besides its physical significance has a moral one as well" (p. 139), and this constitutes an additional element to his metaphysical system, namely that the value of moral actions have metaphysical significance. As I have stated earlier, Schopenhauer's metaphysics is intimately interconnected with his epistemology, and now it is seen that his ethics appear to be interconnected with these as well, in that, if the will constitutes the metaphysical ground and is also our inborn character, then from it directly we observe the ensuing action through some motivation that is then qualified with a moral value.

Cartwright (1999) also explains that Schopenhauer intends for his system to be considered a combination of metaphysics and ethics, where it is also shown to be a combination of metaphysics and epistemology. He argues that Schopenhauer's ethics,

Provides a provocative critique of Kant's ethics, one that both anticipates and motivates contemporary criticisms of Kantian-style deontological ethics; it presents a descriptive virtue ethics, concentrating on moral character and moral psychology; it offers a unified theory of virtues and vices; it draws on affinities to eastern thought; and it grounds Schopenhauer's ethics in a metaphysics that accords moral status to non-human animals (Cartwright, 1999, p. 253-254).

As such, Schopenhauer seems to rely on the explanatory power of one system (metaphysics) to support the other (epistemology, ethics, aesthetics) when outlining his philosophy. It is for these reasons that I am inclined to consider Schopenhauer's philosophy a holistic worldview, because the individual parts cannot be considered separately without reference to the whole system and the interplay that results in a cohesive idea about human nature. In the final chapter I discuss what this worldview looks like and its implications to psychology.

To begin detailing his metaphysical-ethics, Schopenhauer (1840/2010) places moral actions in three possible categories, and explains,

In general, there are three fundamental incentives for human actions, and any possible motive works only through the stimulation of these incentives. They are

(a) Egoism, which wills one's own well-being (is boundless).

(b) Malice, which wills another's woe (extends to the most extreme cruelty).

(c) Compassion, which wills the well-being of another (extends to noble-mindedness and magnanimity). (p. 214).

Egoism

First I explore the moral implications of Schopenhauer's notion of egoism (*Egoismus*), which is equated with an indifferent moral action, in that it only extends to one's own well-being but is indifferent to, or rather has little moral consequence in the world simply because it does not seem to affect the well-being of others. In this way, the egoist is neither morally reprehensible nor morally commendable, and this constitutes the first of his two antimoral incentives (Cartwright, 1999).

Schopenhauer (1840/2010) begins by first explaining that all animals and humans alike are driven by their own well-being and preservation, which he calls egoism,

This *egoism* is in animals, as in humans, most precisely connected with their innermost core and essence, indeed, actually identical. Therefore as a rule all human actions spring from egoism, and from this we must first and foremost always attempt to explain any given action (p. 202)

With this, it is evident that the connection between one's will, which strives for its own preservation, and the actions one commits, must have the same end in view, and that is the regulation and well-being of that individual. Thus, according to Schopenhauer's system, it is necessary to conclude that all human actions must stem from egoism.

Schopenhauer (1840/ 2010) further explains that,

Egoism by its nature is boundless: the human wills unconditionally to preserve his existence; wills it unconditionally free of pains, among which are included all want and privation; wills the greatest possible amount of well-being, and wills

every pleasure of which he is capable, even seeks wherever possible to develop new capacities for pleasure (p. 202).

From the notion of egoism, Schopenhauer argues the necessity of civil laws to protect the interests of the people at large and prevent individual egoism from trespassing on the rights of others, where he considers it morally wrong to infringe on another's will (Cartwright, 1999). This reveals that egoism can in fact lead to a morally reprehensible actions in the case of extreme egoism, where vices such as, "greed, gluttony, lust, self-interest, avarice, covetousness, injustice, hard-heartedness, pride, arrogance, etc." (Schopenhauer, 1840/2010, p. 206) are associated with it. Schopenhauer (1840/2010) explains that this also shows the leading of one moral incentive to another, namely egoism to malice, and that in fact all humans possess a combination of all three moral incentives to differing degrees.

Due to this necessary human condition, Schopenhauer (1840/2010) argues that any attempt to concern oneself or assist in the well-being of another person is automatically observed as magnanimous and worthy of praise. This is because it constitutes more than an indifferent moral action, which is the natural state of affairs considering that our will is given to us immediately, while the representations of the will of others is only given to us mediately, so that in our subjective consciousness the well-being of others cannot be felt directly, though our own is consistently felt and in need of attention.

With the turning of our attention from our own well-being to that of others, Schopenhauer begins to explain moral actions that seem to have some value, particularly because they affect people either negatively or positively. Before turning my attention to

actions that consider the positive well-being of others, I will first discuss what Schopenhauer believes to be a more common type of moral action, which is the negative well-being of others, namely the actions that are aimed at the harming of others for some particular purpose.

Malice

Schopenhauer's (1840/2010) notion of malice (*Bosheit*) is his second antimoral incentive and constitutes a malicious character with evil intent toward others, through vices such as "spitefulness, jealousy, envy, ill-will, malice, *Schadenfreude* (delight in another's misfortune), fault-finding, calumny, insolence, petulance, hatred, anger, treachery, perfidy, vengefulness, cruelty, etc." (p. 206). Malice is merely a stronger form of egoism; therefore it follows from the same premise of being overly concerned with one's own well-being and failing or being unable to acknowledge the well-being of others, and in the extreme of egoism one becomes malicious (Schopenhauer, 1840/2010).

Cartwright (1999) explains that Schopenhauer saw gradations of maliciousness, where envy constitutes one of the most reprehensible qualities but leads into *Schadenfreude*, and then to the even more reprehensible quality of cruelty. Schopenhauer (1840/2010) explains that envy is very common in humans and can be manifested due to the envy of another's good fortune or worse, to the envy of another's natural gifts. In the former, it is easy to overcome the enviousness as fortune can also eventually favour the envious individual; however, the latter is difficult to overcome and often leads to malicious actions because gifts of nature cannot be obtained by the envious person. It is this latter form of envy that can lead to *Schadenfreude*, where one begins to take pleasure

in the suffering of others, and to the extreme degree to inflict intentional suffering onto others through cruelty.

With the introduction to malice, Schopenhauer makes the first strong distinctions between right and wrong. As previously stated, he considers any act of infringing upon another's will to be morally wrong. Interestingly this clarifies how his system is then considered one of virtue ethics and not merely prescriptive ethics, primarily because the rightness or wrongness of a moral action is qualified by the intent of the individual and not the result of the action. This also goes to explain Cartwright's assessment that Schopenhauer's ethics are psychological and metaphysical in nature, where the individual morality is judged based on one's moral character through intention and not only one's moral action through its effect.

Schopenhauer's (1819/1966) account of moral *wrong* is one's will extending beyond their own physical body to encroach on and deny the will of others, in which case moral *right* is the counteraction to this by denying the infringement on one's will through whatever means necessary, at times even killing the other person if it means affirming your own will over theirs. Right is then not a positive action but only a reaction to a wrong, in which case it can often take the form of another "wrong" action but is accepted as "right" insofar as it is the warding off and denial of an original "wrong".

Suffering is mere occurrence; morality can have regard to suffering only indirectly, namely to show merely that what is done simply in order not to suffer any wrong, is not wrongdoing (Schopenhauer, 1819/1966, p. 342).

With this it is also import to recall Schopenhauer's commitment to the belief of an inborn character, so that it becomes clear that in his system the egoist or malicious individual is

by his nature disposed to that particular moral character or will. Atwell (1990) gives an example of Schopenhauer's meaning,

Whether we are dealing with a kettle of water or with a human being, "external circumstances" simply "occasion" the manifestations of that which is already latent in the water or the human being; they do not impose on water the "disposition" to boil any more than they impose on a human being the disposition to commit murderous deeds (p. 26).

In this way, it appears that Schopenhauer leaves little room for moral growth or change if he considers individuals to be predisposed to particular moral characters. It is because Schopenhauer's system relies on an immutable metaphysical will, from which one's character is observed, that it also has consequences on his ethics. Atwell (1990) also explains how the relatively fixed moral character is understood in Schopenhauer's philosophy,

Since I am basically my character or will, if I were to choose the character or will that I am, I would have to antedate what I am, hence I would have to exist prior to existing-and this is self-contradictory (p. 47).

It appears that the only allocation of morally diverse actions in Schopenhauer's (1819/1966) philosophy is accounted for by the explanation that each individual is subject to all three moral incentives to varying degrees, so that the same individual can act in accordance with their will when committing morally "right" as well as morally "wrong" actions. However, one's overall character can be judged morally as egotistical, malicious, or compassionate, given sufficient observation of their actions and intent.

With the case of the malicious individual, the explanation for this disposition and its effects on that individual are,

With regard to the man who commits them, unjust and malicious actions are a sign of the strength of his affirmation of the will-to-live and accordingly of the distance separating him from true salvation, from denial of the will-to-live, and consequently from redemption from the world (Schopenhauer, 1851/1974, p. 320-321).

Schopenhauer (1819/1966) also explains that the strength of the will-to-live in a malicious individual causes constant torment, to which,

...he then seeks indirectly the alleviation of which he is incapable directly, in other words, he tries to mitigate his own suffering by the sight of another's, and at the same time recognizes this as an expression of his power. The suffering of another becomes for him an end in itself; it is the spectacle over which he gloats; and so arises the phenomenon of cruelty proper, of bloodthirstiness, so often revealed by history in the Neros and Domitians, in the African Deys, in Robespierre and others (p. 364).

In other words, Schopenhauer considers malicious characters to be a lost cause, almost solipsistic in nature, for the will-to-live in that individual is so strong that it denies the existence of all other willing beings for the sake of their most prosperous striving and survival, and ultimately the alleviation of their own suffering. Schopenhauer's argument for the strength of one's will-to-live is that it showcases the most primitive instinctual actions toward hedonism and survival, whereas the denial of the will-to-live is the usurping of the striving will by the intellect to the degree that one becomes a pure subject

of knowing/cognition (also called pure will-less knowing). Again, both ends of this spectrum are correlated to the intellect of the individual and as such are subject to some modification and malleability given Schopenhauer's suggestion that education and knowledge can in fact improve the intellect significantly. Through this synthesis of ideas, Schopenhauer demonstrates that his notion of epistemology can have both positive and negative effects on metaphysics, and then on ethics in turn.

If humans are capable of improving their intellect through education and knowledge, and this results in greater self-control through the monitoring of actions and their motivations, thereby restricting their will, it follows that both their intent for actions and the resulting actions themselves can be modified, restricted, and adjusted, to the degree that their moral characters have some room for adaptation. However, Schopenhauer (1840/2010) denies that people can be morally educated and insists instead that people can only be trained to be a little more or less egoistical, malicious, or compassionate, giving some variability to their moral actions but ultimately not altering their metaphysical and inherent moral character.

Schopenhauer's (1840/2010) conclusion about the malicious character is that it describes the misanthrope, who suffers intensely due to their overpowering will-to-live and receives some pleasure (alleviation) in the suffering of others. The mistake the malicious misanthrope makes is in seeking self-control, power, and pleasure through the denial of another's will as opposed to denying their own will, the very source of their torment and misanthropy. In this way, it is possible to see how in Schopenhauer's system, both the malicious and compassionate can have much knowledge, yet the former, through an error in cognition due to a strong will, reacts with malice to the suffering of others,

whereas the latter reacts with compassion to the same situation. The implications of this are further discussed in the final chapter.

Schopenhauer (1840/2010) also discusses the main deterrents and motivators of moral actions to which all moral characters are subject. He explains that one's moral disposition (*Stimmung*), whether it be egoistic, malicious, or compassionate, is necessarily restricted by external powers, which are often set up as civil laws for just the purpose of warding off the abundant antimoral inclinations of individuals and also for the protection of individual rights from the violation of others. He also argues that religion, as a metaphysics for the laypeople, offers the same motivators and deterrents in the abstract in order to regulate morality in its followers, by offering rewards and punishments.

Gods were indicated whose will and command were now the required ways of acting, and whose every command was reinforced through punishment and reward, either in this world or another to which we would go after death (Schopenhauer, 1840/2010, p. 207).

Schopenhauer (1840/2010) argues that “for obviously all actions called forth my motives of *such a kind* always would be rooted simply in mere egoism” (p. 207), and though these frequently occur, he claimed that actions of real moral worth must be of a much nobler and sincerely selfless kind, namely those actions performed through genuine compassion.

Compassion

Schopenhauer's (1840/2010) notion of compassion (*Mitleid*) constitutes his only positive moral incentive, where the previous two were considered antimoral incentives. In line with Schopenhauer's (1840/2010) pessimistic view of human nature, before

discussing compassion he first explains the human vices that he believes are more often exhibited than the virtues,

However, my plan required that I take into consideration this dark side of human nature, through which my path of course departs from all other moralists and becomes similar to that of Dante who first leads into hell (p. 206).

To begin with Schopenhauer (1840/2010) defines the concept of compassion as process of identification with the suffering and will of another being,

That another becomes *the ultimate end* of my will just as, otherwise, I am; and so through this: that I immediately will *his* well-being and do not will *his* woe, just as I otherwise immediately will only *that of my own*. This, however, necessarily presupposes that I suffer along with *his* woe, feel *his* woe, as otherwise I would only mine, and therefore, I immediately will his well-being as, otherwise, I would only my own (p. 212).

This indicates that the *Not-I* (everyone else except for me) becomes identified as the *I* through the awareness that behind the principle of individuation all beings share the same will. Schopenhauer (1840/2010) explains that,

However, this requires that I *be identified with him* in some way, i.e., that the complete *distinction* between me and the other, upon precisely which my egoism rests, to a certain degree be suspended. Now, however, since I do not live *in another's skin*, it is only by means of the *cognition* that I have of him, i.e., the representation of him in my mind, that I identify with him so much that my deed proclaims the distinction to be suspended (p. 212).

It is explained that this is no unique or special quality, but rather a very common phenomenon that all humans experience to some degree the sufferings of others, and the removal of which is the basis for all happiness and satisfaction (Schopenhauer, 1840/2010). This also presumes Freud's conception that all positive states of being are merely the reduction of some pain or suffering in his drive reduction model, which I will address more thoroughly in the final two chapters.

The internal worlds of good and evil people are very different, for the former, other people represent a *self once again*, a concept Schopenhauer borrowed from Vedic philosophy, *This art thou* (Chandogya Upanishad, 6:8:7, in Navlakha, trans. 2000); and for the latter, other people are 'non-egos'. Thus, for malicious individuals their inner world is not homogenous with the external world and they assume others would fail to help them in times of need, whereas good individuals find the external world homogenous with their own and assume others have very similar interests to their own (Cartwright, 1999).

The cognitive defect of the malicious is that they do not recognize the same will in others that they find in themselves and as such deny the metaphysical ground that Schopenhauer believes to be true of the world, namely that all representations have an underlying will. Good people then have an accurate understanding of the world when recognizing the same unified metaphysical will individuated in every single person, and through this consider the will of others to be the same will as their own (Cartwright, 1999).

From the notion of compassion, Schopenhauer (1840/2010) derives two primary virtues from which all other virtues can be further derived, namely justice and loving

kindness (or philanthropy), which account for the only genuinely compassionate and morally worth actions;

...the moral significance of an action can only lie in its relation to others; only with respect to them can it have moral worth or reprehensibility, and consequently be an action of justice or loving kindness, as well as the opposite of the two (p. 211).

Justice is the first virtue derived from compassion because it stems from a negative antimoral disposition to harm others that naturally occurs in all humans, but is then restrained through virtue in order to prevent infringing upon the well-being of others. Justice is then a restraint from actually harming others and constitutes a first form of compassion (Cartwright, 1999). This establishes a more passive virtue, in that, it does not activate the motivation to help another person, but simply the motivation not to be the cause of another's suffering. With regards to the motives for virtue, Schopenhauer (1840/2010) explains that,

...there are two clearly separated degrees to which suffering of another immediately becomes my motive, i.e., can determine me to do or not to do something: specifically, first only to the degree that, working against egoistic or malicious motives, it restrains me from causing another's suffering, from myself becoming the cause of another's pain, to giving rise to that which still does not exist; but second, to the higher degree, wherein compassion working positively, impels me to activity (p. 216).

Loving kindness, or philanthropy, is the second virtue derived from compassion but the first positively derived form of compassion because it actually seeks out to help the well-being of others (Cartwright, 1999).

It is primarily the virtue of loving kindness then that accounts for the identification with the suffering of others as one's own, and though noble in intent, leads to certain problems in Schopenhauer's philosophy. First, it defies one of the primary principles that Schopenhauer set out at the beginning of his ethics, and that I mentioned earlier, that all actions are performed through one's ego. The exception here is that egoism is suspended when one identifies with another's suffering and adopts it as their own. This is much like the exception he makes that I mentioned earlier with the denial of the will-to-live, where the will is suspended resulting in a pure subject of cognition. Second and more importantly is the actual process of identification, which is not explained as imagining another's suffering but actually experiencing it as your own.

...I no longer perceive him as he is given in empirical intuition, as completely distinct from me, as a stranger about whom I am indifferent; rather, I suffer *in him* even though his skin does not enclose my nerves. Only through this can *his* woe, *his* distress, become a motive *for me*; otherwise, it can only be my own (Schopenhauer, 1840/2010, p. 231).

This seems to posit that the mental or perhaps even physical disposition of a being can be transmitted into another simply through some cognitive process involving observation and identification. To this Schopenhauer (1840/2010) responds,

This process is, and I repeat it, *mysterious*; for it is something for which reason can give no immediate account, the grounds for which are not to be ascertained by

the way of experience. And yet it is an everyday occurrence. Everyone has often experienced it himself; it has not remained foreign to even the most hard-hearted and selfish (p. 231)

This is intended to corroborate with his metaphysics, in that, the process of identification is where one sees beyond the principle of individuation to the unified will in all others, yet this still fails to explain how this process works, and Schopenhauer (1840/2010) acknowledges this limitation,

Certainly this process is astonishing, indeed, mysterious. In truth, it is the great mystery of ethics, its *urphenomenon* [primordial, basic, elemental, or essential core of a phenomenon] and the boundary-stone beyond which only metaphysical speculation can dare take a step (p. 213).

Cartwright (1999) argues that Schopenhauer appeals to moral traditions for evidence of moral experience, such as consensus in Eastern and Western traditions on moral principles, though he also admits the weakness of this type of argument;

Yet what serves as the confirmation of his views is not that mainstream intellectual traditions share his insight, but that he can produce a philosophical system that has an explanatory force greater than that of rival theories; one that preserves insights from other traditions within a context in which the totality of human experiences receives a unified explanation, something these traditions could not accomplish (p. 267).

Beyond this, what makes Schopenhauer's ethics unique is that he disagreed with Kant that human essence lies in reason which further produces morals that separate us from

animals, and instead proposed that human essence is the will and that suffering produces morals that animals are not impervious to because they also suffer (Cartwright, 2010).

Finally, another unique component of his ethics that builds on the disagreement with Kant, and is recognized by Cartwright (1999), is that,

Schopenhauer views ethics as part of psychology, and he attributes metaphysics to the moral quality of a person's behaviour...Schopenhauer resolves the psychology of ethics into a matter of will rather than reason, and he sees a metaphysics expressed in a person's behaviour instead of a metaphysical conception of oneself that leads to a person's behaviour (p. 267-268).

As discussed previously, the culmination of a person's behaviour is that person's character, and as such, is that person's will, so that the evaluation of one's morality is really an evaluation of one's metaphysical will or character. "Can ethics transform a hard-hearted person into a compassionate person and thereby into a just and philanthropic one?-Certainly not: the difference of character is innate and ineradicable" (Schopenhauer, 1840/2010, p. 250). Although, "One cannot change the goal to which the will strives, but only the path it takes...In this regard there is certainly a moral education and an ethics that improves: but it does not go beyond this..." (Schopenhauer, 1840/2010, p. 255). In essence "The head is enlightened; the heart remains unimproved" (Schopenhauer, 1840/2010, p. 255).

Thus far I have discussed how Schopenhauer aims to explain the essence of human beings through his metaphysics of the will, which relies on his epistemology to demonstrate our intimate knowledge of our inner being through cognition and representations, which further aims to explain human actions through motivation that is

ultimately shown to be grounded in morality. This synthesis captures the cohesive philosophy on human nature, however, leaving out one other component central to Schopenhauer's philosophy that he believes completes this task, and I am referring to his notion of aesthetics that is discussed in the next chapter.

Schopenhauer's ethics suggests a psychological moral experience that stems from one's being, the actions of which provide us with self-knowledge. In his philosophy, the acquisition of self-knowledge is one of life's highest aims and affords us intellectual freedom, from which all other goals can be pursued. With the addition of his aesthetics, his main philosophy is complete and reveals the psychological worldview here alluded to.

CHAPTER 4-ON AESTHETICS

Schopenhauer was a strong admirer of the arts. Cartwright (2010) discusses in his biography that he was an avid flute player, and dedicated some time each morning to practicing his instrument. He often attended concerts, though very much disliked the opera as he considered it a cacophony of artistic formats competing each other rather than being harmonious, and he specifically admired the work of Italian composer Rossini (1792-1868) as well as Mozart (1756-1791). His dedication to music, both as a flute player and enthusiast, may have influenced him to consider music to be the highest form of art, a perfect copy of the will in the world. His pessimism may also have attracted him strongly to epic and tragic poetry, holding the tragedies of Shakespeare in the highest regard. Finally, his travels as a youth may have influenced his inclusion of architecture, hydraulics, and horticulture, into his hierarchy of aesthetics.

In the third section of *The World as Will and Representation*, Schopenhauer discusses representations once more, but now in the context of aesthetics, which provides a perspective that transcends the principle of sufficient reason and makes a direct connection to his metaphysics.

Magee states of Schopenhauer that, “his aesthetics are a special application of his metaphysics...and this means that only if the metaphysics have been accurately grasped are the aesthetics even so much as intelligible” (as cited in Foster, 1999, p. 214).

Foster (1999) explains that Schopenhauer’s aesthetics, which occupy a significant portion of his works, rely very much on the metaphysical foundation set out with the discussion of the will, “for Schopenhauer, genuine aesthetic experience, though rare,

leads directly to an apprehension of metaphysical truth, to the core of genuine knowledge” (p. 213).

