Schopenhauer's Proof that Thing-in-Itself is Will

DALE JACQUETTE
The Pennsylvania State University

1. Will

In a bold series of pronouncements, Arthur Schopenhauer maintains that the Kantian thing-in-itself is Will. The division between the world as Will and representation, with its impressive array of implications, is Schopenhauer's most important and distinctive contribution to metaphysics. To understand what Schopenhauer means by 'Will' (*der Wille*) as opposed to the empirical 'will'[1], and his reasons for identifying thing-in-itself with Will, we must look in detail at two related arguments by which Schopenhauer proposes to link these concepts. The arguments appear in the first and second editions of Schopenhauer's masterwork, *The World as Will and Representation*. The differences between the two versions appear to represent a change in his thinking about the most persuasive way to demonstrate the nature of thing-in-itself. The arguments are reconstructed for the sake of comparison, and critically evaluated in light of a variety of objections. While Schopenhauer's first, analogical, argument is inconclusive, his second argument offers a highly defensible inference identifying thing-in-itself as Will.

2. Thing-in-Itself

The idea that there is an ontic and epistemic division between the world as it appears to perception or reason and as mind-independent reality is as central to Schopenhauer's transcendental idealism as it is to Immanuel Kant's Critical idealism. Schopenhauer regards Kant's distinction between phenomena, appearances and, more generally, representations (*Phänomene*, *Erscheinungen*, *Vorstellungen*),

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and mind-independent thing-in-itself (*Ding an sich*) as the most important and insightful contribution ever to have been made in the history of metaphysics. The world, Schopenhauer believes, has two quasi-Kantian aspects. There is its empirical side as we experience it perceptually and a hidden side that exists entirely outside of representation.[2] It is the world not merely as it appears, but as it is in reality as the transcendent ground of appearance.

Schopenhauer observes that no previous philosopher had been able to make progress with respect to understanding thing-in-itself. Kant maintains that we must satisfy ourselves with only negative characterizations of thing-in-itself as unknowable. 'Here we already see that we can never get at the inner nature of things *from without*', Schopenhauer writes in *The World as Will and Representation*.

> However much we may investigate, we obtain nothing but images and names. We are like a man who goes around a castle, looking in vain for an entrance, and sometimes sketching the façades. Yet this is the path that all philosophers before me have followed. (*WWR*, 1, 99)

The best of those transcendental thinkers who have recognized that there is more to the world than its perceptual representation have thought of it only as something other than the world of phenomena, as noumenon, in Kant's Critical idealist terminology, merely conceivable to the mind, or, as Schopenhauer sometimes colourfully says, as that which lies beyond the Vedic veil of Maya.[3] Thing-in-itself is altogether unknowable on this conception, inaccessible to metaphysical inquiry in so far as philosophy attempts superficially to grasp its character, circling around the castle fortifications but never finding a way inside. Schopenhauer believes that he has surpassed Kant by discovering an extraordinary solution to the problem of understanding the hidden character of thing-in-itself as Will. Accordingly, but primarily also to avoid the term's connotations of modes of intellection, Schopenhauer resists Kant's term 'noumenon', and speaks everywhere instead of thing-in-itself.[4]

What can we expect to find on the other side of the distinction between appearance and thing-in-itself? We learn from Schopenhauer's discussion of all possible explanation in the world as representation under the principle of sufficient reason that such a question as it would usually be understood is misplaced. We cannot literally travel across a borderline or breach the fortress walls

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beyond which we can then proceed to exercise our ordinary methods of information gathering in order to verify knowledge about the transcendent world as thing-in-itself more or less as we do in the empirical world as representation. We cannot possibly hope to acquire anything like representational knowledge of thing-in-itself, to which the principle of sufficient reason in its fourfold root does not apply.[5] The most we can expect in transcendental metaphysics is insight, an intuitive grasp or inchoate understanding of thing-in-itself. Schopenhauer relates his exposition of thing-in-itself to Kant's noumenal reality in these terms:

> [T]o use Kant's language, time, space, and causality do not belong to the thing-in-itself, but only to its appearance or phenomenon [*Erscheinung*], of which they are the form. In my language, this means that the objective world, the world as representation, is not the only side of the world, but merely its external side, so to speak, and that the world has an entirely different side which is its innermost being, its kernel, the thing-in-itself. This we shall consider in the following book, calling it '[W]ill' after the most immediate of its objectifications. But the world as representation, with which alone we are dealing here, certainly begins only with the opening of the first eye, and without this medium of knowledge it cannot be, and hence before this it did not exist. But without that eye, in other words, outside of knowledge, there was no before, no time. For this reason, time has no beginning, but all beginning is in time. (*WWR*, 1, 30–1)

The first eye opening is described by Schopenhauer metaphorically as the defining moment of the world as representation. The beginnings of things, their past history, are projected backward from within rather than originating at the onset of time. Space and time commence with the first representation, which presupposes the perception of a representing subject through which the represented object thereby also comes into being. This is not yet thing-in-itself, which is something altogether different from the world as representation, which, as Kant in the transcendental logic also holds, is beyond all space, time and causality.

Schopenhauer proposes to take a giant step beyond the unknowability of transcendent reality. The terminological differences between Kant and Schopenhauer in distinguishing between phenomena and thing-in-itself are not superficial but significant. They indicate the extent to which Schopenhauer believes that he has achieved a momentous advance over Kant's Critical idealism. Kant's term

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'noumenon' at most constitutes a kind of X or blank space in his metaphysics. It indicates that something exists about which we can know nothing more concerning thing-in-itself as extramental mind-independent reality. Schopenhauer proposes to fill in the blank with an intuitive explication of a transcendent aspect of the world. While remaining truer, he believes, to the main lines of Kant's philosophy than any of his post-Kantian contemporaries, Schopenhauer argues that thing-in-itself is Will. By this choice of term he proposes to convey his insight that the world in reality, independent of its representation in perception and reason or abstract thought, thing-in-itself considered in itself, as distinct from its manifest objectifications in the world as representation, is blind urging, undirected wanting or desire, or objectless and hence subjectless, uncaused, unmotivated striving. He speaks of thing-in-itself as Will, referring to thing-in-itself's highest grade of objectification in phenomenal willing within the world as representation. Schopenhauer intends these pronouncements quite literally. Ultimately, his doctrine of thing-in-itself as Will identifies thing-in-itself as existing within every subject at the pure impersonal and undifferentiable core of all phenomenal willing. In a sense, thing-in-itself is identical with the individual subject when considered more abstractly as the universal subject of pure willing. Thing-in-itself in Schopenhauer's transcendental metaphysics turns out, remarkably enough, to be identical with the pure willing that fundamentally underlies each individual willing, knowing, representing subject, in the act of willing this or that.[6]

3. Polemical Preliminaries

Before proceeding it may be worthwhile taking a brief look at two alternative interpretations that paint a very different picture of Schopenhauer's effort to identify thing-in-itself as Will than the two-part account that I shall advance.

John E. Atwell, in a detailed study of Schopenhauer's thesis that thing-in-itself is Will in his book *Schopenhauer on the Character of the World: The Metaphysics of Will*, initially finds Schopenhauer's reasoning in the first edition and first volume in the later editions of *WWR* problematic. The solution he offers in order to avoid the apparent problems in Schopenhauer's argument nonetheless appears to saddle his philosophy with equal if not worse difficulties. Atwell

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asks, after quoting a key passage from this part of Schopenhauer's text:

> Is it really the case that the individual, as the subject of knowledge, knows the same thing, namely, it is said, this body, as representation and as will? If it is for him a representation, hence a mediate or indirect object, then apparently that is not also for him will; for, strictly speaking, no representation that is a mediate or indirect object is ever known as will, and this fact pertains to 'this body' or to any body. In general, whenever one knows anything as a representation or as a mediate or indirect object, then one is a purely knowing subject, not an individual (embodied) knowing subject. Something, it seems, has gone badly wrong.[7]