Schopenhauer’s (1819/1966) aesthetics focuses on the universality of ideas found within objects that then express truth. For example, a historical war painting is not a specific piece of knowledge about a given war period and an expression of a historical truth; rather it is a universal expression of the truth of the Platonic Idea that is found in nothing particular, but across all ideas of war and history. “Grades of the objectification of the will are expressed in numerous individuals, but Platonic Ideas exist as the eternal forms of things, which are never perfectly exemplified in any particular thing” (Cartwright, 2010, p. 309). This then shows Schopenhauer’s reliance on the Platonic Ideas to formulate his theory of aesthetics, but also serves to create a distinction in his philosophy between what he considers good and bad art, the former being the genial expression of the Platonic Idea, and the latter being an imitation of some particular object that fails to express anything universal.

Aside from the access to truth that Schopenhauer’s (1850/2004) aesthetics provides, he also discusses the subjective experience that we have when enjoying art,

As we know, the world as will is the primary (*ordine prior*) and the world as *idea* the secondary world (*ordine posterior*). The former is the world of desire and consequently that of pain and a thousandfold misery. The latter, however, is in itself intrinsically painless: in addition it contains a remarkable spectacle, altogether significant or at the very least entertaining. Enjoyment of this spectacle constitutes aesthetic pleasure (p. 101).

It is important to recall that Schopenhauer categorizes his notion of representations by their ability to express their underlying will,

Schopenhauer had also posited a hierarchical ontology of the world as representation, based on the degree to which the will was manifest. This hierarchy ranged from the most universal and least expressive to the most individualistic and most highly expressive level of the will's objectification (Cartwright, 2010, p. 309).

In the same way, Schopenhauer describes the various art forms he is familiar with and interested in by arranging them in accordance to their level of the objectification of the will.

Before turning to the detailed discussion on aesthetics, it is important to address an objection raised by Foster (1999), who points out that Schopenhauer's metaphysics of the will runs into trouble when considering that our knowledge of will in ourselves is immediate, yet the knowledge or awareness of a unified will in the rest of the world is merely inferential. What possible basis would we then have to assume that the will is the underlying essence of all objects if we only have access to it in ourselves but merely assume that all other things have a similar essence? Schopenhauer's commitment to aesthetics serves the purpose of answering this objection through his argument that our immersion in aesthetics fosters pure will-less knowing, in which we understand the world as will without ourselves willing. Schopenhauer (1819/1966) explains that,

We *lose* ourselves entirely in this object, to use a pregnant expression; in other words, we forget our individuality, our will, and continue to exist only as pure subject, as clear mirror of the object, so that it is as though the object alone

existed without anyone to perceive it, and thus we are no longer able to separate the perceiver from the perception, but the two have become one...what is thus known is no longer the individual thing as such, but the *Idea*, the eternal form...the individual has lost himself; he is *pure* will-less, painless, timeless *subject of knowledge* (p. 178-179).

In this way, Schopenhauer argues that through the aesthetic experience we come closer to understanding the will as thing-in-itself of objects by our apprehension of the Platonic Ideas, and in the case of music, we are then exposed to a direct copy of the will itself. Foster (1999) explains that this notion is one that has long fascinated artists and many have attempted to capture the feeling and understanding of the experience of art.

Through the description of his aesthetics, Schopenhauer first makes a connection to the Platonic Ideas, then to the role of the intellect and genius in the aesthetic experience, through which he also arrives at another form of the denial of the will-to-live, and finally to the effect that the various art forms have on human aesthetic experience and their gradation of the objectification of the will.

The Platonic Ideas in Art

Cartwright (2010) explains that Schopenhauer believes Kant had ruined the meaning of Platonic Ideas by making them subject to pure reason, and therefore inaccessible to human experience. This follows from his previous arguments against Kant's epistemology that uses the same reasoning in criticizing his predecessor's alleged philosophical missteps. Instead, Schopenhauer prides himself in adopting the correct meaning of the Platonic Ideas by interpreting them as objects for the subject, where these Ideas lie between the will and the representation.

The will as thing in itself is not a representation; when it becomes an object, it is the Idea, and when the will is objectified in time, space, and causality, it is multiplied into the fleeting and changing mundane things in the world. Science only concerns itself with the last. Art, with the exception of music, presents Platonic Ideas, and so art presents a more adequate expression of the will (Cartwright, 2010, p. 311-312).

As such, Ideas are translated through the principle of sufficient reason into particular things of experience that are the mediate objectifications of the will, however, in aesthetic experience we no longer go through this cognitive process but rather focus solely on the Idea itself. This distinction, that Schopenhauer also uses to explain his views of the approach of science versus those of art, places aesthetics closer to the acquisition of truth than science; however, this is primarily done as a result of the connection between his metaphysics and aesthetics, where the former was already argued as the foundation of truth in comparison to the study of representations that science is limited to. This then relates back to Schopenhauer's attempt to demonstrate the value of his metaphysics as the foundation from which science must proceed in his essay, *On the Will in Nature*. The connection between Schopenhauer's metaphysics and aesthetics is important when considering that the aesthetic experience is, among other things, intended to explain our awareness of the will as the thing-in-itself of all objects as representations.

Nevertheless, Cartwright (2010) also explains that Schopenhauer does credit Kant for considering aesthetics from the subject; however, he believes that it is not through judgment that we ought to consider aesthetics but rather the subject's aesthetic experience itself. In the aesthetic experience we no longer apprehend the object through the principle

of sufficient reason in order to satisfy some desire, rather we become lost in the idea of the object and removed from the world with all of its suffering and woes to experience a feeling of serenity. This experience transforms both subject and object; “The subject, the aesthetic contemplator, morphed into a ‘*pure, will-less, painless, timeless subject of cognition*’ and the object of cognition was a Platonic Idea” (p. 311).

Schopenhauer (1850/2004) explains that the objective Platonic Idea we have in aesthetic perception is as though time were removed from the sequence of changing states in an object, and we perceive the totality of those sequences all at once in unity as a whole. For example, we would apprehend the totality of a flower, from its various stages as a seedling, to a growing stem, to its sprouting leaves, to the budding of its fruit, and finally to its full bloom. We would be in awe of its being, its form, its growth, its vertical extension that appears to defy gravity, and the miraculous colours its presents through its body and unfolding petals.

Though Schopenhauer (1819/1966) uses the Platonic Ideas to explain his notion of aesthetic experiences, he argues that Plato makes an error in considering the aim of art to be an expression of the individual object, whereas in his view its aim is the expression of the Idea. Through this expression, the aesthetic experience becomes available to all individuals, but the art itself is then regarded as an expression of the genius of the author. Foster (1999) explains that,

Schopenhauer turns the hierarchy of Plato topsy-turvy: the Idea is glimpsed in nature by the genius, at the level of what Plato terms the ‘visible world,’ and is filtered ‘downward’ into images, which subsequently direct ordinary intellect ‘upward’ to apprehension of the Idea...Schopenhauer embraces perception as a

source of enlightenment, whereas Plato rejects it...Despite their differences, Plato and Schopenhauer stress the importance of metaphysics, of attending to truths which endure, rather than to the exigencies of everyday life (p. 232).

Plato (380BC/2000) considers the senses to be flawed and illusory, and the Ideas to be reserved for intellectual reasoning, whereas Schopenhauer (1819/1966) bases his aesthetic experience on the perception of art, which grasps the Idea. Yet, both philosophers agree that art ought not to be too literal an interpretation of reality, and both condemn instances of direct imitation of reality as it facilitates very little to no imagination (Foster, 1999).

In aesthetic contemplation we become pure subjects of knowing because we contemplate Platonic Ideas that constitute an unconditional knowledge, much like that of the will and unlike the conditional knowledge of representations that always stand in law-like relations to one another. It is a form of pure knowing that constitutes one of the two types of the denial of the will-to-live, though in the case of aesthetics it is only temporary (Hamlyn, 1999). The temporary nature of this respite from willing is accorded to any person, yet the permanent aesthetic consciousness that endows a pure subject of knowing with a much stronger denial of the will-to-live is reserved for geniuses (Foster, 1999). Previously I discussed the denial of the will-to-live as a method of contemplation toward self-restraint and control. In the context of aesthetics, the denial of the will-to-live is the result of immersing the intellectual mind or that of a genius in the Platonic Ideas; however, this is argued to have the potential to lead to madness.

On Women and Aesthetics

First, it important to note here that Schopenhauer (1819/1966) does not accord genius to women. It is precisely here that Schopenhauer first expresses misogynistic ideas that he further develops in his later works. In the *Parerga and Paralipomena*, he devotes a whole essay, *On Women*, to a diatribe about the limitations and place of women in the world.

The sight of the female form tells us that woman is not destined for great work, either intellectual or physical...The most intense sufferings, joys, and manifestations of power do not fall to her lot; but her life should glide along more gently, mildly, and with less importance than man's ...they are themselves childish, trifling, and short-sighted, in a word are all their lives grown-up children; a kind of intermediate stage between the child and the man, who is a human being in the real sense (Schopenhauer, 1851/1974, p. 614-615).

In the essay, he goes further to outline the limitations of women, and suggests that their place in society ought to be in subordination to men, otherwise society risks according them too many liberties and they will assume the airs of men though they could not possibly fill those roles. For this subordination to work, Schopenhauer (1854/1974) suggest that polygamy ought to be practiced and regulated, as he believes that, “as every man needs many women, nothing is more just than that it should be open to him, indeed incumbent on him, to provide for many women” (p. 624), and he concludes the section by stating that “the Mormons are right” (p. 625).

It is also important when considering Schopenhauer's (1854/1974) aesthetics to be aware that he regards the artistic inclinations and interest of women to be mere

entertainment, and a wholly pretentious enterprise for them, with the sole objective of flaunting themselves in society and capturing the interest of men;

They [women] really and truly have no bent and receptivity either for music, poetry, or the plastic arts; but when they affect and profess to like such things, it is mere aping for the sake of their keen desire to please...It therefore lies in the nature of women to regard everything merely as a means to win the man; and their interest in anything else is always only simulated, a mere roundabout way; in other words, it ends in coquetry and aping (p. 620).

With this in mind, what follows on aesthetics and genius is then only applicable to men, according to Schopenhauer's system. This seems odd considering Schopenhauer (1851/1974) belief that "from the father the child receives the will, the character; from the mother, the intellect. The latter is the redeeming principle, the former the binding" (p. 317). This would indicate that genius can be inherited from a mother who is incapable of possessing it herself. Though, later in life, Schopenhauer admits to having underestimated the artistic talents of women,

The effects of his popularity, however, may have moved him to alter his views of women. The old misogynist became enchanted by the twenty-six-year-old Elisabeth Ney, who came to Frankfurt to carve Schopenhauer's bust. The vivacious and intelligent sculptress impressed the philosopher by her artistic talents...(Cartwright, 2010, p. 544).

And, he was also moved to reconsider the intelligence of women,

...along with the number of women who were keen to discuss his philosophy, may have led the philosopher to waver his belief that women lacked the intellect

and objectivity to meaningfully engage in science and philosophy. Malwida von Meysenbug, Wagner's friend and acquaintance of Nietzsche, gave hearsay evidence for this possibility...[by Schopenhauer] telling her [Meysenbug's friend] that when a woman succeeds in raising herself above the crowd, she grows ceaselessly and greater than a man (Cartwright, 2010, p. 544).

None of these reconsiderations were ever published, but are only found as thoughts in his journals and unfinished works, or by word of mouth from those who came in contact with him (Cartwright, 2010). Schopenhauer's system is then to be seen as something he conceived exclusively for explaining the experiences of men, and limiting or restricting those of women; however, as is seen by his own admissions, the same being, intelligence, and aesthetic experiences could easily apply to women merely by the lowering of prejudice and not by altering the system itself.

Aesthetic Experience and Genius

Schopenhauer intends for his aesthetics to corroborate his metaphysics, through the human experience and interaction with the will, much like his ethics through compassion. In this way, Schopenhauer (1819/1966) sees his aesthetics as a superior method toward the acquisition of truth, in comparison to science, where he refers to the former as the *kernel*, and the latter as the *husk*. Foster (1999) describes Schopenhauer's analogy of *kernels and husks* to signify the difference between metaphysics and appearances respectively, where Schopenhauer believes his philosophy to concern itself with the *kernel of nature*, whereas science is busy sifting the *husk of nature*;

Schopenhauer commits himself to an aesthetic of metaphysical apprehension, one whose purpose aims at the greatest possible acquaintance with the totality of being rather than with abstractly surfacing concepts (p. 220).

Schopenhauer, however, does not discredit science, and as I discussed previously with reference to his essay, *On the Will in Nature*, he merely attempts to promote his metaphysics as a foundation to science, without which, it will render only superficial results. Given this analysis, it becomes imperative to understand what Schopenhauer (1819/1966) means by aesthetic experience,

It is the state where, simultaneously and inseparably, the perceived individual thing is raised to the Idea of its species, and the knowing individual to the pure subject of will-less knowing, and now the two, as such, no longer stand in the stream of time and of all other relations. It is then the same whether we see the setting sun from a prison or from a palace (p. 197).

This relates back to his belief that in the aesthetic experience the individual grasps the Platonic Idea that represents the genus of some particular object, as opposed to its direct representation, and this incites a feeling of aloofness from the rest of existence, including the demands of one's own will. Schopenhauer (1918/1966) explains that this feeling can happen instantly at the sight of a beautiful object,

No object transports us so rapidly into purely aesthetic contemplation as the most beautiful human countenance and form, at the sight of which we are instantly seized by an inexpressible satisfaction and lifted above ourselves and all that torments us (p. 221).

Schopenhauer (1819/1966) also discusses the experience of the sublime as a state of profound contemplation induced generally by being in nature, where the will sees no strife or attainment and one is removed from needing. The alternative, for those incapable of contemplation is the torture of boredom. Though he does admit aesthetic experience to most people in some way, he reserves the “pure” aesthetic experience, one that transports the individual as a pure subject of knowing (cognition), to those possessing the highest grade of intellect;

The *punctum saliens* of every beautiful work, every great and profound thought, is an entirely objective perception. But such a perception is absolutely conditioned by a complete silencing of the will which leaves the person as pure subject of knowing. The aptitude for the prevalence of this state is simply genius (Schopenhauer, 1844/1966, p. 371).

Genius, according to Schopenhauer (1819/1966), has the unique ability to see beyond the mere representations, though not literally, and to acknowledge the same will in all objects that is found within the individual self, because,

As will, outside the representations and all its forms, it is one and the same in the contemplated object and in the individual who soars aloft in this contemplation, who becomes conscious of himself as pure subject (p. 180).

Cartwright (2010) explains that genius is more objective because it can, through a greater intellect, see and contemplate the Platonic Ideas in objects, and given sufficient artistic skill, remove the mundane aspects to create an idealized and universal image of the object;

A great work of art is the product of genius, and Schopenhauer used the term “genius” almost exclusively to refer to either a great artist or a great philosopher. He viewed artists as possessing an overabundance of intellect, compared to the ordinary person, and as having an ability to see what others cannot (p. 312).

In this way, it appears as though Schopenhauer considers the highest grade of the intellect, namely genius, to be attainable only by the mind exclusively concerned with metaphysics and therefore abstract concepts, from which, he believes one obtains truth that can then be translated into the real world, either artistically, or philosophically. Again, this limits the sciences, and all other endeavors, from dealing with truth. It is because all other systems focus on representations that by virtue of Schopenhauer’s philosophy, they are considered subjective. The world of representations is in a way conditioned by the mind of the individual, and therefore the underlying layers and essence of those representations can only be captured by objective perception.

Every good painting, every genuine poem, bears the stamp of the frame of mind it depicts. For only what has sprung from perception, indeed from purely objective perception, or is directly stimulated by it, contains the living germ from which genuine and original achievements can result, not only in the plastic and pictorial arts, but also in poetry, and even in philosophy (Schopenhauer, 1844/1966, p. 371).

It would come as no surprise that Schopenhauer (1819/1966) declares himself a genius of philosophy, and thus able to impart on the world an objective perception of reality that is his world as will and representation. This then requires a special kind of knowledge or cognition that is independent of the will;

The unpremeditated, unintentional, indeed in part unconscious and instinctive element which has always been remarked in works of *genius* owes its origin to precisely the fact that primal artistic knowledge is entirely separated from and independent of will, is will-less (Schopenhauer, 1850/2004, p. 104).

Alternatively, Schopenhauer (1819/1966) would then also have to consider that his audience may not be receptive to this type of knowledge, unless they too could engage in a state of *pure subjects of knowing*, at least for some duration of time;

For this reason the most excellent works of any art, the noblest productions of genius, must eternally remain sealed books to the dull majority of men, and are inaccessible to them (p. 234).

It would be odd if Schopenhauer insisted that only a genius would be capable of appreciating or understanding the work of genius. However, he does not completely commit to this, because he does explain, as I have mentioned in the section of Platonic Ideas, that the genius is capable of not only translating the Idea of an object, but also of “enlightening” or elevating the common intellect through the aesthetic work. In this way, Schopenhauer (1840/2010) seems to account for his claim that education works toward improving the intellect, by exposing individuals to aesthetic or philosophical works of genius. This would entail that the intellect can be improved through all forms of education, and not limited to only aesthetic and philosophical works of genius. This raises the question, whether Schopenhauer believes, or would be committed to believing, that works of genius produce a stronger impact on the growth or enlightenment of the intellect than other forms of education. I am inclined to believe that he would, although it

seems that he may suggest a special type of intellect that is predisposed or inclined toward the kind of elevation or enlightenment offered by works of genius.

Although Schopenhauer considers himself a genius and reveres the types of works he considered to be the products of such, he is also relatively unique in his time for considering genius and madness to be very closely related. Cartwright (2010) explains that Schopenhauer believes that genius can lead to madness, much like in Plato's allegory of the cave where one experiences the light (enlightenment) outside the cave and returns unable to perceive in the dark again, thus appearing mad to the cave dwellers.

“Anticipating Freud, Schopenhauer observed that the loss of a correct memory of the past and the substitution of a fictitious one is often the product of trauma” (Cartwright, 2010, p.313).

This trauma then leads to madness where a loss of practical awareness occurs through a full immersion in the aesthetic experience, becoming part of the universal and filled with fictitious memories that the mind created instead of reality.

The fact that violent mental suffering or unexpected and terrible events are frequently the cause of madness, I explain as follows...if such a sorrow, such painful knowledge or reflection, is so harrowing that it becomes positively unbearable, and the individual would succumb to it, then nature, alarmed in this way, seizes on *madness* as the last means of saving life. The mind, tormented so greatly, destroys, as it were, the thread of its memory, fills up the gaps with fictions, and thus seeks refuge in madness from the mental suffering that exceeds its strength...(Schopenhauer, 1819/1966, p. 193).

Schopenhauer (1819/1966) considers intelligence to be proportional to one's sensitivity to suffering, thus the genius would always be more receptive to the suffering of the world in all its abundance, and hence more often susceptible to the type of trauma here outlined as leading to madness. So not only does a genius, through objective perception, become more often seized by aesthetic experiences that result in a pure will-less knowing, but it follows that genius must also be more sensitive to morality by acknowledging the suffering of others through compassion, which again leads to pure will-less knowing. This makes genius predisposed to both instances that lead to pure will-less knowing (or pure subject of knowing) and ultimately to the denial of the will-to-live. It is this separation from reality, the state of pure will-less knowing that offers the sufficient detachment to allow fictitious memories and ideas of reality to fill in the gaps that were formed by either trauma or prolonged detachment, which in turn leads to madness. Though, Schopenhauer (1819/1966) argues, this only seems to affect their memory, and not their assessment of the present;

Neither the faculty of reason nor understanding can be denied to the mad, for they talk and understand, and often draw very accurate conclusions. They also, as a rule, perceive quite correctly what is present, and see the connexion between cause and effect (p. 192).

However, he also accounts for an indirect effect on the assessment of the present through a faulty connection to the past,

For the most part, mad people do not generally err in the knowledge of what is immediately *present*; but their talk relates always to what is *absent* and *past*, and only through these to its connexion with what is present. Therefore, it seems to

me that their malady specially concerns the *memory* (Schopenhauer, 1819/1966, p. 192).

This explains that his view of representations does not commit to a notion of stored representations, but rather to a kind of representation that has the capacity to be altered by cognition, memory, trauma, and time. Schopenhauer (1813/1974) believes that representations lose detail over time and are reconstructed from memory in combination with experience, not stored. This was against the science of his time which believed in a storehouse model.

I cannot agree with the usual description thereof, namely a storehouse or receptacle in which we keep a stock of ready-made representations that we should thus always have, yet without being aware of them...as soon as a link in a series of representations has come to us, we at once recall all the others, often apparently against our will (Schopenhauer, 1813/1974, p. 216).

Schopenhauer (1813/1974) also offers an analogy for the way the mind preserves the links of representations and explains how individual representations are rebuilt with experience,

...the most accurate [analogy] seems to be that of a piece of cloth, which after being folded frequently, again falls automatically, as it were, into the same creases...A recollection or remembrance is by no means always the same representation, as the usual description assumes-one that is again produced from a storehouse, so to speak. On the contrary, a fresh representation actually arises each time, only that practice makes this particularly easy (p. 217).

He offers the same explanation of knowledge fading over time without sufficient practice, and relates his theory (of representations losing detail over time) to a common phenomenon where “we are made aware when we see again after a long time an old familiar object, and it does not correspond exactly to the picture we have of it at that moment” (Schopenhauer, 1813/1974, p. 217). He concludes his notion of memory by stating that geniuses often have a poor memory, especially for trifling details and events, but retain an excellent memory of their primary interests, where those particular representations are reinforced not only through practice but also through their links to related representations that are then recalled together when one of them is remembered.

Though this notion of memory may have been against the science of Schopenhauer’s time, modern science in cognition and psychology now parallel this view of memory being a reconstruction of events that are influenced by current experience and certainly deny the storehouse model. This is discussed further in the final chapter.

On the Types of Art

Schopenhauer’s (1819/1966) aesthetics forms a special case in his theory of representations because aesthetic experiences can take us away from the will, suffering, and the mundane world; it transforms the subject and object into one. In this he agrees with Kant when it comes to considering aesthetics from the subject as opposed to other philosophies that focused on beautiful forms of the object (Cartwright, 2010). Here is proposed another solution to the suffering propagated by the will, and that is the escape offered by aesthetic experiences. Some theories in aesthetics in psychology also suggest that aesthetic experiences can have a profound impact on how we view the world,

behave, and consider others, through a morality that is given to us by the awe inspiring experience of beauty (see also Freeman 2012). I discuss them in the final chapter.

Here I outline Schopenhauer's (1819/1966) hierarchy of art, where he begins with the lowest objectifications of the will and moves progressively to the highest. He begins with architecture, then hydraulics and horticulture, to landscape painting, life painting, and sculpture, to poetry (lyrical, epic, tragic), and finally to music. In all of these, the objective is the same, namely to capture the Idea of some object and reflect its beauty to the observer, thereby inducing a state of pure will-less knowing or the aesthetic experience. Schopenhauer argues that good art captures universal concepts, in other words the Platonic Ideas, for they alone have permanence, whereas art that focuses on current affairs or particular bits of knowledge is poor and does not elicit any will-less knowledge, or have the effect of relieving the subject from the suffering of the will (Foster, 1999). Schopenhauer (1850/2004) further explains that in youth we are often in awe at the magnificence of individual things because;

...we then first become acquainted with the genus, which is still new to us, through the individual, so that every individual thing stands as a representative of its genus: we grasp therein the (Platonic) Idea of this genus, which is essentially what constitutes beauty (p. 107).

Schopenhauer creates an analogy where water is shown to be equally disposed to stillness as it is to flowing only depending on circumstance, whereas in art the artist suffices as the circumstance to express the Idea of humankind. "The common aim of all the arts is the unfolding and elucidation of the Idea expressing itself in the object of every art, of the will objectifying itself at each grade" (Schopenhauer, 1819/1966, p. 252).

In his assessment of architecture, Schopenhauer (1819/1966) also draws a distinction between the aesthetic and the sublime, which is mainly a difference in degree. He explains that large structures captivate us by their interplay with light, and this occurs also in winter, though we recognize here that this light then offers no warmth and thus does not sustain life, giving the will an obstacle that prevents us from completely turning away from it and toward the aesthetic experience. In this way, architecture offers only a faint sensation of the sublime, that in turn only gives way to a faint sense of beauty, whereas violent challenges to the will provide a much stronger turning away into pure subject of knowing (Cartwright, 2010).

Cartwright (2010) clarifies that Schopenhauer praises Kant's notion of the sublime, but believes that it threatens the will and causes an internal struggle, the stronger the struggle, the stronger the feeling of the sublime. Although it must be noted that Schopenhauer does not intend to mean an actual threat to the will, but merely an idea or feeling of threat. In the experience of beauty, however, the transition to pure will-less knowing is instantaneous and smooth. Thus, with higher forms of art in Schopenhauer's system, there is a heightened sense of the sublime that offers a greater internal struggle in the individual.

Higher on the hierarchy of art than architecture is what Schopenhauer (1819/1966) refers to as hydraulics and horticulture, where the aesthetics lie in the movement and flow of water in the former, and even higher aesthetics are revealed in the growth of life in the latter. Both demonstrate the forces of nature to varying degrees and capture the course of existence through their movement, arrangement, and development.

Higher yet than horticulture, is landscape painting, which involves an individual grasping the Idea of plant life and expressing it in an ideal form.

Schopenhauer (1819/1966) argues that the plastic arts are perfect versions of their subjects, at times nature and other times human, through the artist's vision of beauty that must come *a priori*. Artists are capable of seeing aspects of perfection (Platonic Ideas) in nature and humans through an *a priori* understanding of aesthetics, that they then bring together to form the prototype of that particular form. In this way, they create something more perfect than reality can truly express.

For Schopenhauer (1819/1966) the expression of the universal Idea in painting also comes in degrees that begins with landscapes, then increases with paintings of animal life, and reaches its highest expression with paintings of humans, which captures universal aspects of human life and experience. Sculpting also follows the same pattern as painting, and reaches its highest aesthetic in the expression of the human form. Schopenhauer (1850/2004) argues that imitation of reality in art does not induce aesthetic perception because it stands only to remind us of particular and individual things in reality as opposed to the Idea of the species or genus of that thing;

The true work of art leads us from that which exists only once and never again, i.e. the individual, to that which exists perpetually and time and time again in innumerable manifestations, the pure form or Idea (p. 106-107).

It is for this reason, he explains, that waxwork figures do not produce aesthetic perception, for they merely copy the individual in a very precise and impressive way, yet instead of offering an aesthetic feeling they often evoke horror due to their resemblance to a corpse.

Poetry seems to achieve a much greater level of respect in the eyes of Schopenhauer (1819/1966) than the previously mentioned arts, and he very much disagrees with Plato's criticism of poetry. "I have defined poetry as the art of setting the imagination into action by means of words" (Schopenhauer, 1850/2004, p. 105-106). He, of course, creates a hierarchy even within the varieties of poetry that he considers and places lyrical poetry at the lowest end, followed by epic poetry, and finally the highest form being tragic poetry. Schopenhauer (1850/2004) explains the effect of poetry with an analogy describing the Platonic Idea as the archetype of the group;

For as the botanist plucks one single flower from the endless abundance of the plant world and then analyses it so as to demonstrate to us the nature of the plant in general, so the poet selects a single scene, indeed sometimes no more than a single mood or sensation, from the endless confusion of ceaselessly active human life, in order to show us what the life and nature of man is (p. 105).

He loves epic poetry, and makes reference to Homer and the universal themes found in the Iliad and Odyssey, but prefers tragedy primarily because of its more accurate portrayal of real life experiences and the suffering endured in the world. Tragedy also has the profound effect of startling our will and captivating us with the feeling of the sublime (Schopenhauer 1819/1966). With regard to novels, Schopenhauer (1850/2004) writes;

The task of the novelist is not to narrate great events but to make small ones interesting...The art lies in setting the inner life into the most violent motion with the smallest possible expenditure of outer life (p. 114).

Schopenhauer considers music to be the highest form of aesthetics and a perfect copy of the will, the most metaphysical of all the arts, and the best analogy for the will as a force in all nature. Foster (1999) sums it up eloquently;

Bass notes ground harmony but do not move themselves as a melody. Their anchoring, low-tonal notes correspond to gravity and the very lowest grades of the will's objectification. Ripienos, the middle to high range notes, do indeed move but only in response to necessary stimuli around them. They enter into harmony as well, and so, like the animal kingdom, are positioned between human beings and earthly forces. Finally, musical melody, the highest and principle voice, travels its course to a goal. It sets the tone and structure for the other levels and thus corresponds to human intentionality. The voice of melody mirrors the path of self-conscious will in the world (p. 241).

It is his theory of music that in fact attracts the most attention among artists because it intends to capture the aesthetic feeling one experiences when listening to music. Schopenhauer (1850/2004) believes that, "*Music* is the true universal language which is understood everywhere, so that it is ceaselessly spoken in all countries and throughout all the centuries with great zeal and earnestness" (p. 109). It is the only art form in his system that has the special quality of being entirely separate from the world of representation, and it is also the only art that creates a direct copy of the will, or in other words, presents to us the highest form of the objectification of the will. Schopenhauer (1819/1966) explains that;

Therefore music is by no means like the other arts, namely a copy of the Ideas, but a *copy of the will itself*, the objectivity of which are the Ideas. For this reason

the effect of music is so very much more powerful and penetrating than is that of the other arts, for these others speak only of the shadow, but music of the essence (p. 257).

Nevertheless, Cartwright (2010) points out that this theory of music contradicts Schopenhauer's philosophy of the will because the will cannot be copied, mirrored, or represented. The will is the underlying essence of all representations, but inseparable from them, and unavailable to mediate experience outside the sole and unique experience of our own bodies as simultaneous will and representations. Schopenhauer admits to this contradiction, but leaves it up to his readers to contemplate the aesthetic experience of music in combination with his metaphysics of the will.

Overall, Schopenhauer's aesthetics, like his epistemology and ethics, serve to complete his metaphysics. Foster (1999) explains that, "this fundamental discovery of will in the self shares with aesthetic contemplation the quality of being *reflective*" (p. 215). As such, his metaphysics can be approached epistemologically through the reflection of one's being as will and representation, the effect of which can enter one into a state of pure will-less knowing, or through the reflection of aesthetics that renders the same result. Foster (1999) explains this as,

What the individual perceives, representationally, through the Idea in art, she also experiences, immediately, as pain, pleasure, force, joy through her body. In this spirit Schopenhauer appears to link his epistemological aesthetic of Ideas with the immediacy of will as experienced and recognized in the individual body (p. 222).

However, the aesthetic experience for both the layman and the genius can only temporarily remove that individual from the striving of their will, and that short lived

state of will-less knowing is indeed one of the only forms of satisfaction we can attain in this world of ceaseless suffering (Cartwright, 2010). Schopenhauer (1819/1966) suggests that the highest level of pure will-less knowing, a more permanent removal from the will, as the denial of the will-to-live, is to be found in his morality, namely through compassion. The subject of which was discussed earlier. With this, Schopenhauer's system is complete, with an account of his metaphysics as first understood through epistemology, and then elaborated through ethics and aesthetics. What remains are the odds and ends of his philosophy, all of which are instances of his main system being applied to a variety of situations, experiences, and phenomena.

CHAPTER 5-SCHOPENHAUER'S PESSIMISM

Cartwright (2010) explains that Schopenhauer philosophy slowly began to attract followers very late in his life, which the philosopher referred to as “evangelists” for those writing in his favour and against his critics, and “apostles” for those looking out for references to his work and maintaining correspondence with him. Schopenhauer had eight faithful apostles that he relished bestowing wisdom upon, once even paraphrasing St. Matthew 18:20; “for where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them” (King James Version).

Although Schopenhauer dreaded the possibility of being caught up in war, battle, or revolution, and frequently used this as his motivation to flee, in 1848 the fight was brought to his doorstep in Frankfurt. The *March Revolution* that attempted to protest the autocratic monarchs in the various German states toward a unified and liberal German nation presented a sense of political hostility that made Schopenhauer very anxious (Barkin, 2014). He was stuck in his apartment while the fighting ensued on the streets; however, he allowed Austrian troops entry into his home so they could shoot from his window at the democratic rebels. It was after this event that Schopenhauer finally shared his political views. He sees individuals as highly egoistical and democracy as a medium for all people to express their egoism, thereby causing suffering and chaos, whereas a monarchy consolidates all wealth and power to a king, swaying the ego of the masses and protecting society from their own vices through law and fear of punishment (Cartwright, 2010).

Cartwright (2010) explains that the revolution, which failed to instil democracy, actually worked to endorse Schopenhauer's philosophy by moving away from the Left

Hegelian, which proposed that human and social progress was possible through freedom. He further states that with the publication of *Parerga and Paralipomena* in 1851, Schopenhauer became famous, receiving good reviews both locally and abroad (in Britain) and his works began being referenced by professors. The British review, though favourable, interpreted Schopenhauer's philosophy as misanthropic; however, he defended that it was in fact philanthropic and that his love for humankind is sealed in his works, which intend to help the state of humanity through idealism.

Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855), living at the same time as Schopenhauer, read his works and was greatly impressed and even influenced by his style, attacks on Hegel, and his views. He did, however, criticize his pessimism as dubious, given that Schopenhauer enjoyed his fame as opposed to scorning it (Kierkegaard, 1865/2006). Schopenhauer never called himself a pessimist, though he did not oppose it when others did, and his final work (*Parerga and Paralipomena*) ended up doing as much to launch his fame as it did to harm his philosophy because people primarily read only selected essays on controversial issues such as spiritualism, misogyny, sexual love, etc. while being unfamiliar with his principal work. There were never any Schopenhauerians as a philosophical school, only Schopenhauer-minded neo-Kantians (Cartwright, 2010).

Schopenhauer can be considered an early precursor to existentialism, not only through his influence on Nietzsche, but by virtue of his own philosophy that is often difficult to categorize as metaphysics, continental, analytic, etc. (Janaway, 1999a). It is meant to deal with human experience and his writing often takes the form of eloquent prose, replete with worldly examples and analogies. For example, Schopenhauer (1850/2004) writes,

A quick test of the assertion that enjoyment outweighs pain in this world, or that they are at any rate balanced, would be to compare the feelings of an animal engaged in eating another with those of the animal being eaten (p. 4).

This aphorism expresses his view that the world has far more suffering in it than pleasure or good, and the examples to follow of his pessimism and advice for a happy life will put into perspective the existential nuances of his work. Thus far his focus on explaining human nature by referring to the lived human experience, actions, motivations, and their consequences in the world already touches on existential themes; however, his mandate to find truth, causes, and reasons would exclude him from being considered an existential philosopher.

The mutual dependence of his various concepts that when taken together formulate what Schopenhauer (1819/1966) considers a unified thought, makes his philosophy not only difficult to categorize and define, but also to expound with confidence without reiterating many of the same ideas along the way, or as Janaway (1999a) puts it,

Schopenhauer's philosophical thought is both idiosyncratic and very tightly organized around his central conceptions of will, representation, subject, object, intellect, individuation, and the principle of sufficient reason. Hence it can be difficult to consider his views in one philosophical area without re-stating much of what he thinks overall...(p. 16).

It is only in *Parerga and Paralipomena* that Schopenhauer (1851/1974) temporarily suspends some of his beliefs in order to address curious topics outside the realm of his main work, but he often attempts to relate these peripheral ideas to his established notion

of the world as will and representation. It is in these later essays that we find Schopenhauer considering parapsychology, spiritualism, clairvoyance, and other mystical relics of his time, which he attempts to explain through the same underlying force behind all other phenomena; the will. He adamantly contends that “whoever at the present time doubts the facts of animal magnetism and its clairvoyance should be called not a sceptic but an ignoramus” (Schopenhauer, 1851/1974, p. 229). He argues here that the force being manipulated during clairvoyance and magnetism is in fact the will, which then affects the outward action of the person. In his essay *On Physiognomy* Schopenhauer (1851/1974) says,

If we wish to be satisfied with the *psychological* explanation, let us ask ourselves what kind of physiognomy we are to expect from those in whose hearts there has very rarely arisen throughout their lives anything but petty, mean, and miserable thoughts, and vulgar, selfish, envious, wicked, and malicious desires. Each of these has set its mark on the face during the time that it lasted. Through much repetition, all these marks have in the course of time become deeply wrinkled and furrowed, so to speak (p. 636).

He takes for granted the many parapsychological accounts available during his time as facts by their sheer number of occurrence and attempts to demonstrate how his theory also works with these experiences. His ambition to account for all human experience includes such instances that are difficult to argue for but I suppose Schopenhauer wanted to have all bases covered, presuming these would later turn into or be confirmed by science.

Schopenhauer (1851/1974) also writes at length about somnambulism and its relation to dreaming, the effects it has on the individual, and its ability to grant the sleeper a vision of the future thus enabling for them a kind of clairvoyance. His thesis in the essay is that there exists the natural and the supernatural, where nature rests on the supernatural, which is his way of arguing for his metaphysics and ultimately the force of the will. Schopenhauer clarifies that visions of the dead (ghosts) are subjective experiences that appear as in dreams and do not at all pertain to anything objective or real. With this he assists his theory by claiming that all physical objects, along with time and space, are mere apparitions (representations) of the mind that correspond to the metaphysically real thing-in-itself. Much of his time was spent observing, reading, and studying in a variety of fields in order to determine connections to his worldview; to see if his philosophy fits with all components of the world.

Cartwright (2010) notes that Schopenhauer maintained a very routine lifestyle, enjoyed good health, lucidity, a good appetite, and long walks well into his old age. He advocates for these habits, along with reading, writing, and good sleep, as a method of having self-control and engaging in more frequent episodes of will-less knowing as a denial of the will-to-live. It seems that despite Kierkegaard's criticism, Schopenhauer's pessimism, and the common conception that Schopenhauer was unhappy, he nevertheless managed to live a long, prosperous, and fulfilling life by committing himself to his principles.

Schopenhauer's habitual and organized lifestyle matches some of the contemporary psychological research on willpower conducted by Roy Baumeister (1953-). The studies operationalize willpower as a measure of self-control through ego

depletion, finding strong correlations between glucose levels in the blood and the ability to exercise self-control (Baumeister, Bratlavsky, Muraven, & Tice, 1998). Studies also show that social behaviour can be improved through managing glucose levels, and correlations were found between individuals with prolonged glucose depletion, such as diabetics, hyperglycaemics, and menstruating women, and antisocial, volatile, and violent behaviours (Baumeister, Crescioni, & Alquist, 2011). Most interestingly, Baumesiter and Tierney (2011) discuss the most efficient methods to manage glucose levels and thereby preserve self-control, indicating an interesting parallel with Schopenhauer's lifestyle and beliefs. They mention that a proper diet, exercise, good sleep, and habitually exercising self-control are the best combined methods of maintaining balanced glucose levels. Though Schopenhauer would not have had the benefit of this knowledge, he certainly experienced good health, self-discipline, and access to aesthetic and moral states of pure will-less knowing, through a lifetime commitment to his philosophy.

If Schopenhauer believes his mandate to be an explanation of human experience, it is safe to assume that his own living experience is his primary source of evidence, from which he draws much of his wisdom and advice for a happy life. It is perhaps because he does not experience much "happiness" as is commonly understood as positive affective states of joy, euphoria, or bliss that he considers happiness to be merely the negation of some want or desire. However, he nevertheless attempts to provide some advice that he believes will help humanity reduce the amount of suffering he sees everywhere, dominating all life through endless striving. It is in this way that he does not consider himself a pessimist and rather a philanthropist, perhaps also through leading by example to demonstrate that an austere disposition, relatively ascetic habits, and a lack of

dependence on the comforts of intimacy and love, can nonetheless provide one sufficient reason to exist, find meaning in life, and feel accomplished.

Pessimism and a Happy Life

Here I am going to address the pervasive pessimism everywhere discussed about Schopenhauer and his philosophy. It merits a thorough analysis, especially considering its prominence in his work even if only indirectly suggested, as it does have some interesting implications on the psychological perspective here considered, and raises some questions regarding Schopenhauer's notion of a happy life. First, I discuss some observations and objections raised by Janaway (1999b) in his essay *Schopenhauer's Pessimism*, and attempt to answer some of these using Schopenhauer's philosophy before diving into his advice on happiness.

Janaway (1999b) argues that Schopenhauer heavily criticizes optimism especially in the context of religions, certifying that Judaism and pantheism are optimistic for proposing the world to be a good place, while Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism are pessimistic for acknowledging strife and suffering as the human condition. Schopenhauer's secondary attack on optimism is targeted at Leibniz's (1710/2007) assertion that "if there were not the best (*Optimum*) of all possible worlds, God would not have produced any" (p. 131) with the contrary position that it is in fact the worst; an argument that he failed to make convincing.

Schopenhauer (1844/1966) considers this the worst of all possible worlds and argues that the conditions are such that if it got any worse it would simply cease to continue,

But against the sophistical proofs of Leibniz that this is the best of all possible worlds, we may oppose seriously and honestly the proof that this is the *worst* of all possible worlds. For possible means not what we may picture in our imagination, but what can actually exist and last. Now this world is arranged as it had to be if it were to be capable of continuing with great difficulty to exist; if it were a little worse, it would no longer be capable of continuing to exist (p. 583).

Even given the stipulation that possibility entails actuality, Janaway (1999b) argues that we can imagine a worse possible world; one that has more severe degrees of the currently existing amounts of suffering, natural disasters, human deaths, etc. Schopenhauer (1844/1966) bases his argument on the idea that the world is at a threshold where a single shift in the forces of nature can cause severe catastrophes, and thereby mass extinction, the eradication of earth, etc. He refers to previous periods of mass extinction and disasters that threatened the destruction of the earth, as well as astronomical calculations that show the possibility of immanent destruction given an offset in gravity, asteroids, the sun, etc. These arguments seem to ignore the historical fluctuations where the conditions of the earth were at times worse, then got better; the anticipation of natural disasters that we are bound to survive; and wars that decimate entire populations. Furthermore, Schopenhauer's consideration of a possible world seems limited to the existence of human life on earth, where even if the planet were to be destroyed, the remaining universe-which is really what we mean when we refer to possible worlds-would continue to exist.

From the belief that this is the worst of all possible worlds, Schopenhauer (1844/1966) argues that it would then be better if the world and all of human life with it

had not existed. It is easy to see here how he would be considered a pessimist, misanthropist, or worse yet, a fatalist. “It is true that, for Schopenhauer, everything in ordinary life is characterized by *Nichtigkeit*, or nothingness, which might suggest the thought that life is meaningless” (Janaway, 1999b, p. 318). Given this notion, one might even consider Schopenhauer a proto-nihilist; however, when considering his “philanthropic” intentions, and acknowledging that he does in fact propose several solutions to the suffering of existence, it may appear that this particular brand of “pessimism” can be of philosophical and perhaps psychological value.

Schopenhauer (1850/2004) states that “all happiness and all gratification, is that which is negative, the mere abolition of a desire and extinction of a pain” (p. 4). Janaway (1999b) explains that Schopenhauer’s view of happiness entails no real positive affective states, but rather the alleviation of some desire that once satisfied is replaced by another, and so on *ad infinitum*: “Schopenhauer often equates happiness (*Glück*) with the satisfaction (*Befriedigung*) of a state of willing” (p. 323). Similarly, Freud conceives the pleasure principle as a drive reduction system, also arguing that humans do not have positive affective states and at best we can only achieve neutrality where we have no desires to satisfy for some time (Kukla & Walmsley, 2006). This parallel here, which will be discussed in full in the next chapter on *Schopenhauer’s Influence on Freud*, provides some insight on how similar pessimistic perspectives of humanity were considered in philosophy and then in psychology.

Schopenhauer (1819/1966) sees suffering to mean all kinds of wants, whether conscious or not, such as thirst, hunger, or homesickness. These states actually bring about a pain in the organism that then seeks satisfaction, and we become aware of this

pain that then causes us some form of misery or irritation. Janaway (1999b) raises some objections here as to the notion that we must be aware of these wants, pains, irritations, or states of misery. It is easy to imagine that we could experience unconscious states of dissatisfaction, and although Schopenhauer does consider the will to be largely unconscious, he seems here to require awareness of these needs in order to conclude that they in fact cause us suffering. Then, only by addressing these desires and satisfying them do we reduce our suffering, but inevitably face new struggles and strife.