Atwell then proceeds to allay misgivings about the logical integrity of Schopenhauer's reasoning about the dual nature of the body and knowledge of the body. The conclusion he reaches, unfortunately, does not resolve but only compounds the original obscurity. He continues: 'the world as representation is the will manifested, objectified, made known. But only in one instance – that of the bodily movement and the act of will, or as Schopenhauer often says, the body and the will – does this fact come to one's explicit awareness'.[8]

The defects of this account of Schopenhauer's efforts to identify body movement as the manifestation or objectification of Will as thing-in-itself are evident. It is impossible in this limited space to do justice to Atwell's consideration of the relation between the body, willing and the Will, and the Will as thing-in-itself, but some problems can be highlighted in summary for the sake of comparison with an account of Schopenhauer's first-edition argument as an analogical inference of the sort that I shall articulate in the next section. How, in the first place, is even the most reflective philosophically trained enquirer supposed to become aware through consideration of the role of willing in body movement that the represented body is the objectification or manifestation of Will? All we know is that our bodies are (usually and in limited ways) subject to our individual phenomenal wills, to episodic acts of willing. Atwell rightly notes that for Schopenhauer the individual will does not cause action, but rather identifies individual will and action, much as he identifies causation and matter, allowing that the two concepts are separable 'only in reflection'.[9] Atwell goes further, making an extraordinary leap from this fact as revealed by introspection to the remarkable

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conclusion that 'bodily movement manifests or reveals the corresponding act of will – just as, I might add, the whole body is the manifestation of the individual will, and indeed the whole world as representation is the manifestation of the "world-will".'[10]

Importantly, however, Schopenhauer nowhere puts things in quite such a precipitate way. Thus, I find that Atwell leaves Schopenhauer's reasoning unexplained, contenting himself to restate Schopenhauer's main conclusion just where explanation is wanted, without tracing the steps by which Schopenhauer is most plausibly and charitably understood as arriving from what he says about the identification of will with action or body movement within the world as representation and the world as representation at large as the objectification or manifestation of Will as thing-in-itself. Schopenhauer's observations about the role of individual will in internal knowledge of the body via internal knowledge of certain body movements might finally provide a basis for an *analogy* by which a comparable hidden or internal nature of the world in its entirety might be projected, as I will argue in what follows. Reflecting on internal knowledge of the body in acts of will by itself does not point to anything beyond the data, consisting of occurrent phenomena of willing and representational knowledge of bodily motion. How is the mere fact that internally, through the very occurrence of the former, I am somehow made aware of their identity with at least some of the latter, supposed to be enough to make me aware that the body motion in question, not to mention my body as a whole, is the objectification of something that is not phenomenal at all, let alone as something to be called 'Will'?

One problem is that Atwell does not distinguish typographically between the individual phenomenal or empirical will (in lower case) to which we have access through inner perception in reflecting on volitional acts of body movement and the Will (capitalized) which Schopenhauer argues is identical with thing-in-itself. Atwell is a sufficiently astute commentator on Schopenhauer's meaning to avoid confusing the two senses of will and Will in most places, but in reconstructing Schopenhauer's reasoning by which thing-in-itself is identified as Will in what I have referred to as Schopenhauer's first argument, Atwell seems to commit an indefensible elision from will revealed in inner knowledge of the body and Will in the sense of thing-in-itself. Since Schopenhauer speaks explicitly of an analogy in this context (*WWR*, 1, 105), however, it seems correct to

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consider Schopenhauer's first argument for thing-in-itself as Will as an analogical inference beginning with the relation between the perceptual representation of the body in external knowledge and inner knowledge of the body in action as will, and ending with a relation between the world in its entirety as representation and as its inner principle thematized in the metaphysics of thing-in-itself as Will.