Janaway (1999b) states that Schopenhauer does not believe in an absolute good, but only insofar as something satisfies a desire is it considered good. As such, the highest good would be a complete satisfaction of the will, which of course cannot exist, thus life is seen as a constant struggle to relieve suffering. By this definition, happiness then becomes foolish as it is seen as ultimately unattainable in any permanent way, for it merely constitutes a brief relief from suffering. Even when all objects of striving cease, what we are then left with is boredom at having nothing to strive for, which is itself another form of suffering. This is why Schopenhauer (1819/1966) proposes the denial of the will-to-live as the better alternative, though it does not entail happiness, neither in the common sense, as a positive affective state, or as a sense of satisfaction.

Schopenhauer (1844/1966) claims that the mere existence of a single suffering tips the balance of the world toward pessimism, because no amount of joy can truly expunge it. This formulates a pessimism that appears at first fatalistic and thus lends itself to all sorts of oppositions. Janaway (1999b) raises some objections to this type of pessimism: first, that Schopenhauer fails to account for positive states of happiness that are not merely the satisfaction of some suffering; second, that people can feel happy as a

result of overcoming suffering, as is the case in vigorous exercise (e.g. mountain climbing); and third, that by setting the total sum of satisfaction at zero (neutral) it follows that all good becomes valueless.

I want to address the first objection by referring to Schopenhauer's notion of happiness. It is true, as provided above, that he defines happiness merely as the satisfaction of some frustration, desire, suffering, etc. Nevertheless, I think what the objection refers to is Schopenhauer's dismissal of pleasure as a positive affective state, best describing what we commonly refer to as happiness. If I am correct, then Schopenhauer (1851/1974) does certainly account for pleasure, and places the cultivation of the mind as the highest form of pleasure in opposition to materialism,

Nevertheless, people are a thousand times more concerned to become wealthy than to acquire mental culture, whereas it is quite certain that what we are contributes much more to our happiness than what we have. Therefore we see very many work from morning to night as industrious as ants and in restless activity to increase the wealth they already have...The highest pleasures, those of the mind, are inaccessible to them and they try in vain to replace them by the fleeting pleasures of the senses in which they indulge at intervals and which cost little time but much money (p. 321).

In this section, Schopenhauer does discuss happiness; however, the context here needs more explanation and I will address this a little later when discussing his essay *Aphorisms on the Wisdom of Life*. For now, it is only my intention to show that the philosopher did in fact provide some arguments concerning human happiness. Also, if we look at his account of the denial of the will-to-live, we find the highest form of mental cultivation,

the complete removal from the striving of the will through pure will-less knowing, and possibly the highest form of pleasure. This conclusion is, however, dubious because Schopenhauer often discusses will-less knowing as a state of aloofness and removal from worldly woes. Thus, it would not constitute what we normally refer to as pleasure; a sense of euphoria, bodily excitement, or joy. From the passage above, it becomes evident that Schopenhauer considers the bodily pleasures to be temporary and insignificant, while the highest pleasure to be those of the mind. In this case, I understand him to mean that the bodily pleasures are only the satisfaction of some form of suffering, while the mental pleasures are the complete removal from the world of suffering. Then in the latter case, we already know that aesthetics and morality produce these “highest” mental pleasures that for Schopenhauer, it seems, denote a true sense of happiness; one that parallels the spiritual enlightenment described in the Eastern religions.

The second objection, namely that without suffering, some activities would cease to be rewarding and pleasurable is discussed by Janaway (1999b) through Nietzsche’s criticism of Schopenhauer. Nietzsche (1883/1961) rejects Schopenhauer’s pessimistic account of existence and proposes instead that we ought to embrace our will and define our own morality through it as the *will to power*. In this way, our suffering becomes the fuel to overcome ourselves and attain mastery over our inherent strengths. Suffering becomes not a denial but an affirmation of life and thus we are asked to consider it not as necessary but rather desirable toward improving ourselves. Here the distinction between Schopenhauer’s view of suffering and Nietzsche’s is that the former regards it as necessary and unfortunate (something we should work on to relieve), while the latter accepts the existence of suffering but embraces it as a desirable form of motivation

toward achievement. I think both philosophers would agree that suffering is a form of motivation; however, given Schopenhauer's philosophical stance on free will (that we lack it), it would be inconsistent for him to suggest that we could choose to suffer any more or less toward some positive aim.

If we look at Schopenhauer's theory of motivation and apply it to Janaway's (1999b) example of a mountain climber undergoing suffering toward a pleasurable sense of personal achievement, it would not be inconsistent to state that given the mountain climber's character they could be sufficiently motivated to engage in the activity to satisfy the desire to achieve the ideal or goal. In this case, the abstract desire to overcome a mountain would simply serve as a stronger motivation, frustration, or form of suffering than the physical suffering endured on the climb. Mental suffering can often outweigh physical suffering, and many individuals engage in physically demanding activities or physical suffering in order to satisfy some internal feeling of inadequacy, insecurity, or other sense of weakness. It must also be consistent with Schopenhauer's philosophy to suggest that mental suffering must outweigh the physical when he commits to claims that intelligence and cognition can remove us from suffering, that the mental pleasures outweigh the physical, and that with greater knowledge comes greater suffering.

Schopenhauer (1819/1966) places abstract motives (reason) at a higher end than the intuitive (sense perception) because they serve to improve the intellect whereas the latter serve the body. The mountain climber can have abstract motives to overcome the body, much like the practices of the Buddhist monks. It reflects the common saying, 'mind over matter'; a concept Schopenhauer would certainly agree with. The difference here between Schopenhauer's view and Nietzsche's then merely comes down to the

problem of free will. Schopenhauer is certainly more pessimistic by restricting human achievements and abilities to their inherent characters, whereas Nietzsche seems to allow for anyone to embrace their will and overcome themselves toward greater accomplishments and aptitudes.

So to address the objection, I suggest that Schopenhauer would agree that one can “choose” to suffer in order to attain self-improvement or some achievement, so long as that motivation is stronger than others and consistent with that person’s character. It would also be inconsistent to suggest that flying the person to the top of the mountain would be equivalent to having climbed the mountain because the abstract motivation here is overcoming adversity, self-improvement, and a sense of achievement that cannot be offered without enduring the physical strains of the climb. Thus, the successful climber can attain a sense of pleasure or happiness, and in Schopenhauer’s view, this happiness would be more genuine because it pertains to the mental pleasures, as opposed to the physical, in satisfying an abstract motive.

The third objection, namely that by considering no positive spectrum for pleasure and restricting satisfaction to a neutral point, it makes the idea of good valueless, can also be questioned. It is true that Schopenhauer is committed to considering pleasure and happiness only as a sense of relief in response to some suffering or pain. Therefore once all suffering is relieved, we are simply in a neutral state that then leads to boredom, which of course is suffering once more. This again leads me back to Schopenhauer’s belief that mental pleasures are of the highest grade. It also begs that question of whether Schopenhauer considers the mental pleasures on the same spectrum. If he does, which would seem consistent, it would constitute a prolonged state of neutrality. However, this

neutrality would require some more explanation. It seems that the neutral state can be congruent with the state of aloof will-less knowing, where we simply feel no suffering. For the normal person this can be a brief respite that soon leads to boredom, however, for the intellectual or genius it can be a prolonged state of will-less knowing. Schopenhauer (1851/1974) claims that one who is intelligent has enough mental wealth to sustain themselves through the many perils of the objective world, and often does not need to indulge in material pleasures and entertainment to alleviate boredom, for thoughts sufficiently provide satisfaction and keep them busy.

This still does not answer whether or not the mental pleasures are in fact more than neutral and begin for us a positive spectrum of happiness, achievement, or actualization. However, Schopenhauer does value self-improvement through education when stating that the cultivation of the intellect is the most prized human achievement. Furthermore, his account of ethics certainly provides many examples of valued good through compassion and virtues. Alternatively, his view of religion that values asceticism and renunciation would seem to imply that the highest good is achieved by that very state of neutrality in the prolonged sense, namely the pure will-less knowing. With this, Schopenhauer (1819/1966) argues that all other pleasures are a product of the world of *Maya* (world of illusion in Hinduism) and constitute an erroneous sense of fulfillment or purpose. Hence, the gradations of good can be found in his ethics through acts of justice, philanthropy, and overall compassion, while the highest notion of good is to be found in his denial of the will-to-live through aesthetic and intellectual contemplation. In the *Bhagavad Gita* (in Easwaran, trans. 2004). it is explained that the world of illusion gives

rise to all desire but leaves one deluded by false attachments, while breaking the veil of *maya* is the true form of consciousness and wisdom;

Others are deluded by maya; performing evil deeds, they have no devotion to me. Having lost all discrimination, they follow the way of their lower nature (7:15)...Few see through the veil of maya. The world, deluded, does not know that I am without birth and changeless (7:25)...Unwavering devotion, always united with me, the man or woman of wisdom surpasses all the others (7:17).

Schopenhauer (1819/1966) is greatly fascinated with the Vedic teachings precisely because they valued wisdom and consciousness of the metaphysical unity of all beings over the divided world of illusion, just as he values pure will-less knowing over the individuated world of representations. Thus, his highest good is comparable to the enlightenment described in the ancient Eastern religions.

Having dealt with some of the objections to Schopenhauer's pessimism, I can turn to some of his practical advice for a happy life, which of course still originates in and embraces his pessimistic worldview. In *Parerga and Paralipomena* Schopenhauer (1851/1974) dedicates a lengthy portion of the book to an essay entitled *Aphorisms on the Wisdom of Life*, in which he attempts to consider practical advice for finding happiness,

However, to be able to work out such an answer, I have therefore had to abandon entirely the higher metaphysical ethical standpoint to which my real philosophy leads. Consequently, the whole discussion here to be given rests on a compromise, in so far as it remains at the ordinary empirical standpoint and firmly maintains the error thereof (p. 313).

Given that the philosopher here takes some liberties in imparting this advice, it is interesting to consider whether this wisdom reflects his philosophy, his daily life, or his psychology. Schopenhauer (1851/1974) creates three distinctions for a happy life: *what a man is*⁴; *what a man has*; and *what a man represents*. He then argues that humans are split into the objective and subjective, where one's experiences may perfectly reflect the objective reality but paired with an inferior subjective half these experiences become mundane and commonplace. Thus one cannot be improved from without, and their reality is that which they live based on their objective and subjective halves. Humans are then entirely that subjective half, while the objective is outside of them, and the subjective is unalterable for it represents their character, which is predetermined by nature: "Accordingly, the life of every man bears throughout the same character in spite of all change from without and is comparable to a series of variations on one theme" (Schopenhauer, 1851/1974, p. 317). Therefore one's capacity to be happy is fixed within the limits of their character.

In keeping with the above, Schopenhauer's (1851/1974) main recommendation for happiness is acknowledging one's character and keeping one's life consistent with that character vocationally, habitually, and socially. This constitutes what was discussed previously as the "acquired character". He further explains that because the subjective is vastly more important toward acquiring happiness than the objective, one must focus on cultivating the mind and not wealth. This was also discussed previously in the context of mental pleasures and happiness. "Therefore subjective blessings, such as a noble

⁴ I must note here that the sexist language reflects Schopenhauer's time and misogynistic perspective. I preserve the original titles of his essays for clarity but use inclusive language when referring to the application of his theory. I argue later that inclusivity has no consequence on the efficacy of Schopenhauer's philosophy and thus the sexist language serves as a mere artefact. The final chapter also deals more with his misogyny.

character, a gifted mind, a happy temperament, cheerful spirits , and a well-conditioned thoroughly sound body...are for our happiness primary and the most important” (Schopenhauer, 1851/1974, p. 324).

What a man is; concerns firstly one’s health, according to Schopenhauer, who here gives regency to health despite his much stronger belief in asceticism and renunciation. This can be overlooked, and I state it here once more, because he has committed himself to a consideration of a happy life that disregards his main philosophy. Schopenhauer (1851/1974) suggests exercise and a healthy diet as a necessary means toward happiness, and includes that we must take all opportunity to be cheerful without questioning the reasons and over-analyzing. It is by now common knowledge that healthy diet and exercise have been studied in psychology and shown to be correlated with happiness (see also Baumeister & Tierney 2011, and Georgios 2011,). When reading the part about being cheerful I was reminded of a passage from Goethe’s *Sorrows of Young Werther* where the principal character complains of the humourless disposition of some and how it is immoral to ruin the cheerfulness of those around them because of personal problems and crises. It is an act of egoism to bring others down in order to suffer along with you as opposed to maintaining the necessary strength to hide what festers beneath and attempt instead to join in their cheerfulness. Schopenhauer being a fan and friend of Goethe, I believe would have been inspired by the same passage and perhaps it influenced what he said here. Returning to the importance of health, Schopenhauer (1851/1974) states;

But from this it follows that the greatest of all follies is to sacrifice our health for whatever it may be, for gain, profit, promotion, learning, or fame, not to mention

the sensual and other fleeting pleasures; rather should we give first place to health (p. 326).

Schopenhauer (1851/1974) quickly returns to pessimism to elucidate the finer points about a life of true happiness, a subject I alluded to earlier in dealing with Janaway's objections,

Pain and boredom are the two foes of human happiness. In addition, it may be remarked that, in proportion as we succeed in getting away from the one, we come nearer to the other, and vice versa. And so our life actually presents a violent or feeble oscillation between the two (p. 329).

He states that pain is produced by want, whereas boredom is produced by security and prosperity. So in keeping with his pessimism Schopenhauer (1851/1974) ascribes the highest boredom to the dullard and the highest pain to the genius. Dullard are vapid within and thus seeks at all cost to find themselves in a social environment, for when they are alone they become terrified by their emptiness, while geniuses seek solitude where they can be alone with themselves and the prosperous wealth of their subjectivity, rarely interested in the company of others. "For in solitude, where everyone is referred back to himself, he then sees what he has in himself" (Schopenhauer, 1851/1974, p. 330). He creates a dichotomy of the world where either side is bad, but we must face the lesser of two evils, "For in this world we have little more than a choice between solitude and vulgarity" (Schopenhauer, 1851/1974, p. 331).

Returning to Schopenhauer's (1851/1974) duality for happiness, namely the objective and the subjective, he here accounts for the effects of the environment (objective) on one's ability to control their circumstances and maintain inner happiness

(subjective), “Of course, as was the case with Descartes, external circumstances must be favourable to the extent of enabling a man to be master of his own life and to be satisfied therewith” (p. 334). The remaining question regarding the ability to maintain inner happiness while suffering the pains of intelligence or the boredom of stupidity is not yet clarified, for Schopenhauer states that one who leads an intellectual life is always occupied and painlessly exists in satisfaction, yet he ascribes the highest pain to the highest intelligence.

Schopenhauer (1851/1974) clarifies his point by stating that geniuses are born with a particular talent that requires them to have liberty and leisure to exercise and produce that which they were born to do, otherwise any impediment naturally disturbs them and throws them into sickness and possibly self-destruction of the worst kind (madness). He states that the elimination of the two opposing poles, namely boredom and pain, is the only method of obtaining inner happiness and that this requires, in the case of individuals of exceptional intellect, leisure and liberty, which naturally depend on the environment. Thus when the objective conditions are favourable for someone with a supreme subjectivity, all boredom and pain are eliminated and they are able to attain the heights of their inherent capacity. Nevertheless, in stimulating and chaotic circumstances geniuses are overly pained and perhaps their intellectual faculties are crippled, and thus their constant need for solitude becomes evident. Schopenhauer acknowledges the apparent contradictions in his claims and provides several passages from the ancients that confirm the same notion, namely that happiness is to be found in the lowest of intelligence, but that intelligence is necessary for true happiness.

What a man has; begins with a hierarchy of needs (much like Maslow's), starting with food and clothing (health), then welfare and sex, and finally luxury and excesses. Unlike Maslow, Schopenhauer's (1851/1974) hierarchy is inverted, where the more basic needs like health are conducive to higher forms of happiness than the excesses, which is discussed in the context of *What a man represents*. With regards to what one has, Schopenhauer (1851/1974) only briefly touches on the absence of real value offered by material possessions and reputation; "Wealth is like sea-water; the more we drink, the thirstier we become; and the same is true of fame" (p. 347) and argues that real value is to be found in intelligence.

What a man represents; begins by covering issues of self-esteem that reflect our concern over what others think of us as a defective quality, because it ought not contribute to our happiness, "If a cat is stroked it purrs; and just as inevitably if a man is praised sweet rapture and delight are reflected in his face; and indeed in the sphere of his pretensions the praise may be a palpable lie" (Schopenhauer, 1851/1974, p. 352). Returning to his hierarchy, he stipulates that one who is unable to obtain happiness from the first two sources, namely health and welfare, and must rely on the third category of rank and reputation based on the impressions of others, is of the lowest sort. In the first category one derives happiness from basic necessities like food and clothing in order to be healthy, while in the second, one derives happiness from sex and some kind of monetary wealth that is sufficient to maintain health and provide sufficient leisure. In this last category one derives happiness from what they represent in the minds of others, which Schopenhauer (1851/1974) claims is the lowest form of happiness for it depends

not on what one is but rather how one is perceived. A testament to this is that one would gladly sacrifice their rank, honour, position, job, reputation, etc. for health.

In everything we do or omit to do, almost the first thing we consider is the opinion of other people and, if we examine the matter more closely, we shall see that almost half of the worries and anxieties we have ever experienced have arisen from our concern about it. For it is at the root of all our self-esteem that is so often mortified because it is so morbidly sensitive, all of our vanities and pretensions, and also of our boasting and ostentations. Without this concern and craze, there would be hardly a tithe of the luxury that exists (Schopenhauer, 1851/1974, p. 356).

This account of self-esteem reflects a psychological look at our interaction with the world, or as Schopenhauer (1819/1966) would put it; the subject-object relation; the foundation of his philosophical enterprise in attempting to account for all human experience. He places more emphasis on our internal valuing of ourselves than on the judgements of others, however, that is also due to the fact that he considers most people to be quite dull and the rare few to possess impressive intelligence. By considering himself a genius, and having had relatively little success for most of his career, it would seem like a rationalization for him to profess his genius despite a lack of objective confirmation. Nevertheless, he seems to have protected his self-esteem by his enduring beliefs in his intelligence, and finally in his later life achieved the objective esteem he had long anticipated, though he grew to scorn his fame.

Schopenhauer (1851/1974) does differentiate between pride and vanity, where the former results from inner self-esteem in the qualities one possesses while the latter rests

on what one represents in the minds of others. The proud need not advertise their knowledge, but the vain frequently do for this is the means and source of their vanity, the opinions of others, though Schopenhauer (1851/1974) does not agree with modesty,

But the virtue of modesty is, I suppose, a fine invention for fools and knaves; for according to it everyone has to speak of himself as if he were a fool; and this is a fine levelling down since it then looks as if there were in the world none but fools and knaves (p. 360).

The account of self-esteem he provides rests more, but not entirely, on internal (or subjective) valuing given his criticism of modesty. It would appear that Schopenhauer agrees with objective confirmation of one's abilities, such as one's education, publications, awards, and esteem, though not in cases where one depends on this confirmation for their evaluation of themselves, especially to the degree that they constantly seek confirmation in others. Schopenhauer (1851/1974) sums up his distaste for vanity by stating that, "the magnitude of human folly [is that]...What you know is worthless, unless others also know that you know it" (p. 355).

To clarify the distinction between what Schopenhauer (1851/1974) considers genuine and ungentle with regards to self-esteem, happiness, etc. he further clarifies his definition of *what man represents* by splitting related representations into three categories; rank, honour, and fame. The first he describes very quickly and gives it very little importance. Honour on the other hand can be internal or external; "...honour is external conscience and conscience internal honour..." (Schopenhauer, 1851/1974, p. 362) though he exclaims that this is only a flashy statement that requires more explanation. Honour, as opposed to fame, is something one has that they desire not to

lose, whereas fame is something one strives for and attains by merit. The majority of honour has to do with meeting utilitarian ends by being a good citizen, abiding by the law, and in cases of official honour to represent that which you were elected for.

Schopenhauer (1851/1974) begins a satirical diatribe about the preservation of honour and how ridiculous the “social construct” is. He points out that if a reasonable and just person is insulted, they lose their honour while the one who insulted them maintains theirs until the insulted person regains their honour, but not by using reason, rather by making an even greater insult to the other person. So vulgarity and immorality can both reduce and increase honour. Schopenhauer clarifies that the type of honour he criticizes is the kind birthed in the Middle Ages, called knightly honour, that has persisted into his time and very much differs from what the ancients called honour. When the ancients were insulted, defamed, or physically abused, their ultimate recourse was to have the law set it straight. In Schopenhauer’s time, dueling was permitted by the law as a method of restoring honour; a practice he finds absolutely ridiculous and detrimental to society and morality.

Finally Schopenhauer (1851/1974) discusses fame, which he grants more respect toward as it is generally a product of merit as opposed to impressions; however, he states that the true value lies in the merit and not the fame; the fame in fact is quite possibly the poison to the merit. Fame is mass appreciation and idolizing for some product created or action performed. Schopenhauer proclaims that products such as written works and art are of the highest merit for they last for thousands of years and benefit the whole of the human race. Actions performed are often lost in history and only spoken of by hearsay. Schopenhauer believes that posthumous fame or fame achieved later in life is much better

because it prevents one from having their work swayed by the public and allows the work to stand the test of time. Again, this final thought clearly represents Schopenhauer's situation, more so than his firmly held belief, given by the fact that he desired fame early on but only achieved it later, coincidentally at the same time he was writing this work.

In a section entitled *Counsels and Maxims*, Schopenhauer (1851/1974) continues his advice for a happy life with condoning reflectiveness as a valuable daily practice in order to gain the full benefit of our experiences. Too much experience without reflection becomes a chaotic array of stimuli that is soon forgotten and remembered with much confusion, having extrapolated nothing of mental value from the events. For this, Schopenhauer (1851/1974) suggests solitude, not only as a time of meditation and reflection, but as a way of protecting one's intellect from the monotony, vapidness, and stupidity found everywhere in society; "Everyone can be entirely himself only so long as he is alone; and therefore whoever does not like loneliness, does not like freedom; for only when a man is alone is he free" (p. 419). He further exclaims that the desire to be social is at bottom only a fear of loneliness, just as a love of life is truly only the fear of death.

On a more positive note, Schopenhauer (1851/1974) explains how we ought to treat each day as a new life and provides the analogy that mornings represent youth with the difficulties of waking as labour pains followed by much energy and ambition, then as the day proceeds we become more weary as with old age and finally we prepare for slumber as we prepare for death. From this he recommends that we do not waste the day and that we ought to wake early for it is the most sacred and prosperous part of the day for mental and physical work.

Next, Schopenhauer (1851/1974) instructs us to cultivate self-restraint, which is a large part of his philosophy and very much influenced by Eastern religion. He states that internal restraint is much better than external as the latter is often harsh and merciless. I have experienced the different feeling between internal and external restraint when I intentionally fasted for five days surviving on water alone, where the knowledge that it was my decision and that I had control maintained my perseverance. As juxtaposition I recall how irate I was just recently simply because I was hungry and I had to wait more than an hour to eat. Here the external restraint, though much less severe than my own when fasting, was tenfold more unbearable simply because it was out of my control. Thus maintaining self-restraint becomes the better option as you maintain a sense of liberty over your conduct and trump the will. “We should set a limit to our wishes, curb our desires, and subdue our anger, always mindful of the fact that the individual can attain only an infinitely small share of the things that are worth having whereas many evils must necessarily befall everyone” (Schopenhauer, 1851/1974, p. 438).

Schopenhauer (1851/1974) also teaches us on how to deal with other people, given his “misanthropic” view,

To be able to live among men and women, we must, therefore, allow everyone to exist with his given individuality, whatever this may prove to be; and our only concern should be to use it in the way permitted by its nature and character. But we should not hope to change it or condemn it out of hand for what it is. This is the true meaning of the maxim ‘live and let live ’; the task, however, is not so easy as it is reasonable, and fortunate is the man who is able to avoid for good and all very many individuals (p. 445).

Based on these principles, he also offers similar advice on dealing with friends; advice heavily criticized by Bergsma (2008) in his research on philosophical wisdom for a happy life in comparison to psychological studies on the topic. Bergsma (2008) found much of the anterior advice to be related to Eastern and New Age thinking, however, Schopenhauer's suggestions of happiness through segregation from others, keeping distance from friends, and general misanthropy runs counter to the majority of research on happiness found in psychology.

Schopenhauer's (1851/1974) advice on friendship shows some scepticism toward true companionship. He believes in keeping people at a distance; concealing pleasant impressions we have of them so that they do not begin to feel superior; occasionally demonstrating our disinterest in them to remove dependency and maintain our superiority; never forgiving a transgression for it will set precedent for future and more audacious transgressions; and never offering oily gestures of love and friendship for they represent temporary impressions and often become detrimental when on future occasions we are inevitably let down by one of their flaws. Schopenhauer (1851/1974) tops it off with a scornful remark; "There are few things that so certainly put people in a good humour as when we tell them of a serious misfortune that has recently befallen us, or unreservedly reveal to them some personal weakness. How characteristic" (p. 459)!

In contrast, Schopenhauer's (1851/1974) advice on social conduct appears rather tolerant: we should not take issue with the opinions of others; not correct people in conversation; avoid getting annoyed when listening in on a conversation and pretend it to be a scene in a play; do not express ourselves with vehemence but coldly; do not praise ourselves too often; entertain one who is lying and express disbelief for if they slips in

some truth then they are forced to reveal the whole truth; never reveal our weaknesses or secrets to friends but always remember theirs; do not feel animosity toward others for it reflects poorly on ourselves; and do not express hatred or anger for it is futile and childish.

Schopenhauer (1851/1974) also comments that some people are so subjective that they are completely self-absorbed, and he describes them as highly vain; interested only in what they have to say and never listen to others; quick to anger and offense; and easily placated with compliments. These individuals must be avoided like the plague for they are rarely objective and impartial and are as sensitive as a bomb, so that at any minute waiting to explode if handled without absolute care and daintiness.

Finally, Schopenhauer (1851/1974) captures the essence of his pessimism, which I take to be not a necessarily negative perspective, rather a more realistic one, or a lowering of our expectations to prevent disappointment,

We often try to brighten the gloom of the present by speculating on favourable possibilities and invent many different kinds of fanciful hopes. Every one of these is pregnant with a disappointment that never fails to appear when it is dashed by the hard facts of life. It would be better for us to make the many unpleasant possibilities the theme of our speculation. For this would cause us to take steps to prevent their happening and also give us pleasant surprises in the event of their not being realized (p. 436-437).

With all this pessimism Schopenhauer (1851/1974) still admits that self-training is possible and thus people are capable of change both intellectually and in their characters, however, this only works toward improving within a predetermined capacity at which

they have a maximum they can reach personally that may be objectively insignificant. Part of the problem of self-improvement is that we often do not know where we require it, for it is easier to see the flaws of others than our own. I return to this subject in the final chapter and put it in the perspective of psychology.

CHAPTER 6-SCHOPENHAUER'S INFLUENCE ON FREUD

I turn now to the more explicit exposition of Schopenhauer's psychology by considering his direct influences therein and the theoretical groundwork that may be of importance to psychology today. There are few instances where the philosopher uses the term "psychology" in his works, and even then they are vague references to what could be called mental philosophy, or the common use of the term during his time⁵. Schopenhauer began his studies in medicine; preserved a deep interest in the sciences according to his extensive library, notes, and biography; and, though perhaps to his detriment, was fascinated with the popular parapsychology of his period.

In the previous chapters I hoped to bring to light the psychological nuances of Schopenhauer's philosophy by letting the philosopher's words speak for themselves. Here I begin to draw inferences from that material to suggest where his contributions may be of interest to current psychology. First, I discuss the much noticed similarities between Schopenhauer's philosophy and Freud's psychoanalysis in order to show how his theories have already had impacts on, if not merely parallels to, an early form of psychology. Then, in the following chapter, I show how Schopenhauer's worldview could be considered psychologically, given the express pessimism found in his work although maintaining the same motivational end of self-improvement offered by the positive approaches.

⁵ See, Schopenhauer, A. (1974). *Parerga and paralipomena*: (Vol. 2). (E.F.J. Payne, Trans.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press. (Original work published 1851). Chapter XXVI 'Psychological Remarks' (p. 581-613).

The Parallels with Freud

In the psychological literature there is no more frequent mention of Schopenhauer than in his influence on Freud and psychoanalysis, with some authors questioning the authenticity of Freud's claims to originality, while others merely pointing out the incredible parallels in the theories of these thinkers (see, Bilsker 1994, Chessick 2005, Gardner 1999, Grimwade 2011, Hansen 2007, Makari 1991, Poon 1996, Rechartd 1997, Soble 2009, Taylor 1962, Wisdom 1945, and Young & Brook 1994). For my purposes I am interested in looking at how Schopenhauer's philosophy lends itself to psychology, both out of the philosopher's own admissions and ideas, but also historically through the legacy he left behind. Many authors recognize Schopenhauer's efforts as breaching the line between philosophy and psychology. Wisdom (1945) points out the relevance of Schopenhauer to psychology early on,

He [Schopenhauer] is sometimes considered the father of modern psychology...He was the first to show some psychological insight into the unconscious...He shows himself aware of the enormous power of the sex instinct, of the phenomena of wish-fulfillment, which he attributes to the intellect, of repression due to painful emotion...But his most interesting intuition concerns madness, which he attributed to a break in the thread of memory (pp. 45-46)

Young and Brook (1994) point out an interesting passage from the essays of Thomas Mann (1875-1955) on the psychological aspects and influence of Schopenhauer's philosophy. Mann (1947) writes,

Schopenhauer, as psychologist of the will, is the father of all modern psychology. From him the line runs, by way of the psychological radicalism of Nietzsche,

straight to Freud and the men who built up his psychology of the unconscious and applied it to the mental sciences (p. 408).

With the benefit of hindsight these authors not only recognize the psychological in the works of Schopenhauer, but also see these ideas explored in a new way through psychoanalysis. Gardner (1999) remarks,

The depth and range of Schopenhauer's anticipation of psychoanalytic ideas makes it appropriate to regard him, from the point of view of intellectual originality, as the true philosophical father of psychoanalysis. Freud did not, however, cite Schopenhauer as an influence. Indeed, he repudiated the suggestion that Schopenhauer had provided a source of psychoanalytic concepts while acknowledging their main points of agreement (p. 379).

It becomes easy to see why many are fascinated with the similarities between the two thinkers, when Freud repeatedly denies having been influenced by Schopenhauer (see, Gardner 1999, Freud 1911/1989, Freud 1914/2004, and Freud 1925/1989), though "in Freud's youth, Schopenhauer was the most widely discussed philosopher in the German-speaking world" (Young & Brook, 1994, p. 101).

Gardner (1999) argues that Schopenhauer anticipated Freud with a unique philosophical view that stood out from his contemporaries, provided a theory of the unconscious, and viewed human motivation as irrational through his metaphysics of the will. However, even if this similarity is evidence of some form of ideological "plagiarism", it cannot be denied that Freud's ends are much different than Schopenhauer's, where the latter attempts to formulate a unified theory of human

experience, while the former deals particularly with psychopathology. Though, Gardner (1999) makes the point that,

If Freud's central theoretical concept does descend ultimately from Schopenhauer, then this is reason, or a further reason, for regarding Schopenhauer's philosophy as having a special importance for our self-understanding (p. 375).

Gardner makes a fair point here; it is not that we ought to disqualify Freud's work or authenticity based on his parallels to Schopenhauer, or perhaps even his refusal to cite the philosopher, even if had he in fact read him, rather it offers us a chance to reconsider the value of Schopenhauer's philosophy to a different field, namely psychology.

The influences found in Freud's work are not exclusive to Schopenhauer and as Recharadt (1997) points out, it follows a lineage or theme of thinking that leads to Freud's worldview,

The influence of Kant, Schopenhauer, and Helmholtz had brought into Europe a tradition of critical psychology, which, as its starting point, questions the idea of faultless perception and focuses on how the image of the world is formed through illusion and misunderstanding. They were accompanied by Sigmund Freud, whose interest centered primarily on psychopathology (p. 44).

Nevertheless, the strong association to Schopenhauer is not based simply on a shared worldview or a philosophical paradigm that determined the emergence of psychology or more specifically psychoanalysis; the parallels are quite precise to specific concepts, theories, and understanding of human action, motivation, and experience. Gardner (1999) even makes that point that the philosophical lineage leading to Freud can nevertheless be reduced to Schopenhauer's original ideas,

It is a commonplace of the history of ideas that there is an extremely close relationship between Schopenhauer and Freud. Nietzsche too is often cited as a philosophical precursor of Freud, but the proto-Freudian elements in his thought are naturally regarded as derived from his Schopenhauerian legacy (p. 375).

In order to clarify some of the similarities between Schopenhauer and Freud that I have thus far only alluded to briefly, I must discuss some of them in detail. Again, the objective here is to demonstrate the psychology in Schopenhauer's philosophy, not to show the philosophy in Freud's psychology. In order to do this I have selected three principal areas to focus on, namely the unconscious, sexuality, and mental illness, as discussed by both thinkers.

The Unconscious

Much of the literature looking at the comparison here discussed focuses primarily on the notion of the unconscious, probably due to the fact that it has remained one of the most intriguing psychological concepts both in the field and in popular culture. The most interesting comparisons acknowledge the similar nuances of the unconscious in both thinkers, such as sexuality, irrationality, and their "...shared view of the negative nature of pleasure" (Gardner, 1999, p. 379).

Taylor (1962) comments on some of these similarities by stating that "what we now call lapses, rationalizations, and various defenses were emphasized by Schopenhauer" (p. 786), and suggests that the connection here is more than coincidental,

Substantially the Freudian view of 'the unconscious,' including the supposed sexual core, was developed perhaps first by Schopenhauer, whose work, *The World as Will and Idea* (1896, orig. publ. 1819), was widely read (p. 787).

When discussing the notion of the unconscious in Schopenhauer's philosophy we must necessarily turn to his concept of the will, which possesses all the qualities thereof. As Janaway (1999b) explains,

Firstly, although the will to life operates in conscious and rational life forms, it is not essentially rational or conscious. Will manifests itself `blindly`-that is, without consciousness or mentality of any kind-in the vast majority of nature, including the human organism (p. 325).

Schopenhauer (1819/1966) considered the will to be independent of consciousness and leaves the realm of mentality to the intellect, which then through cognition and reason attempts to understand action and motivation as ultimately guided by the blind force; the will. Janaway (1999b) further explains,

So the will to life within me is not a quasi-mind, not a consciousness, not something working rationally toward purposes. It is the principle that organizes me, this individual human being, just as it organizes a snail or an oak tree, so that I tend towards being alive and propagating the species I belong to (pp. 325-326).

In this way, the same will strives in all living things and toward the same end. This general view of the will found everywhere in nature is not something Freud is concerned with when discussing the unconscious, and it is also fair to say that Schopenhauer, when discussing the will, is not particularly concerned with the pathology of the unconscious. However, when discussing human experience, both authors make use of similar unconscious determinants of action.

Both thinkers regard unconscious processes to be responsible for basic bodily functions as well as complex mental functions. Gardner (1999) explains that,

Ideas are regarded by Schopenhauer as unconscious in themselves: for an idea to be rendered conscious, an extra operation is required, turning (as in Freud's account of the method of free association) on the laws of association (p. 376).

Similarly Freud (1900/1997) states that "the most complex mental operations are possible without the co-operation of consciousness" (p.428). Both rely on conceptions of the unconscious that are intended to explain some observable human experience,

In Schopenhauer's naturalistic metaphysics, as in Freud's scientific naturalism, the concept of the unconscious has a realistic justification, in comparison with the transcendental role which it plays in absolute idealism and in Nietzsche (Gardner, 1999, p. 402)

In this way, both are concerned with real consequences in the lived human experience as opposed to positing some mental phantom for the sake of completing an abstract theory. The function of the unconscious is then a construct that explains the origins of certain actions, behaviours, and ideas that lie beyond our awareness, and often beyond our control. As Grimwade (2011) explains,

Both believed that the vast majority of mental activity proceeds unconsciously and that the role of the conscious mind had been greatly overestimated by the philosophical tradition. Both men understood human behavior as the product of powerful and often conflicting drives. Each thinker held that mental illness involved a disorder of memory. And perhaps most importantly, they shared a pessimistic view of human nature, which required them to confront the complexities of human aggression and the problems of life in civilization (p. 149).

Freud (1933/1966) only discusses the existence of the unconscious indirectly, “we call a psychical process unconscious whose existence we are obliged to assume—for some such reason as that we infer it from its effects—,but of which we know nothing” (p. 534). Whereas Schopenhauer’s (1819/1966) mandate is to demonstrate direct knowledge of the individual will through our conscious awareness of being simultaneous with thinking and acting. Nevertheless, our only direct knowledge of the will is still derived from its effects, and much like Freud, Schopenhauer believes we can know very little about the will itself, aside from its manifestations.

The similarities become more striking when considering, first, Freud’s (1923/1989) *topographical model* of the psyche that describes the majority of human mental experiences as lying in the unconscious; using the iceberg metaphor whose peak that sits above the water represents consciousness, while the much larger submerged bulk represents the unconscious. Similarly, “Schopenhauer returns time and again to the theme of the superficiality of consciousness, which he compares to the surface of a globe or a sheet of water, the depths of which are largely unknown to us, but where our thinking and resolving take place truly” (Gardner, 1999, p. 376).

When considering Freud’s (1923/1989) *structural model*, that describes the functions and interplay between the ego, id, and superego, we begin to see even more remarkable similarities.

Freud’s ‘id’ [*das Es*] (part of the structural model of the psyche) is strikingly similar to Schopenhauer’s will. The id is a mass of unconscious drives which act according to the pleasure principle to discharge tension. It is a dark and inaccessible part of the mind that strives for expression. The id is responsible for

all the basic functions of the mind and contains the drives for sex, hunger, and other basic necessities. It is without a sense of time, completely irrational, and amoral (Grimwade, 2011, p. 152).

The will and the id share many common features, and though conceived for different purposes by the respective thinkers, they seem to explain the same types of human tendencies, actions, and ideas that accord less conscious control to the individual and regards the origin of these to be irrational.

Schopenhauer's notion of 'will'...is atemporal, as, following...It has no regard for phenomena (Schopenhauer's equivalent to what Freud is calling 'reality') because it is the Kantian thing-in-itself. Furthermore, it is inherently irrational since reason is a faculty of the thinking subject that only applies itself in conscious thought. In Freud's structural theory the id is timeless, irrational and characterized by a blind striving. Both thinkers understood these amoral and irrational unconscious drives as the motor behind most if not all human behaviour (Grimwade, 2011, p. 154).

Furthermore, Schopenhauer frequently discusses the primacy of the will in self-consciousness just as Freud gives primacy to the id. Schopenhauer (1844/1966) argues that "the will, as the thing-in-itself, constitutes the inner, true, and indestructible nature of man; yet in itself it is without consciousness. For consciousness is conditioned by the intellect, and the intellect is a mere accident of our being, for it is a function of the brain (p. 201). Grimwade (2011) also observes that "Schopenhauer understood the intellect as secondary to the will much as Freud understood the relation between the ego and the id" (p. 155). Freud (1923/1989) explains that "the ego represents what may be called reason

and common sense, in contrast to the id, which contains the passions” (p. 636). Similarly, Schopenhauer (1819/1966) attributes reason to the intellect, and an unconscious striving to the will.

In Freud’s (1923/1989) later structural model, the id is driven by two instincts or drives, the sexual (*Eros*) and the death (*Thanatos*) instinct. This causes human behaviour that the ego must accommodate with the pleasure principle and the reality principle in order to relieve the tension between the id (unconscious) and superego (moral conscience), and conform to reality. “Moreover, the ego seeks to bring the influence of the external world to bear upon the id and its tendencies, and endeavours to substitute the reality principle for the pleasure principle which reigns unrestrictedly in the id” (Freud, 1923/1989, p. 636). Interestingly,

The concept ‘Eros’, a prominent feature of Freud’s later works, appears by name in Schopenhauer’s *The World as Will and Representation* to describe the will-to-live as sexual impulse... While Schopenhauer does not account for the death drive proper, he certainly accounts for some of its outward manifestations. Freud’s death drive is a multifaceted concept which explains many behaviors; projected inwardly it is masochistic, outwardly it is sadistic (Grimwade, 2011, p. 153).

Schopenhauer’s (1819/1966) life preserving instinct, the will-to-live, is sexual in its core as it is the sole reason humans are driven to procreate; it is the only way to ensure the continued striving of the will and therefore becomes its prime objective. With regards to the death instinct, Grimwade (2011) continues,

For Schopenhauer, in congruence with the early views of Freud, outwardly aggressive and destructive behaviors are the result of the struggle for continued

existence. All living things, as manifestations of will, are bound to struggle against anything and everything to the utmost extremity of their power to persevere in being and expand themselves (p. 153).

However, there is more to Schopenhauer's notion of a death instinct. Bilsker (1994) suggests that Schopenhauer accounts for a death instinct with his denial of the will-to-live. I am inclined to agree to a certain extent. Schopenhauer (1819/1966) discusses the denial of the will-to-live in the context of aesthetics and asceticism toward pure will-less knowing, not directly in regards to aggressive behaviours. Nevertheless, the type of asceticism he discusses does account for a great deal of self-denial, which seems to fit with Freud's notion of masochism as the death drive inwardly directed. As for the sadistic element of the death drive, Schopenhauer (1819/1966) captures this in his ethics by relating malice to the character as a moral vice, stating that "...violent emotions and powerful passions in which the individual not merely affirms his own existence, but denies and seeks to suppress that of others, when it stands in his way" (p. 328), is the mark of an overly powerful will. Seeing that the character is the individual will, we can make the parallel again with Freud's id.

Freud⁶ (1920/1989) himself acknowledges that his theory of both instincts was covered by Schopenhauer,

May we venture to recognize in these two instinctual impulses, the life instincts and the death instincts? There is something else, at any rate, that we cannot remain blind to. We have unwittingly steered our course into the harbour of Schopenhauer's philosophy. For him death is the 'true result and to that extent the

⁶ Though Freud here acknowledges Schopenhauer, I later discuss the inconsistencies in his other writings where denies familiarity with Schopenhauer, or claims to have read him late in life, or claims he knows of his philosophy by hearsay alone.

purpose of life', while the sexual instinct is the embodiment of the will to live (p. 618)

Grimwade (2011) makes the point that Schopenhauer's will-to-live actually accounts for both the life preserving and life denying instincts found in Freud's unconscious. Though Schopenhauer does not name a death instinct directly, his description of the will-to-live provides sufficient evidence of aggressive and life denying actions. Schopenhauer (1819/1966) argues that most humans are inherently vicious due to the strong internal pressure from their individual will to survive, which finds satisfaction in the suffering of others, sometimes even drives us to be cruel to others in order to relieve our own internal suffering. This is complemented by his theory of compassion which is reserved for the few and highly intelligent individuals among hordes of miserable, stupid, and immoral people that account for the overwhelming suffering in the world.

In Freud's (1923/1989) view of instincts, he claims that "a special physiological process (of anabolism or catabolism) would be associated with each of the two classes of instincts; both kinds of instincts would be active in every particle of living substance" (p. 646). This begins to look like Schopenhauer's (1819/1966) view of the will as regulating all bodily functions on its most basic level. Furthermore, Freud (1923/1989) says "...we have admitted the idea of a fusion of the two classes of instincts with each other..." (p. 646) in order to account for various mental conditions where, for example, the death instinct influences the sexual or vice-versa. Again, Schopenhauer accounts for both the aggressive and sexual tendencies as part of the will-to-live.

Along with the similarities in their notions of the unconscious, its primacy over consciousness, and the internal drives that result in behaviour, there are yet more

resemblances in some of the functions of the unconscious that both authors describe. Freud (1933/1966) discusses the concept of repression as an unconscious defense mechanism for protecting the individual psyche from unwanted thoughts, desires, or memories that would otherwise be very painful to accept. Makari (1991) points out that Freud was surrounded by an intellectual elite that had been heavily influenced by Schopenhauer, and among them was Otto Rank (1884-1939), who pointed out that the philosopher had discussed the concept of repression first. Freud (1914/2004) discusses this;

Concerning the theory of repression, I was certain that I worked independently. I knew of no influence that directed me in any way to it, and I long considered this idea to be original, till O. Rank showed us the place in Schopenhauer's "The World as Will and Idea," where the philosopher is struggling for an explanation for insanity. What is there said concerning the striving against the acceptance of a painful piece of reality agrees so completely with the content of my theory of repression that, once again, I must be indebted to my not being well-read for the possibility of making a discovery (p. 7).