A subtler but in other ways more elusive analysis of Schopenhauer's argument concerning the dual nature of body knowledge as a basis for the identification of thing-in-itself as Will is presented by Christopher Janaway in his contribution on 'Will and Nature' to the *Cambridge Companion to Schopenhauer*. Here, too, unfortunately, Janaway leaves Schopenhauer's exact mode of reasoning unexplicated, encouraging the reader to wonder what Schopenhauer might have had in mind by introducing his treatment of dual body knowledge as a foundation for what is at least the core of what he proudly proclaims as his 'single thought' and main contribution to transcendental metaphysics. Janaway writes:

> If, as Schopenhauer claims, my self-consciousness as bodily agent gives me a uniquely unmediated knowledge of myself, this may well suggest that it is an accurate pointer towards the inner nature of the portion of the world that is me. If the world and my place in it can be intelligible to me only if I interpret the world as having the same inner nature as myself, and if a unifying metaphysical account is what the necessary limitation of scientific explanation leaves us crying for, then it would be irresponsible not to apply the knowledge of my own nature to the metaphysical unriddling of all of the world.[11]

Janaway's retelling of Schopenhauer's first argument ultimately fares no better than Atwell's. How and why is inner body knowledge supposed to 'suggest' anything whatsoever about the inner nature of the world considered as a whole? How can Schopenhauer responsibly conclude that the world and I have the *same* inner nature based only on inner body knowledge examined introspectively in episodic acts of individual phenomenal willing? For that matter, again, given the starting point in introspection with respect to acts of individual phenomenal willing, how can he conclude anything further about the inner being one's body considered as a whole? What, that is to say, on Janaway's account, entitles Schopenhauer to suppose that the world as a whole as opposed to a person's body has a dual

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nature, one aspect of which is hidden away from all external representational knowledge as thing-in-itself?

Janaway hints in the above selection, but stops short of saying, in just so many words, that Schopenhauer's reasoning might involve some sort of abductive inference to the best explanation of the world's hidden nature, loosely grounded in a hint taken from the experience of subjective willing. This way of understanding Schopenhauer's argument also leaves too much unexplained. As Janaway himself in fact adds:

> Not everyone nowadays will identify strongly with Schopenhauer's task of revealing the supra-scientific essence and significance of reality in itself, or his idea that a subject's self-consciousness must play the primary role in achieving it (though at the time he was writing, broadly analogous conceptions could be found in the mainstream philosophy of the German Idealists). His monistic assumption that my fundamental nature cannot be different from that of the whole of reality is not obviously disreputable, though it may well seem too big (or too vague) a thought to handle comfortably. Nevertheless, by something like this argument, Schopenhauer arrives at his alleged common inner nature of all things, and it is this inner nature that he calls *the will* (*der Wille*), or better simply *will* – an adventurous exercise in nomenclature which enables him to say that human willing is merely one instance of will, one manifestation of will in the world as nature ... Just how we are to understand this inner nature, and just why it is appropriate to call it will, are problems Schopenhauer never fully resolves.[12]

I am dissatisfied with this way of understanding Schopenhauer's 'argument' for two main reasons. I think we can do better both in interpreting his reasoning in the text and in gaining our own insight into the transcendental metaphysics of thing-in-itself as Will, by which we might find ourselves more closely in agreement with or in any event at least better prepared to refute Schopenhauer's idealism.

In the first place, Janaway speaks here of a monistic *assumption* that the individual subject's 'fundamental nature cannot be different from that of the whole of reality'. If Janaway is right that this is something Schopenhauer simply assumes, then Schopenhauer's efforts to extend the dual knowledge of the body in representation and in living through individual acts of willing is caught up in a vicious circle. The thesis that thing-in-itself as Will, after all, is

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Schopenhauer's greatest claim to fame, the cornerstone of his entire philosophical system, and, again, the 'single thought' from which he never budged throughout his long and productive philosophical writing career. How could Schopenhauer expect his critics to let him get away with the proposition that the perceiving and thinking subject's fundamental nature *cannot* be different from that of the world as a whole? After all, many philosophers have held that the nature of purely physical entities is fundamentally different from that of psychological entities. What entitles Schopenhauer simply to assume that this is not the case where the individual subject and the world in its entirety are concerned?