Gardner (1999) refers to a lengthy passage in Schopenhauer that directly discusses the phenomenon of repression found in Freud. In it, Schopenhauer (1844/1966) writes,

[The will] makes its supremacy felt in the last resort. This it does by prohibiting the intellect from having certain representations, by absolutely preventing certain trains of thought from arising, because it knows, or in other words experiences from the self-same intellect, that they would arouse in it any one of the emotions previously described [anger, resentment, humiliation, shame, etc.]. It then curbs

and restrains the intellect, and forces it to turn to other things. However difficult this often is, it is bound to succeed the moment the will is in earnest about it; for the resistance then come not from the intellect, which always remains indifferent, but from the will itself; and the will has an inclination in one respect for representation it abhors in another. Thus the representation is in itself interesting to the will, just because it excites it. At the same time, however, abstract knowledge tells the will that this representation will cause it a shock of painful and unworthy emotion to no purpose. The will then decides in accordance with this last knowledge, and forces the intellect to obey (p. 208).

Schopenhauer (1844/1966) even talks about wish fulfillment in the same way Freud has and also the notion of undesirable wishes of death that when realized bring us both shame and relief, a parallel to Freud's conception of catharsis,

We often do not know what we desire or fear. For years we can have a desire without admitting it to ourselves or even letting it come to clear consciousness, because the intellect is not to know anything about it, since the good opinion we have of ourselves would inevitably suffer thereby. But if the wish is fulfilled, we get to know from our joy, not without feeling shame, that this is what we desired; for example, the death of a near relation whose heir we are (p. 210).

Another of Freud's (1933/1966) famous defense mechanisms is projection, a process by which we unconsciously attribute undesirable qualities of ourselves to other people in order to ridicule them as opposed to the painful discovery of noting it in ourselves. In another essay, Schopenhauer (1851/1974) discusses projection much in the same way as Freud has and with the same intention,

Everyone has in others a mirror wherein he clearly sees his own vices, faults, bad manners, and offensive traits of all kinds. But in most cases, he is like the dog who barks at his own image because he does not know that he is looking at himself, but thinks he sees another dog. Whoever finds faults with others is working at his own reformation (p. 457).

In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud (1900/1997) discusses the complex ways in which the unconscious manifests itself in dream work by fulfilling the unwanted desires we harbour through symbols and imagery, thereby relieving some of the psychic pressure built up by repressing this material. The wish fulfillment in dreams can be more or less direct, though not blatant as it would shock us and result in waking, and can even appear in opposition to the unconscious wish, causing us much confusion. Freud (1933/1966) states that “the dream as a whole is a distorted substitute for something else, something unconscious” (p. 114), and “it is a perfectly valid psychic phenomenon, actually a wish-fulfillment; it may be enrolled in the continuity of the intelligible psychic activities of the waking state; it is built up by a highly complicated intellectual activity” (Freud, 1900/1997, p. 34). Schopenhauer (1851/1974) describes a very similar process in dreaming,

But yet there is between them a mysterious and appropriate connection since a hidden power that is obeyed by all the incidents in the dream controls and arranges even these circumstances and indeed solely with reference to us. But the strangest thing of all is that this power can ultimately be none other than our own will, yet from a point of view that does not enter our dreaming consciousness. And so it happens that the events in a dream often turn out quite contrary to our

wishes therein, cause us astonishment, annoyance, and even mortal terror, without the fate that we secretly direct coming to our rescue (p.217).

Here he describes wish fulfillment and the unconscious quite directly as the active components of our dreams. Freud (1900/1997) also discusses the possibility of seeming frustrations in dreams that appear contrary to our desires in the dreaming consciousness; “the inability to do something in a dream is the expression of a contradiction, a ‘no’ (p.219). Both authors here suggest that wish fulfillment occurs on an unconscious level and this may sometimes appear to us as contradiction to what we assume our actual desire is. In another passage Schopenhauer (1851/1974) describes unconscious conflict by analogy to the dream,

...Just as everyone is the secret theatrical manager of his dreams, so too by analogy that fate controls the actual course of our lives ultimately comes in some way from the will. This is our own and yet here, where it appears as fate, it operates from a region that lies far beyond our representing individual consciousness; whereas this furnishes the motives that guide our empirically knowable individual will. Hence such will has often to contend most violently with that will of ours that manifests itself as fate... and thus, in relentless opposition thereto, arranges and fixes as external restraints that which it could not leave the consciousness to find out and yet does not wish to see it miscarry (p.218-219).

These similarities indicate only the heavy focus on the unconscious by both thinkers, for it is not the case that Schopenhauer’s simple account of dreams is in any way a strong foundation for Freud’s theory of dreams, which is expounded at great length; filled with

complicated concepts such as *dream-work*, *manifest content*, *latent content*, and *condensation*; and most importantly is intended for interpretation toward discovering unconscious content toward therapeutic ends. Nonetheless, it is interesting to see that both agree that the same phenomenon guiding humans in waking actions is underlying the dreaming process.

Finally it is important to note that both thinkers share a similar pessimistic worldview that once more rests on the unconscious. “Freud notes that all of civilization is characterized by repression of the id. Throughout his works, Schopenhauer understood the intellect as an organ of the will, but it was *rare* and *advanced* intellects that made civilization possible” (Grimwade, 2011, p. 155), through pure will-less knowing or by regulating the striving will.

On Sexuality

Everyone familiar with the writings of Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860) and Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) should immediately recognize their philosophical affinity. Many obvious parallels strike even the casual reader. Both thinkers conceived that sexuality played an enormous role in human behavior, far beyond the limited area granted it by their respective contemporaries (Grimwade, 2011, p. 149).

Freud’s psychoanalytic system revolves around sexuality. Freud (1900/1997) himself claims, “It may be said that there is no class of ideas which cannot be enlisted in the representation of sexual facts and wishes” (p.245). Schopenhauer (1844/1966) also states that “the sexual impulse is the focus of the will...” (p. 237). In another passage, Schopenhauer (1819/1966) says that “the fundamental theme of all the many different

acts of will...can be reduced to the maintenance of the individual and the propagation of the race” (p. 327). Both authors see sexuality at the core of all human behaviour; Freud through his pleasure principle and sexual instinct found in the unconscious id and Schopenhauer in his life affirming and ever-striving unconscious will-to-live.

Once more, various authors find fascination with the similarities between the two thinkers and the introduction of a sexual nexus to human action. Gardner (1999) examines the central role of sexuality in Schopenhauer’s philosophy that is similarly found in Freud’s psychoanalysis;

Schopenhauer unequivocally assigns supreme importance to sexuality, Sexuality is ‘the invisible point of all action and conduct’, ‘the cause of war and the object of peace, the basis of the serious and the aim of the joke’, ‘the key to all hints and allusions, and the meaning of all secret signs and suggestions’...the essence of man is will, will to life, the concentrated expression of which is sexuality (p. 378). Not only does Schopenhauer (1819/1966) consider that actions, comments, and jokes have a sexual basis, but he believes that the strongest expression of the will in humans, as a preservation of life and objectified as pure will lacking knowledge, is manifested in the genitals. Freud (1905/1989) similarly claims that,

The normal sexual aim is regarded as being the union of the genitals in the act known as copulation, which leads to a release of the sexual tension and temporary extinction of the sexual instinct-a satisfaction analogous to the sating of hunger (p. 247).

Schopenhauer also claims that sexuality pervades the entire personality of all humans, and he gives the sexual climax an extremely important role in producing a transient removal from the misery of human life (Chessick, 2005, p. 311).

Soble (2009) states that “Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860), anticipating evolutionary biology and Freudian psychoanalysis, painted a bleak picture of the human condition” (p. 113) by claiming that the instinctual drive to procreate that is essentially beneficial to the species is actually detrimental to the individual by creating dependence, causing a loss of resources, and leading to suffering. As such, nature tricks humans into engaging in sex by creating an impulse to procreate that would otherwise be seen as disgusting (Schopenhauer, 1819/1966). This is due to the fact that procreation is related to the strongest striving of the will, namely its own survival; however, the trick Schopenhauer speaks of that becomes detrimental to the individual is that the will would continue on regardless of procreation. Schopenhauer (1819/1966) discusses the atemporal and metaphysical nature of the will throughout his works and that it is a unified force that becomes individuated through cognition, thus the individual feels the striving of the will within, along with sexual instinct and assumes the responsibility of continuing the species. Nevertheless, the will, as a unified force can never cease, and therefore the act of procreation is a deceptive device that renders many burdens for the individual in having to raise offspring. In the overall pessimistic worldview, Schopenhauer (1819/1966) argues that the will-to-live both in its life affirming and life denying instincts only introduces suffering into the world, a world that ought not to exist (according to Schopenhauer), and as such,

The will performs the great tragedy and comedy at its own expense, and is also its own spectator...the justification for the suffering is the fact that the will affirms itself even in this phenomenon [procreation]; and this affirmation is justified and balanced by the fact that the will bears the suffering [of individuation]. Here we have a glimpse of *eternal justice* in general (p. 331).

We can see here how the aims of the two thinkers are somewhat different. Schopenhauer, though he conceived first of sexual and death instincts in the unconscious, nevertheless maintains that these are responsible for the suffering in the world caused by the striving will through the principle of individuation. Freud, on the other hand, is more concerned with the individual suffering brought about by these same instincts that cause mental illness, and only in some works discusses how these general tendencies shape society and human behaviour overall. Nevertheless, Freud (1933/1966) states,

Sexuality is, indeed, the single function of the living organism which extends beyond the individual and is concerned with his relation to the species. It is an unmistakable fact that it does not always, like the individual organism's other functions, bring it advantages, but, in return for an unusually high degree of pleasure, brings dangers which threaten the individual's life and often enough to destroy it (p. 413).

We see here their shared view on the negative consequences of sexuality at the core of the instinct to procreate. Grimwade (2011) explains,

Schopenhauer, however, with his predilection for metaphysics, connected sexuality to the 'will-of-the-species', which always serves as its guiding metaphysical thrust. Freud also understood sexual desire as the primary stimulus

in human life. Since all desire is libidinal in Freud's view, all of life, including psychological development, is spurred on and defined by erotic charge (p. 152).

I discussed in the previous section Grimwade's analysis of the two thinkers in terms of the sexual and death instincts. It was elaborated that both Schopenhauer and Freud give some account of each, and more so that Freud's notions of sadism and masochism are found in Schopenhauer's writing, though he does not use the same terminology, but instead describes the inwardly and outwardly directed instinct to harm.

The important, and obvious, similarity between the two theories is that sadistic acts are understood as the manifestation of an overwhelming instinct, or drive.

Schopenhauer, like the young Freud, conceived of destructiveness and mastery as arising from essentially self-preservative instincts (Grimwade, 2011, p. 161-162).

Schopenhauer (1819/1966) explicitly states that "generation is only reproduction passing over to a new individual, reproduction at the second power so to speak, just as death is only exertion at the second power" (p. 330). Freud (1905/1989) says that "sadism would correspond to an aggressive component of the sexual instinct which has become independent and exaggerated" (p. 252), and that "it can often be shown that masochism is nothing more than an extension of sadism turned round upon the subject's own self" (p. 252). Yet despite these similarities Grimwade (2011) concludes,

We have seen how Schopenhauer and Freud understood human life as a sadistic-masochistic relation fundamentally characterized by suffering, and how each theorist tried to solve this problem. Schopenhauer's fundamental theoretical assertion, that the complete denial and suppression of instinct was necessary to alleviate suffering, is in complete opposition to Freud's view. Freud offered us an

alternative to Schopenhauer's life denying world-weary pessimism: the good life, a life of rewarding emotional attachments inevitably involves a certain amount of suffering (p. 167).

Though the pessimistic tone is evident everywhere in Schopenhauer's writing, I would like to remind the reader that this notion is based on the negative view of pleasure that in fact both thinkers share. Grimwade suggests that the result of Schopenhauer's worldview appears fatalistic and that Freud's offers some consolation. I venture to argue that Schopenhauer's philosophy is consolatory throughout, first by establishing a pessimistic ground, but then offering resolution through ethics, aesthetics, and self-improvement.

Overall the views on sexuality between the two thinkers appears very similar though again I would make that case that Freud's intentions are much different than Schopenhauer's given the former's insistence on pathology. Freud (1905/1989) explains that his main concern is not with "normal" sexuality, which he does indeed attribute to nearly all human behaviour, but rather that the aim of psychoanalysis is to deal with the pathological cases. This is why the majority of his work on sexuality concerns very specific concepts, such as *libido*, *catharsis*, *perversion*, *fixations*, *fetishes*, *inversion*, and *sexual development* in children, among others. Interestingly, Schopenhauer (1844/1966) also gives a brief account of sexual development in children,

Because the brain has already attained its full size by the seventh year, children after that age become remarkably intelligent, inquisitive, and sensible. But then comes puberty; to a certain extent, it affords a support to the brain, or a sounding-board, and all at once raises the intellect by a large step...but at the same time the

animal desires and passions that now appear oppose the reasonableness that has hereto prevailed, and this is progressive (p. 212).

However, Freud's (1905/1989) certainly has more depth and deals with sexual stages beginning in infancy, accounts for normal and abnormal development, the Oedipus complex, and the consequences of not successfully overcoming a particular developmental stage resulting in mental illness.

Mental Illness

Schopenhauer's concept of mental illness, which he calls madness, is primarily focused around his "observations" of faulty memory. I have previously discussed his notion of madness in regards to the aesthetic experience, where geniuses immerse themselves in pure will-less knowing for prolonged periods that they begin to lose their sense of reality and consequently substitute real memories with fictions. Here I want to focus more specifically on his notion of madness due to trauma.

Grimwade (2011) states that "Schopenhauer's conception of mental illness anticipates many of Freud's early concepts and theories. Schopenhauer proposed that trauma, memory, and repression play a significant role in 'madness'" (p. 155). Though Schopenhauer's assessment of madness is by no means extensive, his remarks do bear a resemblance to some of Freud's ideas on the matter. First, Schopenhauer (1844/1966) says "I have described *madness* as the *broken* thread of this memory which nevertheless continues to run uniformly, although with constantly decreasing fullness and distinctness" (p. 399). He argues that memory-loss, or gaps in the sequence of memories, are filled in with fictions that nevertheless render the sequence complete but inaccurate.

This then, with increasing occurrence, leads to entire series of fictitious memories that result in a confused reality of the present.

The memory gaps that Schopenhauer (1844/1966) discusses stem from a phenomenon similar to Freud's repression,

If certain events or circumstances are wholly suppressed for the intellect, because the will cannot bear the sight of them; and then, if the resultant gaps are arbitrarily filled up for the sake of the necessary connexion; we then have madness (p. 400).

Freud (1911/1989) makes very similar connections between repression and memory resulting in mental illness and a distortion of reality,

We have long observed that every neurosis has as its result, and probably therefore as its purpose, a forcing of the patient out of real life, an alienating of him from reality...By introducing the process of repression into the genesis of neuroses we have been able to gain some insight into this connection. Neurotics turn away from reality because they find it unbearable-either the whole or parts of it. The most extreme cases of hallucinatory psychosis which seeks to deny the particular event that occasioned the outbreak of their insanity (Griesinger). But in fact every neurotic does the same with some fragment of reality (p. 301).

The end of the last sentence of the passage above is supplemented with a footnote by Freud (1911/1989) that offers some credit to Schopenhauer for having discussed the same phenomenon,

Otto Rank {"Schopenhauer über den Wahnsinn," *Zentralblatt*} (1910) has recently drawn attention to a remarkably clear prevision of this causation shown

in Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Idea* [Part II (Supplements), Chapter 32] (p. 301).

The reference Freud makes here is to a section in Schopenhauer's main work entitled *On Madness*, which is precisely where the two previous quotes by Schopenhauer are taken from, regarding memory and repression. We can see here that Schopenhauer, like Freud, makes the connection between repressed ideas and mental illness. Furthermore, Schopenhauer's (1844/1966) view of 'madness' is entirely naturalistic like Freud's,

Yet it [madness] depends more often on purely somatic causes [as opposed to external], on malformations or partial disorganizations of the brain or its membranes, also on the influence exercised on the brain by other parts affected with disease (p. 401).

Freud (1950/1989) wants to devise a general theory of the mind, and in the process remain within the bounds of natural science: he opens his essay, *Project for a Scientific Psychology* with,

The intention is to furnish a psychology that shall be a natural science: that is, to represent psychical processes as quantitatively determinate states of specifiable material particles, thus making those processes perspicuous and free from contradiction (p. 87).

Schopenhauer has similar ambitions for his metaphysics, though not in establishing a science, but rather in having the explanatory power for the foundation of science itself. In this way he is unlike his contemporaries who maintain the Kantian transcendentalism, "So, by a metaphysical route that rejects the transcendental demand that nature be subordinated to rational subjectivity, Schopenhauer arrives at the same unencumbered

view of the human psyche as Freud's scientific naturalism" (Gardner, 1999, p. 398). It is through a naturalistic perspective that Schopenhauer so often touches on psychological topics and themes.

The world could thus present itself to Schopenhauer as a 'cryptograph', and natural phenomena, including human psychology, could be interpreted as directly manifesting the constitution of an underlying reality. Because Schopenhauer's idealism was not transcendental, natural phenomena could be taken as displaying reality, and the reality displayed in them did not need to be invested with the form of self-consciousness; it could, on the contrary, be regarded as foreign and inimical to self-consciousness and its attendant rationality (Gardner, 1999, p. 397).

His observations and acquaintance with scientific journals, as well as his previous studies in medicine, influenced his philosophical perspective and bent it toward accommodating the scientific evidence of his time. Just as he has attempted corroborate his metaphysics with natural science in his *On the Will in Nature*, he similarly attempts to match his philosophy of the will with human psychology. Schopenhauer (1844/1966) even shows familiarity with Phillippe Pinel's (1745-1846) work on mental illness, and correlates his notion of the will with the psychiatrist's findings,

Pinel thought that there is a *mania sine delirio*, a frenzy without insanity...it is to be explained by the fact that will periodically withdraws itself entirely from the government and guidance of the intellect, and consequently of the motives. In this way it then appears as a blind, impetuous, destructive force of nature, and accordingly manifests itself as the mania to annihilate everything that comes in its

way...the man in a frenzy perceives objects, for he breaks loose on them; he is also conscious of his present action and remembers it afterwards (p. 402).

He also accounts for consciousness of reality during mania, or what we would now consider a 'manic episode'. Schopenhauer (1844/1966) explains this phenomenon further with an analogy,

For what bridle and bit are to an unmanageable horse, the intellect is to the will in man; it must be led by this bridle by means of instruction, exhortation, training, and so on; for in itself the will is as wild and impetuous an impulse as is the force appearing in the plunging waterfall; in fact, it is, as we know, ultimately identical therewith. In the height of anger, in intoxication, in despair, the will has taken the bit between its teeth; it has bolted, and follows its original nature. In *mania sine delirio* (madness without delirium), it has completely lost bridle and bit, and then shows most clearly its original and essential nature, and that the intellect is as different from it as the bridle is from the horse (p. 213).

Freud (1923/1989) uses the same analogy to account for the division of the id and ego, making a parallel with Schopenhauer's notion that the will is separate from the intellect,

Thus in its relation to the id it is like a man on horseback, who has to hold in check the superior strength of the horse; with this difference, that the rider tries to do so with his own strength while the ego uses borrowed forces. The analogy may be carried a little further. Often a rider, if he is not to be parted from his horse, is obliged to guide it where it wants to go; so in the same way the ego is in the habit of transforming the id's will into action as if it were its own (p. 636).

This further confirms the idea that Schopenhauer's concepts can be substituted in Freud's structural model of the unconscious and render analogous results, namely mental illness as a result of repression, trauma, etc. However, we can see that in the realm of pathology Schopenhauer's theory is not nearly as robust and cohesive as Freud's. It may then be interesting to look at some general similarities between the worldviews of these thinkers and discuss their ideological lineage.

Lineage

I have covered the main topics where similarities appear between the two thinkers, yet there are still more considerations to be made regarding their worldviews and historical relationship. The controversy in the ideological similarity between the authors is still prevalent in the psychological literature primarily due to the historical accounts. Grimwade (2011) says,

It is *certain* that Freud read Schopenhauer as he readily admits to having done so.

It is not a matter of *if* Freud read Schopenhauer, but *when*. While Freud claims that he read Schopenhauer "late in life", many authors, including, notably Young and Brook (1994), have questioned Freud's claim (p. 150).

Freud (1925/1989) comments on Schopenhauer directly in his autobiography (*An Autobiographical Study*), which was published in 1925, and there denies the philosopher's influence on the emergence of psychoanalysis,

The large extent to which psycho-analysis coincides with the philosophy of Schopenhauer-not only did he assert the dominance of the emotions and the supreme importance of sexuality but he was even aware of the mechanism of

repression-is not to be traced to my acquaintance with his teaching. I read Schopenhauer late in my life (p. 38).

However, Freud (1900/1997) as early as *The Interpretation of Dreams*, published in 1900, shows distinct familiarity with Schopenhauer's philosophy,

I endeavour to compare the views of Kant and Schopenhauer concerning time. Owing to my somnolence I do not succeed in holding on to both trains of thought, which would have been necessary for the purposes of comparison. After several vain efforts, I once more exert all my will-power to formulate myself the Kantian deduction in order to apply it to Schopenhauer's statement of the problem (p. 349).

This example is given to indicate how his thoughts then lead into a symbolic dream representing his inability to recall the Kantian theory of time to compare it to what he did remember in Schopenhauer's. The reference to something as specific as Schopenhauer's theory of time, in which the philosopher goes into relatively little detail and provides no consolidated theory in one place, signifies that Freud must have had at least general familiarity with Schopenhauer's overall philosophy. In order to have any idea of Schopenhauer's theory of time, one must also be aware of his philosophy, where time is one of the interwoven concepts that piece together his epistemology and metaphysics. Schopenhauer's notion of time is that it is product of cognition and the principle of individuation that allows us to experience the world as representation, whereas the will is never subject to time. For a comparison to Kant's theory of time, I presume one must be intimately familiar with Schopenhauer's metaphysics.

Gardner (1999) further states that “It has been suggested, for example that Schopenhauer’s *Dialogue on Religion* lies behind Freud’s views on religion in *The Future of an Illusion*” (p. 379) and Mann (1947) notes that Schopenhauer’s notion of the role of fate closely resembles Freud’s conception of character. Here the similarities must lie in the idea that one’s ethical constitution is ingrained in their being and manifested in their actions, the origin of which are often unconscious according to both thinkers. This is then carried over to humanity in general as in both their views. Chessick (2005) also comments on their similar worldviews,

Schopenhauer (1818/1958), who had a view of humans similar to that of Freud, insisted that only compassion for the general human plight in which we are all immersed has the capacity to eventually unite humanity. He viewed mind as an evolved survival mechanism and not suitable to detach from the phenomenal world in order to practice metaphysics. For Schopenhauer, as later for Freud, thinking is distorted and corrupted by will, so passions and not reason set the goals of human endeavor. For humans, the mind is simply a tool to get drive gratification (p. 311).

I have shown in several places (see, Freud 1911/1989, Freud 1914/2004, Freud 1920/1989, and Freud 1925/1989) that Freud does in fact credit Schopenhauer with having arrived at similar conclusions, however, nowhere does Freud state that this ever made an impact on his own thinking or the creating his psychoanalysis. “Does Freud ever acknowledge a *debt* to Schopenhauer? No, he does not. Does he mention Schopenhauer at all? Yes, he does, in many places (none of them in *The Ego and the Id*, though)” (Bilsker, 1994, p. 127). The most charitable instance of Freud’s (1921) credit to

Schopenhauer occurs during a lecture, *One of the difficulties of psycho-analysis*, delivered in England in 1921,

Probably very few have realised with what momentous import for science and life the recognition of unconscious mental processes is fraught. It was not psycho-analysis, however, let us hasten to add, that was the first to make this step. Renowned philosophers may be cited as predecessors, above all the great thinker Schopenhauer, whose unconscious “will” may be equated with the “mental impulses” of psychoanalysis. It was the same thinker, by the way, who in words of unforgettable force reminded men of the significance of their sexual straining, so invariably under-estimated (p. 39)

Others like Poon (1996) see the lineage between Schopenhauer and Freud as a development of an idea, where the former’s focus on the primacy of the body through his notion of the will is developed further by Freud to explain more mental phenomena; Schopenhauer desires to account for all human experience, and Freud continues in this venture by accounting for the psychopathological experience. Hansen (2007) makes an even deeper connection to the lineage of the unconscious by attributing Schopenhauer’s preference for eastern religion to his notion of the unconscious that is then adopted into psychology,

Schopenhauer, however, moves toward a psychological point of view by attributing will to the cognition of self, the singular “I.” By pairing will and “the thing-in-itself” that we perceive as “representation,” Schopenhauer offers a metaphysical view with obvious Buddhist parallels (p. 191).

Hansen (2007) concludes that the introduction of the unconscious to philosophy by Schopenhauer, as influenced by the eastern religions, then made its way into scientific psychology in the work of Gustav Fechner (1801–1887), Wilhelm Wundt (1832–1920), Sigmund Freud, and Carl Jung (1875–1961).

The similarities between Schopenhauer and Freud are everywhere in their works and it appears everywhere in their intentions to produce knowledge of human experience. Both thinkers also admit the limitations of their systems but attempt to show that the bigger picture ought to dispel the skeptics of doubts.

What people seem to demand of psychology is not progress in knowledge, but satisfactions of some other sort; every unsolved problem, every admitted uncertainty is made into a reproach against it. Whoever cares for the science of mental life must accept these injustices along with it (Freud, 1933/1966, p. 470).

Though there can be here no conclusive remark as to the actual influence Schopenhauer may have had on Freud, it becomes nonetheless evident that both thinkers have a similar perspective of human nature, behaviour/action, motivation, and the aim of science. Both want to offer a complete explanation of human experience, whether metaphysical or psychological. What is interesting is that the metaphysical and the psychological are here shown to be compatible in their explanatory power of human experience. My intention is to indicate the ‘psychological’ that is inherent in Schopenhauer’s philosophy, which is often regarded as a metaphysical system. In the next chapter I also discuss the possibility of (re)introducing metaphysics into psychology, while attempting to see if Schopenhauer’s philosophy can be useful to the field of psychology.

CONCLUSION-SCHOPENHAUER'S "NEGATIVE PSYCHOLOGY"

In conducting a psychological reading of Schopenhauer's philosophy I have found that it most closely resembles the ambitions found in the humanistic and positive psychology traditions. Schopenhauer's philosophy aims at self-improvement, moral virtues, overcoming and accepting suffering, and presents a holistic theory of human nature. Humanistic and positive psychology also aim at self-improvement, moral virtues, and overcoming obstacles through a holistic theory; however, their focus is primarily on positive experiences and unlike Schopenhauer, they often ignore the negative experiences of suffering toward "self-actualization" (see, Diaz 2014, and Yen 2014). With this it may be possible to suggest a new approach to psychology derived from Schopenhauer's philosophy that shares some of the same concerns as the humanistic and positive traditions but with some definitive ontological and epistemological differences, namely a "negative psychology".

Thus far the anterior chapters have outlined Schopenhauer's fundamental philosophical concepts, assumptions, and ontology, and have shown the practical implications derived therefrom. It is primarily these implications and practical application of his philosophy that are here discussed to indicate the potential for these ideas to be included in psychology.

Schopenhauer's notion of psychology rests very much on the foundation that we as humans do not have free will. This view differed considerably from most of his contemporaries and marked one of the first pessimistic philosophies on human nature that later influenced figures like Friedrich Nietzsche and Sigmund Freud (Makari, 1991). It is in this sense that I refer to this initiative as a "negative psychology", where this starting

point is necessarily one where we must lower our expectations even before we begin and first accept our limitations, the first of which is a denial of free will.

As with causal determinism that is observed in nature, Schopenhauer (1819/1966) applies the same fundamental principle to human nature, as expressed in human actions, as originating from some cause. The cause is the individual *will* that resides in each human being and shares in common with the *will-in-nature* the same blind striving for survival. It is through the birth of consciousness in the human mind that *the principle of sufficient reason*, as our tool for cognitive organization, began to categorize objects in the world in relation to the subject. It is this same cognitive process that through *the principle of individuation*, recognized among a world of *representations*, individual objects of which the cognizing subject counted themselves as one. This cognitive process, Schopenhauer (1819/1966) argues, is how the will as *thing-in-itself* and a unified force ever-present in nature became individuated. The individual will in humans strives blindly like the will-in-nature, but now in competition for survival with all other individuated wills including the will-in-nature. It is this competitive striving that is the ultimate cause of all strife and suffering in the world, and for this reason Schopenhauer (1851/1974) says,

Whoever has fully accepted the teaching of my philosophy and thus knows that our whole existence is something which had better not have been, and to deny and reject which is the highest wisdom, will not cherish great expectations of anything in the world, nor will he complain very much if he fails in any undertaking (p. 409).

The principle of sufficient reason also explains the causal nature of human actions through motivation. Schopenhauer (1813/1974) argues that all actions must have a cause, and the cause for human action is the striving will that unconsciously monitors all biological activity, all instinctual drives, and all desires that spring therefrom. The *motives* that we perceive through cognition in the real world then act as the triggers to initiate a reaction from the will to satiate some desire, the process of which is a reduction of some pain, deficiency, or want. Schopenhauer (1819/1966) then argues that to claim we possess free will is to ignore all the motivating factors that act upon our consciousness in activating specific desires and the ensuing actions that satiate them. He says that the only way the will is free is metaphysically, where truly it is absolutely free as a blind force; however, human action is necessarily caused. In this way, Schopenhauer (1836/1992) parallels human nature with nature in general, showing the same causal forces working in both through organization and thus proposes that self-knowledge leads also to knowledge of the world. The first instance of this self-knowledge derives from our observation of our body in action as representation, and feeling simultaneously our will as the source of that action. This is how we have direct knowledge of the will as thing-in-itself, and how we understand the simultaneity of will and representation as two sides of the same coin.

This brief recapitulation serves as a reminder of Schopenhauer's reasonable approach to pessimism that is so temptingly misunderstood when diving into its practical consequences in moral behaviour and psychological well-being. At the nexus of this metaphysical/epistemological argument is Schopenhauer's explanation of all human experience, namely one that connects knowledge to metaphysics. It is also in this way

that it can be misleading to consider this a “negative psychology”, in that, it does not merely focus on the negative aspects of psychology, negative thinking, or the like, but attempts to offer a comprehensive understanding of human nature in general, where the negative and positive cannot be segregated. Albeit, Schopenhauer’s philosophy certainly accentuates the negative aspects of existence, though this conforms to his thesis that in this world the negative outweighs the positive. This is not a fact that we must celebrate or consider good for ourselves, but one that he argues we must accept if we are to overcome it and make life meaningful.

Lowering expectations and strategically preparing for the worst case scenario is what Schopenhauer (1851/1974) recommends instead of hope and optimism. This is the same strategy employed by defensive pessimism in order to deal with anxiety (see, Norem & Chang, 2002). Schopenhauer (1851/1974) believes the world is full of possibility, yet the majority of them do not represent the favourable outcome you desire, hence, the probability of succeeding in what you do is one out of an innumerable possible results. By considering the worst case scenario and preparing yourself mentally to face it you reduce your chance of suffering the effects of failure and possibly reap pleasant surprises, should the worst not actualize. This does not entail, as many fatalists would believe, a hopeless strategy that calls for a lowering of effort as well, or giving up. In fact it would counter the very logic of the proposition if you were to consider the worst eventuality and then do nothing to prevent it when you must initially strategize based on the idea that you are working toward a desirable outcome. If you fail to put in the necessary effort to achieve your desired outcome then you have modified the original variables that led you to consider the worst possible result. Now, with a lack of effort a

novel worst possible result must be considered. Furthermore, without putting in the effort it is not likely that the worst result will be disappointing because you will not have lost much having invested little in the enterprise to being with.

This position is often referred to as realism because it accounts for causal determinism, which acknowledges the limitations if not the impossibility of free will, and considers the significantly low probabilistic eventuality of succeeding through so many odds. Nevertheless, it is not nihilistic or fatalistic, and for a psychological theory it intends to remove a reliance on hope and optimism and place the focus rather on work and effort. Schopenhauer (1819/1966) argues that the suffering that is necessary to motivate us to act and achieve is what we must accept, otherwise we become defeated by it, and if we follow the illusion that things will turn out for the best we will face much graver consequences than expected, which may in turn defeat us permanently. The elation we experience when overcoming adversity is a feeling that we beat the odds and achieved something that appeared to be impossible. It is the same feeling we seek when engaging in challenging activities like rock climbing, video games, art, exercise, etc.

The benefits of suffering as outlined by Schopenhauer (1851/1974) are that we are not only prompted to achieve and overcome, but through the experiences we become resilient. Unlike positive psychology, which measures resilience as a stand-alone virtue, it is here specific to an ability to withstand and anticipate suffering as a necessary condition of existence (see, Friedman & Robbins, 2012). By doing this it does not mean that we become impervious to suffering, rather that we recognize that all of our actions are triggered by some deficiency, lacking, or suffering that we are in the process of alleviating, and that once it is complete it will be followed by yet another and another.

Schopenhauer (1819/1966) compares life to a circle of hot coals that we must walk on with brief intervals of rest. The appreciation that all life must involve consistent suffering offers a consolation for individual suffering. I often catch myself becoming anxious, annoyed, or impatient while engaging a difficult activity that requires strenuous effort, such as exercise or writing this, and begin to anticipate its conclusion. It is then that I remind myself of Schopenhauer's wisdom to realize that the conclusion of this mild state of suffering will be followed by a fresh one. Once I complete these difficult tasks I usually become bored, which Schopenhauer (1819/1966) says is the other end of the pendulum, and another form of suffering. He describes the necessity of constant suffering in contrast to a life of ease,

Imagine this race transported to a Utopia where everything grows of its own accord and turkeys fly around ready-roasted, where lovers find one another without any delay and keep one another without any difficulty: in such a place some men would die of boredom or hang themselves, some would fight and kill one another, and thus they would create for themselves more suffering than nature inflicts on them as it is. Thus for a race such as this no stage, no form of existence is suitable other than the one it already possesses (Schopenhauer, 1850/2004, p. 5-6).

All of these forms of suffering we might consider normal already. What about intense suffering that is brought on by physical or mental illness, or the cruelty of others, or even accidents? Schopenhauer (1819/1966) does not condone these as good, just as he does not consider the mild forms discussed previously as good. He does, however, offer us a perspective that can be comforting by first reminding us that they occur of necessity with

causal determinism but are not personal in most cases. You do not suffer because it is intended for you by some grand design, and it does not happen out of sheer luck either. It is the way of the world and the best you can do is to accept it as a challenge to be overcome. These forms of suffering are often the catalysts for change both societally and individually. Without them, people would not be sufficiently motivated to react in proportion to the initial devastating effect. In fact, Schopenhauer (1844/1966) says that we often overreact to these instances,

If willing sprang merely from knowledge, our *anger* would inevitably be exactly proportionate to its cause or occasion in each case, or at any rate to our understanding thereof, since it too would be nothing more than the result of the present knowledge. But it very rarely turns out like this; on the contrary, anger usually goes far beyond the occasion (p. 225).

This passage also serves as an argument for his denial of free will, and the reactionary nature of the will to motives. Hence, a traumatic life event can trigger in us a much stronger and more lasting reaction. This can be observed in individuals that have overcome adversity through life changing decisions, adaptation, and motivation. Had the traumatic event offered a directly proportional reaction, the reaction would have lasted as long and been as intense only as the initial trauma, which in most cases would not suffice to bring about permanent change.

The absence of suffering often leaves us with complete boredom and sometimes with a wry existential feeling of the meaninglessness of life, which is then its own form of suffering. Schopenhauer offers an understanding of suffering, its necessity, and its usefulness. Instead of despairing over every failure, pain, or absence of pleasure, we can

begin to feel less sorry for ourselves and see each form of suffering as an opportunity for some achievement. In beginning to see suffering as a motivational tool we may not turn our lives around or make some incredible change, but perhaps experience the intellectual freedom that comes with knowing our limits, challenging them, and dispelling self-pity. Without suffering at least a little while engaging in some activities, they may lack the sufficient challenge to be inherently rewarding. Though, there are instances where suffering can be completely alleviated while engaging in an inherently rewarding activity, like in Csikszentmihalyi's (1997) state of "flow".

The positive experiences that Schopenhauer (1844/1966) talks about are what he refers to as "salvation" from suffering, in that it does not constitute a positive spectrum of pleasure in the hedonic sense, but rather a complete but temporary alleviation of suffering; a sense of aloofness. Schopenhauer (1851/1974) criticizes hedonism as a fool's errand, stating that indulging in pleasures as the highest good is a mere illusion, and one that inevitably ends in greater pain when sought. A good example would be intoxication where an individual consumes some substance that produces the sensation of pleasure, and following the temporary excitement comes the weaning of the drug with all the terrible feelings of withdrawal and pain. Ultimately what we sacrifice for pleasure is homeostasis, a painlessness that is now disturbed by a temporary period of delight and followed by the loss of this fleeting pleasure, instilling in us all the misery that we were previously free of.

To put this in the greater perspective of his philosophy that denies free will, it means that the individual is not intelligent enough to have some self-control in satiating their striving will. There are several ways to satisfy a desire that requires a nearly equal

amount of effort, thus having on us the same motivational impact. If we take Schopenhauer's word for it that the strongest motive always wins, with the added caveat that through experience learning occurs, we can realize that fleeting pleasures are not a very good remedy in the long run for truly satisfying our desires. Hedonic pleasures seem to merely postpone our suffering while adding interest during the delay to return in compounded form. In fact, he says that the indulgence itself compromises our well-being by temporarily offering pleasure to only feel the effects of its descent followed by a stronger desire to either have more or indulge in a different pleasure (Schopenhauer 1819/1966). For this reason he recommends everywhere in his works that we engage with our only malleable resource, namely our intellect, through education, contemplation, reading, and aesthetics. Through learning, we can recognize the pitfalls of hedonism and attempt instead to engage in more fulfilling methods of alleviating our desires.

One of Schopenhauer's (1844/1966) methods is aesthetic experiences, which he says takes us away from the world of suffering and puts us in a state of pure will-less knowing. This can be achieved through aesthetic contemplation, reading, watching a play, and most of all listening to music, among others. Another method for achieving pure will-less knowing is simply to engage in deep contemplation. This latter form resembles a type of "flow" experience, where we are withdrawn from the world around us temporarily, relieved of bodily necessities, and involved in an inherently rewarding activity. Schopenhauer (1844/1966) believes these methods are the marks of great intelligence, but also that they foster and facilitate the intellect for those attempting to nurture it. They follow from a sense of asceticism that intends to bring out meaning rather than pleasure. Stokes (2007) says that "Schopenhauer's asceticism is itself a form of

eudaimonism, because it is based in the idea that to exist is to suffer: therefore, to become as one not-existing through ascetic renunciation is to attain a form of eudaimonia” (p. 74). This may resonate well with the positive psychology emphasis on eudemonic pleasure, especially when considering Schopenhauer’s moral virtues (see, Peterson, Ruch, Beermann, Park, & Seligman, 2007).

The moral virtues in Schopenhauer’s (1840/2010) philosophy are the foundation of his compassionate worldview that intends to be consolatory. He believes that our will or character is inborn and stable over time, meaning that our moral constitution is also fixed. This at first appears hopelessly pessimistic and that it may offer little in the way of useful psychology. However, his minute margin of malleability through the education of the intellect offers a realistic perspective of the enormous difficulty of behavioural or character change. It is only through learning that we may adapt new methods and actions that we find more beneficial than the previous ones we were accustomed to that led to our problems. It is quite rare that we actually change completely.

Schopenhauer (1840/2010) argues that we can only curb our vices so as to cause us and those around us less suffering because it makes *being* more comfortable. To take an example from my own life that reflects this tendency; I used to have the bad habit of biting my nails, which as a nervous tick is both unattractive and socially frowned upon. I would often catch myself with my fingers in my mouth unaware that I had been chewing my nails for some time, usually in conditions of minor stress such as studying or boredom. My spouse at the time begged me to stop and I gave full effort toward desisting from the habit, not by reducing the anxiety or stress, but rather with a focus on growing and maintaining an aesthetic set of fingernails. My success in this change has been thus

far permanent; however, I found that the anxiety that initially caused the nail biting has now manifested itself in other nervous habits, such as twisting my hair (head and beard), tapping my foot relentlessly, and frequently shifting my position while sitting. My friends often joke that I cannot sit still for more than two minutes.

Initially I found Schopenhauer's pessimism to be accurate but fatalistic, and through my deeper investment in his philosophy I came to find it consolatory. If I am to accept my characteristic "flaws" it does not mean they are immutable, but that small elaborate shifts are possible through learning and reasoning. Like a sliding tile puzzle, we can rearrange the pieces we are given to form a more accurate and desirable image of ourselves, though it comes through great difficulty and practice. The consolation that comes out of this is not happy talk about infinite possibility, inevitable change, and freedom to be whatever you imagine, but rather to accept yourself first along with your limitations and prepare for the worst case scenario where change is impossible. If this can be overcome, then your actual strengths and talents can be fostered and emphasized to slowly shift away from your less admirable qualities. The character flaws perhaps cannot be changed, but their manifestations can. If you are disposed to anger, like with Freud's (1923/1989) sublimation, there can be constructive outlets for this drive. In more serious cases, such as those of criminal offenders, child molesters, and psychopaths, an early diagnosis (or self-awareness) may be beneficial toward gearing those tendencies away from harming others or oneself. The military and special forces make use of soldiers with psychopathic tendencies to carry out missions that require unflinching violence and immunity to fear (Barrett, 2007). Art frequently serves as a cathartic device for individuals with socially unacceptable tendencies, such as sexual attraction toward

children, which is disclosed in novels like Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice*⁷, and Vladimir Nabokov's (1899-1977) *Lolita*⁸. Though these internal conflicts may not be resolved in the sense that they dissolve from the individual and leave them with a greater sense of health and psychological well-being, the cathartic release in socially and perhaps personally acceptable ways may suffice to render one less psychologically conflicted, more stable, and with a greater feeling of self-control. Admittedly this does not resolve the problems these people face but it is intended to demonstrate the type of strategizing when facing the worst case scenario where change is impossible.

Schopenhauer may be a prime example of this phenomenon given his life and pessimistic tendencies. Though he was seemingly depressive and arguably misanthropic, he used these dispositions to attempt to prove himself as a philosopher and despite his lack of success for many years, he did not give up. It was only when he achieved fame that he realized the inherent lack of value in high reputation and secluded himself from the public to resume his habitual life (Cartwright, 2010). It is difficult to say if his life was rewarding given his disposition, however, Schopenhauer (1851/1966) believed in his philosophy and considered it an outstanding achievement.

Achieving happiness according to Schopenhauer's (1851/1974) advice, which he does not necessarily always follow himself, happiness involves more than anything being sensible. He offers this advice though he believes that a happy life is not really possible,

A happy life is impossible; the best that man can attain is a *heroic life*, such as is lived by one who struggles against overwhelming odds in some way and some affair that will benefit the whole of mankind, and who in the end triumphs,

⁷ Mann, T. (1993). *Death in Venice and seven other stories*. (H. T. Lowe-Porter Trans.). New York, NY: Triangle classics (original work published 1912).

⁸ Nabokov, V. (1955). *Lolita*. Paris, France: Olympia Press.

although he obtains a poor reward or none at all (Schopenhauer, 1851/1974, p. 322).

I assume he counted himself among those leading a heroic life and that through his philosophy he has offered a benefit to all of humankind. Though he may not believe in happiness, he acknowledges that others do and offers some suggestions for maintaining a sensible life that can be satisfying.

Schopenhauer (1851/1974) recommends that we ought to balance living in the present with anticipating the future, for those trapped in either extreme are either narrow and foolish or anxious and not really living respectively. “Regard each day as a special life” (Seneca, in Schopenhauer, p. 415). Likewise he says we should enjoy every moment that is painless for it will quickly slip forever into the past and only when we once again arrive at suffering do we nostalgically reminisce and desire that moment of peace we lost. “A number of scholars hypothesized that a time orientation with a focus on the present is a necessary prerequisite for wellbeing. Amongst them are Csikszentmihalyi, Maslow, and Schopenhauer, with their emphasis on the value of here-and-now experiences” (Boniwell, 2005, p. 65).

Another piece of advice toward balance and painlessness is limitation. I believe here Schopenhauer is arguing for simplicity, which I agree holds a great aesthetic and calm to it. Indeed a wide range of options often creates anxiety, uncertainty, regret, and indecision.

Schopenhauer’s (1851/1974) next lesson is that our only belonging in this world is ourselves and that we ought to be satisfied with it, for those who are not reveal by it their very insignificance. He also argues that those who seek solitude are often highly

intelligent for they seek to remove themselves from society in its abundant chaos, striving, and suffering. As such, one is most happy or painless when alone, because then they are self-sufficient and independent of others. Schopenhauer suggests including this teaching in early education as a method for youth to put up with loneliness. I am reminded of the aim of therapy, which is for the client to gain independence and self-sufficiency in order to overcome their problems and be able to deal with them if or when the issues recur. The following (long) passage captures the essence of Schopenhauer's (1851/1974) meaning,

It is well known that evils are alleviated by the fact that we bear them in common. People seem to regard boredom as one of these and therefore get together in order to be bored in common. Just as the love of life is at bottom only fear of death, so too the urge to be sociable is at bottom not direct. Thus it does not depend on love of society, but on the fear of loneliness, since it is not so much the pleasant company of others that is sought, as rather the dreariness and oppression of being alone, together with the monotony of one's own consciousness, that are avoided. Therefore to escape this, we put up with bad company and tolerate the burden and feeling of restriction that all society necessarily entails. If, on the other hand, a dislike of all this has triumphed and consequently a habit of solitude and an inurement to its immediate impression have arisen so that it no longer produces the effects previously described, then we can always be alone with the greatest ease and without hankering after society. For the need of society is not direct and, on the other hand, we are now accustomed to the wholesome virtues of solitude (p. 422).

He states that one can even practice solitude in society by possessing a distant demeanor, not taking others very seriously and expecting others to be dull and vulgar. In this way one can benefit from observation and manage to participate in society without suffering the side-effects of its vapidness on the intellect. This may translate into antisocial and misanthropic behaviour that we now know to be unhealthy. However, his perspective is rather tolerant when he argues that we ought to let everyone live with their given idiosyncrasies and character, not expecting them to change for us. This type of tolerant detachment from society resembles the type of Buddhist life Schopenhauer greatly admired. In this way, he also considered the avoidance of hedonic pleasure as a way to reduce suffering in the world, for he reasoned that each sensual pleasure comes at the expense of someone else's suffering directly or indirectly, and thus the more sensibly we learn to live the less we take away from everyone else's "happiness". Schopenhauer (1850/2004) concludes that,

The conviction that the world, and therefore man too, is something which really ought not to exist is in fact calculated to instil in us indulgence towards one another...from this point of view one might indeed consider that the appropriate form of address between man and man ought to be, not *monsieur, sir*, but *fellow sufferer, compagnon de misères*...[it] makes us see other men in a true light and reminds us of what are the most necessary of all things: tolerance, patience, forbearance and chastity, which each of us needs and which each of us therefore owes (p. 15).

Wellbeing in Schopenhauer's (1851/1974) view is entirely the maintenance of one's health above all else. He states we should not sacrifice it for anything for it is the driving

force behind all of our actions, activities, abilities, and achievements. In fact, the reason he claims that states of pure will-less knowing can only be temporary is that spending too much time in such a deep state of contemplation necessarily ignores the bodily needs for too long and removes our awareness from the present reality, which can lead to madness. The advice he offers for the maintenance of well-being will seem like nothing new to us, however, for his time this may have been quite unique. He calls for habitual exercise of the mind and body by reading, contemplating, writing, walking, running, and other forms of physical exertion. He places great emphasis on sleeping well and for a sufficient amount of hours to rest the mind from exertion. Finally, he recommends habitual self-restraint as it builds up self-control over time and offers us a greater feeling of agency through certain types of renunciation. The negative side of well-being, which must tie in with the positive here, is the resilience through suffering, the acceptance of its necessity, and the overcoming of adversity, all of which was mentioned previously. A realistic perspective acknowledges all sources of motivation, achievement, and limitations, so that we do not restrict our consideration of well-being to what can only be accomplished by those already in possession of the prerequisite resources both social and biological.

A metaphysical psychology may be the result of following Schopenhauer's worldview. An early insight into this possibility is advanced by Hugo Münsterberg (1863-1916) who, according to Haldane (1900) was influenced by Schopenhauer's philosophy of the will;

The disciple of Schopenhauer, and as such it seems right to rank Prof. Münsterberg, tells us that we are directly aware of the fact that we will, although

this fact is not and; cannot be one belonging to the object world, and is what he calls 'over-individual' (pp. 208-209).

Münsterberg (1898) says “in this world we are ourselves not physical and not psychical; we are subjects of will” (p. 163), and further states that we hold subjective psychical representations of objects from the real world in our mind. The aim of his psychology was to counter the atomistic experimental psychology that was emerging during his time, and to suggest that the will is at the core of human experience, which must then be at the core of what we want to discover in psychology as opposed to its representations.

Münsterberg (1899) argues,

If psychology, like physics, deals with the objects of the world in their artificial separation from the will, how can the will itself be an object of psychology? The pre-supposition of the question is in some way wrong; the will is primarily not at all an object of psychology (p. 30).

Haldane (1900) states that Münsterberg followed the Schopenhauerian stream of Post-Kantian thought as opposed to the Hegelian that was shrouded in obscurity and abstractions, and as such maintained a knowable thing-in-itself (the will) at the core of human nature. Thus in order for psychology to offer any valuable insight into the nature of humanity it must acknowledge the underlying essence of the observable phenomena that is the will. If psychology is to follow this advice it necessitates openness toward a metaphysical psychology to look at the essence of being from which all actions and ideas are formed.

DeRobertis and Iuculano (2006) argue that although psychology has been influenced by metaphysics it rejects it due to a traditional understanding of metaphysics

that can be revised to accommodate psychology. They claim that the traditional metaphysical influences in psychology, such as the study of the mind, have been abandoned in favour of a materialistic view. DeRobertis and Iuculano (2006) believe that psychology could benefit from metaphysics if,

First, the metaphysics would illuminate human existence holistically, but without reducing the richness of lived experience to a totalizing epiphenomenalism, monism, or solipsism. Second, the metaphysics would emphasize the always-personal nature of human existence without reducing the richness of lived experience to a totalizing individualism (p. 105).

Schopenhauer's (1819/1966) metaphysics could satisfy this criteria and provide a theoretical premise to reintroduce a dialogue between the two fields. His metaphysical description of the human will is based on the epistemological foundation that direct knowledge of the will as thing-in-itself is possible. Through this he attempts to give an account of all human experience and ties his aesthetics and ethics to his metaphysics as well by having the individual will at the core of all experiences, all actions, and moral character. In this way it ties the physical brain as representation to the metaphysical mind as will through their inseparable functioning, without committing to an epiphenomenalist interpretation. It also avoids reducing human experiences to subjectivism or qualifying only those universal aspects as real. Schopenhauer (1819/1966) develops a metaphysical account that considers the universal underlying factor, namely the will, and the individual experiences that are derived therefrom through human action, motivation, and cognition. This holistic view of human nature captures both the essence and unique peculiarities of human experience. It shows that brain functions are intimately connected to a

metaphysical ground that is the same causal force found everywhere in nature and that these are the same phenomena seen from two different perspectives. As such, it cannot be reduced to a materialistic view, but it also does not suggest any form of dualism.

Schopenhauer's metaphysics can answer the questions DeRobertis and Iuculano (2006) have in mind,

Such a metaphysics would have to focus on different kinds of questions than the traditional metaphysics noted above, such as, "Who are human beings?" "What is their fundamental relationship to the world-with-others?" "How is it that human beings are a meaningful part of the wider universe of beings, existents, and mysteries?" (p. 105).

In Schopenhauer's (1819/1966) view, humans are the result of their experiences through action and moral character; their fundamental relationship with others is discovered through a moral recognition of the same metaphysical and universal will in all others through the virtue of compassion that we all have to some degree; and the meaningful part of human existence is the conscious ability we have through cognition to make changes in the world, however small they may seem. Taken together, these changes can amount to a lot if we follow Schopenhauer's advice on morality, education, aesthetics, and an effort to reduce suffering. The catalyst for these changes begins with the self through learning, self-knowledge, and the exercising of compassion toward others. Without being too hopeful about these possible changes, the least we can derive from this is a greater insight into ourselves as people by assessing our self-knowledge and our contribution to the suffering of the world.

Application in psychology of Schopenhauer's worldview as a "negative psychology" would counter some of the aims of the humanistic and positive traditions while maintaining the same interest in helping individuals lead more affluent lives. I am here constructing a psychological theory based on Schopenhauer's philosophy in order to assess whether psychology can benefit from his wisdom and view of human nature. Schopenhauer's worldview is holistic but does not assume a self-actualizing tendency; in fact the tendency is quite the opposite, toward instinctual gratification that requires effort to control. His view also rejects a strict focus on positive experiences and emotions, positive character, and positive communities. Any positive results rendered from his "negative psychology" would be the outcome of suppressing the will through self-awareness, self-knowledge, and education.

In the "negative psychology" the highest aim becomes self-knowledge and is the result of active effort toward improving one's intellect by means of education, contemplation, and experience. This entails a formal education as well as learning through one's own volition, engaging in creative activities and aesthetic experiences, attempting to lead a more sensible and moral life, and becoming aware of suffering both as an inevitability and a motivational tool. Through this one builds resilience and a stronger appreciation for morality and the well-being of others. Though this part of the system sounds like a self-help initiative, it cannot wholly depend on the individual given the challenges and difficulty of change that Schopenhauer argued. This is a mutually dependent system where the individual and society must work together toward change. I say this knowing Schopenhauer's misanthropy but counting on his holistic view that touches on individual as well as universal experiences that are required to relieve

suffering in the world through collective effort. If Schopenhauer restricts our free will, but makes our intellect malleable and recommends education as the best resource, we must initiate first the education system where change is immediately possible before expecting individuals to make changes for themselves, where the possibility is relatively restricted.

For educational psychology only two recommendations can be derived from Schopenhauer's work, namely an early introduction to philosophy and teaching self-sufficiency. Positive psychology aims at happiness, character strengths, and fostering experiences of flow in the classroom, which Kristjánsson (2012) criticized based on mixed empirical findings and that these initiatives are not novel, nor are the methods of employing them in the classroom clearly established. I have long considered the benefits of implementing the teaching of philosophy in early education programs if not at least at the high school level as a mandatory course. This would involve a brief detailing of some of the major philosophical figures and their theories, but more importantly a direct focus on key aspects of philosophical method, such as critical thinking, argumentation, and problem solving. These methods are highly valued at the graduate level and make up the format of most assessment tests like the SAT, GRE, LSAT, etc. With these skills taught at an early age students can begin to critically analyze what they are learning while in the process. Kuhn (2005) also argues in favour of a similar initiative for inquiry and argumentation in early education programs and shows that these skills have measurable benefits in the classroom and for life-long learning.

Schopenhauer's second recommendation for self-sufficiency derives from his belief that we ought to become comfortable with loneliness. This runs counter to our

contemporary common beliefs that communal work, social activity, and interaction are all beneficial toward more effective learning, work, and personal well-being. We can look at Schopenhauer's advice in two ways; one is that he means to train children to be antisocial, which he may have been himself, or that he means to teach children to become independent and be able to cope with loneliness. Given his arguments for suffering that advise us to strategically prepare for the worst case scenario; I am inclined to believe Schopenhauer meant the latter. Teaching self-sufficiency does not mean segregating children to avoid interaction, but rather that they learn to become more independent. This means learning to think independently and derive solutions to problems without depending on others for help, as well as being able to cope with loneliness and other forms of suffering early on. In this way, children can develop a stronger resilience to suffering and in tandem with Schopenhauer's moral imperative, become also more sensitive to the suffering of others through compassion. Objections can be foreseen here with this type of training and it is understandable, however, when taking Schopenhauer's holistic perspective that involves self-knowledge, aesthetics, ethics, and education, it creates a comprehensive understanding of the aims of a "negative psychology" that if taken in piecemeal fashion appears crude and counterintuitive.

Similarly these principles of a "negative psychology" can be applied in therapy as a holistic system that focuses on clients gaining independence, self-sufficiency, and ultimately self-knowledge. Schopenhauer's view of compassion and his belief in accepting others for who they are, are similar to Rogers's (1957) unconditional positive regard. In this way, this fundamental tool of client centered therapy that has gained immense popularity and been incorporated in psychodynamic therapies can be preserved

even with a “negative psychology”. The difference is in the aim of the therapy and the expectations the therapist would have of the client. Once again, change, as seen from “negative psychology” would not be automatic so long as obstacles are removed, nor is it necessarily always possible, assuming the change involves one of character. To reiterate what I have said earlier, it would first involve having the client accept who they are, their limitations, and learn to deal with their suffering through strategizing worst case scenarios. The strategies would involve the same skills of critical thinking, argumentation, and problem solving as proposed for the educational initiative.

The therapy can also make use of challenging irrational beliefs, as its foundation is in a philosophical system that promotes reasoning, however, this would not be followed with promises of positive outcomes. Rather, it would focus on showing clients a realistic not an ideal perspective of the world with a fair depiction of the positives and negative, and focus on preparing them to deal with the worst aspects of it. It would also build an understanding founded on Schopenhauer’s Buddhist influences that *being* is not a solipsistic experience but that it is shared in common through the will with all other *beings*. Therefore, part of the aim of therapy would be that through self-knowledge one learns to be more aware of the needs and suffering of others as a communal ground of existence. With this, a sense of humility can be developed that removes or reduces feelings of self-centeredness and egoism and recognizes that part of helping yourself is helping others through compassion and moral action. It is based on a realization that one’s own problems are not created nor experienced in isolation but necessarily derive from and are part of the world with other people in it. Part of Schopenhauer’s (1851/1974) misanthropy is the result of observing overwhelming egoism in the world as

created by the individual striving will of each person, where he adopts the Hindu perspective that the *veil of maya* (an illusion) prevents us from seeing that we are all metaphysically united with the same will. He argues that this flaw in cognition brings about all the suffering we experience, and the closer we get to breaking it down, through aesthetic experiences and pure will-less knowing, the more we find unity with others. Hence his belief that one discovers nature from within themselves not themselves from nature.

Limitations must be acknowledged to this “negative psychology” in order to foster a better system through critical analysis and collaboration. This project is merely a suggestion based on mostly anecdotal evidence that requires empirical testing. I welcome criticism and a collaborative approach to building both a holistic worldview of human nature and experience as well as a practical system of “negative psychology” based on Schopenhauer’s philosophy.

One of the limitations, aside from the lack of empirical evidence, is the promotion of yet another western white male perspective, regardless of Schopenhauer’s connection to eastern philosophy. The collaborative approach I ask for involves hearing from diverse voices to create a more accurate perspective of an inclusive view of human nature that embraces the unique as well as universal qualities of all people. If Schopenhauer desired to have the explanatory power of describing all human experiences and nature he must be prepared to embrace all perspectives and experiences toward maintaining his highest virtue; truth. Schopenhauer (1851/1974) boldly claimed,

When I entered life, my genius offered me the choice either of recognizing truth but then pleasing no one, or with others of teaching the false with encouragement and approbation; and for me the choice had not been difficult (p. 135).

Elsewhere Schopenhauer (1819/1966) writes, “but life is short, and truth works far and lives long: let us speak the truth” (p. xvii). With this aim Schopenhauer ought to accept any necessary modifications to his theory that are found to be false, mistaken, or in need of adjustment.

With this in mind it is important to recognize some inclusionary and exclusionary criteria for importing Schopenhauer’s philosophy into psychology. The inclusions have already been discussed at length with a focus on maintaining the integral theoretical premises, which are interrelated and inseparable, namely his metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, and aesthetics. Within these, however, there are instances where he applies his theories, or touches on topics unrelated to his main philosophy that must be excluded. Two obvious examples are his misogynistic views and his fascination with parapsychology. The latter has little effect on his theory as a whole and needs no further argument to be excluded, however, the misogyny is incorporated into his ethics where yet another exclusionary category may arise, namely in his belief that character is inherited from the father.

With regards to his misogyny in ethics, Schopenhauer (1854/1974) considers men to be more concerned with the future and planning ahead, using reason, imagination, and abstract concepts, whereas women are more pragmatic and concerned with the present, thus,

From the same source may be traced the fact that women show more compassion and thus more loving kindness and sympathy for the unfortunate than do men; on the other hand, they are inferior to men in the matter of justice, honesty, and conscientiousness (p. 617).

In this way he accords the virtue of philanthropy more to women, but that of justice more to men; however, his reasons appear to be less concerned with the observation of the sexes, and more in line with his misogynistic perspective of women, as he continues the above with the following explanation,

For in consequence of their weak faculty of reason, that which is present, intuitively perceptual, immediately real, exercises over them a power against which abstract ideas, established maxims, fixed resolves, and generally a consideration for the past and future, the absent and distant, are seldom able to do very much. Accordingly, they certainly have the first and fundamental thing for virtue; on the other hand, they lack the secondary, the often necessary instrument for it (Schopenhauer, 1854/1974, p. 617).

The classification here between men and women on moral capacity seems trivial and based on his prejudice alone, thus it is of no consequence to the efficacy of his ethics if women and men were not considered separately but subject to the same moral tendencies. The inborn character, however, regardless of whether it is from the father, may present a problem in psychology. There have been mixed results in personality theory as to the level and validity of inherited traits, their reliability, and stability over time (Butt, 2004). More research in this area is necessary to determine whether character, especially as it pertains to morality, is as immutable as Schopenhauer theorizes.

Schopenhauer (1819/1966) also argues that intellect is inherited from the mother, however, given that it is a malleable resource, it seems relatively less detrimental to his theory if this was altered due to contrary evidence. Nevertheless, he does propose that intellectual inequality ought to have social consequences. Schopenhauer (1851/1974) writes,

The [highly intelligent], therefore usually withdraw from society where, as soon as it is numerous, vulgarity prevails. What in society offends great minds is an equality of rights that leads to one of claims and pretensions, in spite of inequality of abilities, and consequently to an equality of (social) achievements (p. 420).

He suggests that people be treated in accordance to their intellectual abilities so that geniuses be afforded the most leisure and financial support in order to do their work in peace, which will benefit all of humanity, because they are most sensitive to suffering. We can see that this was not an integral part of his philosophy because it appeared as a complaint rather than a necessity. Furthermore, geniuses if recognized in society would generally obtain the sorts of positions where they will be encouraged to help humanity.

These represent only the limitations I have been able to observe, and along with welcoming criticisms and collaborations, I also welcome suggestions and solutions to recognize other limitations and possibly resolve them.

This thesis examined the works of Arthur Schopenhauer and his philosophical contributions in the areas of epistemology, metaphysics, ethics, and aesthetics, toward incorporating his worldview on human nature into psychology.

I have discussed how his worldview resembles but also contradicts some of the aims of the humanistic and positive psychology traditions. This led to the construction of

a novel approach that I have called a “negative psychology”, which focuses on a more robust understanding of human behaviour, human nature, and a conception of well-being that accepts both the positive and the negative aspects of experience. With this approach I have attempted to show its possible efficacy in the same domains as humanistic and positive psychology, namely in constructing a psychological understanding of human nature, in educational psychology, therapy, and as a holistic psychological theory of human experience. I have acknowledged some limitations to this approach and requested a collaborative initiative to get this theory off the ground. If successful, this can serve as a catalyst toward incorporating more philosophies and philosophical predecessors in the history and theory of psychology.

By engaging in a psychological reading of Schopenhauer’s philosophy I hope to have shown the intimate ties between these two fields and how collaboration can be possible at least on the theoretical level. Schopenhauer’s unique philosophy provides a novel approach to human nature from a realistic and often pessimistic perspective that amounts to a robust understanding of ourselves. By initiating a negative psychology from his philosophical worldview we stand to gain a more realistic perspective of our nature by first understanding our limitations and becoming more humble with our expectations for change. Unlike optimistic theories that consider human nature basically good and automatically flourishing toward self-actualization, the negative psychological perspective regards personality change as difficult and thus places emphasis on hard work toward realizing these changes. In this way it prepares us to face challenges and obstacles, as well as providing the understanding that suffering is both essential and motivational, so that positive outcomes are not merely expected but fought for. In this

way, psychology stands to benefit from the explanatory power of Schopenhauer's philosophy of human experience, nature, and being.

Schopenhauer enjoyed good health, lucidity, a good appetite, and long walks well into his old age. He was blessed with a relatively leisurely life and a peaceful death. He was born on a Friday in 1778 and died on a Friday on the 21st of September 1860. His late fame left behind no Schopenhauerian school of thought but only Schopenhauerian minded neo-Kantians (Cartwright, 2010).

He has also influenced leading artists such as Wagner, Thomas Mann, and Proust. Finally, he had a tremendous, if often indirect, influence on continental philosophy. His emphasis on the will and his anti-intellectualism were the driving forces behind life philosophy (*Lebensphilosophie*), a movement which, through Nietzsche, influenced existentialism and post-modernism. His pessimism was appreciated by unorthodox Marxists like Horkheimer. And his discussion of the unconscious has obvious parallels with psychoanalysis, which itself has exerted a significant collateral influence on continental philosophy (Glock, 1999, p. 422).

Russell (1984) says that "Historically, two things are important about Schopenhauer: his pessimism, and his doctrine that the will is superior to knowledge" (p. 727). I have developed these ideas in this work toward a psychological reading of Schopenhauer and proposed a theoretical framework for psychology therefrom. It is my hope that this view of human nature no longer remains overshadowed and gains the benefit of serious investigation toward a comprehensive understanding of suffering, human experience, and self-knowledge.

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