Finally, to characterize Schopenhauer's identification of thing-in-itself as Will, making that particular choice of word, as an 'adventurous exercise in nomenclature', is to imply that Schopenhauer is on rather thin ice with respect to the identification of thing-in-itself as Will, as though through reckless guesswork or tenuous association he had virtually pulled the central insight of his metaphysics out of a hat. Janaway seems to put things too mildly, given his objection in the final sentence quoted above, when he remarks that the asking what if anything justifies Schopenhauer's decision to attach the label 'Will' to thing-in-itself is a problem that Schopenhauer in his extensive writing on the subject 'never fully resolves'. I find this an unnecessarily ungenerous reading even of Schopenhauer's first argument identifying thing-in-itself as Will, and, despite my criticisms of his reasoning in the first-edition proof, I find Schopenhauer in the first instance offering a more solid and substantial analogical inference in support of his transcendentalism.[13]

4. First Argument for Thing-in-Itself as Will

Schopenhauer offers what appear to be two arguments, or perhaps a single argument that lends itself to two distinct complementary interpretations, for his conclusion that thing-in-itself is Will. The arguments appear in the first and second volumes, in the first and second (and third) editions of *The World as Will and Representation* respectively. The chronology of their separate publication suggests that Schopenhauer, in the intervening twenty-six years between the first and second editions of the text, may have somewhat changed his mind about how best to demonstrate that thing-in-itself is Will.

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He may have rethought the topic, or at least the exact presentation of the reasoning he intended, possibly reconsidering what would provide the strongest and most acceptable basis for the conclusion he wants to defend.

The first argument trades on what Schopenhauer describes merely as an analogy between individual empirical willing and his interpretation of thing-in-itself as Will. He begins by considering the explanatory limitations of empirical science in the world as representation governed by the principle of sufficient reason:

> [W]hat now prompts us to make enquiries is that we are not satisfied with knowing that we have representations, that they are such and such, and that they are connected according to this or that law, whose general expression is always the principle of sufficient reason. We want to know the significance of those representations; we ask whether this world is nothing more than representation. In that case, it would inevitably pass by us like an empty dream, or a ghostly vision not worth our consideration. (*WWR*, 1, 98–9)

> Far from satisfying us, the most intimate familiarity with represented objects gained through natural science only makes us wonder more urgently whether there is anything more to reality transcending the limits of representation. That which we seek, if it exists at all, must lead us to an understanding of the nature of reality beyond the limits of the world as representation. (*WWR*, 1, 99)

Schopenhauer begins by distinguishing between *internal* and *external* self-knowledge, by which he describes two ways of knowing the human body. External knowledge is knowledge gained through sense perception.[14] It is the representation of the body acquired by what we can see, hear, feel, smell and taste of ourselves, just as we can of any other physical entity in the world as representation. The internal knowledge we have of our own bodies, in contrast, is acquired through first-person experience of willing and acts of will in action, directing the movements of the body from within through volitional decision and resolve. Schopenhauer asks:

> What is this world of perception besides being my representation? Is that of which I am conscious only as representation just the same as my own body, of which I am doubly conscious, on the one hand as *representation*, on the other as *will*? (*WWR*, 1, 18)

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Later he maintains that the dual nature of our bodies, and corresponding to it our dual knowledge of its nature, suggests the same two ways of coming to know or understand the world at large. If the world as a whole has both an inner and external side, if we can know about its external representational side through perception, then, as we become aware of the limitations of exploring and theorizing about the phenomenal world, we may increasingly feel the need to turn from natural science to transcendental metaphysics in order to consider the world in its entirety in some sense also from the inside. It is only the latter type of knowing, Schopenhauer believes, that can enable us to project the inner knowledge of our bodies in acts of will as a key to understanding thing-in-itself as the inner hidden nature of the world. By analogy, if inner knowledge of the body's actions reveals individual will, as the hidden side of at least certain of its parts and qualities known externally by perception, then insight into the hidden inner nature of the world as thing-in-itself might similarly and by analogy with equal justice be referred to also as Will. Schopenhauer explains:

> He would then also call the inner, to him incomprehensible, nature of those manifestations and actions of his body a force, a quality, or a character, just as he pleased, but he would have no further insight into it. All this, however, is not the case; on the contrary, the answer to the riddle is given to the subject of knowledge appearing as individual, and this answer is given in the word *Will*. This and this alone gives him the key to his own phenomenon, reveals to him the significance and shows him the inner mechanism of his being, his actions, his movements. To the subject of knowing, who appears as an individual only through his identity with the body, this body is given in two entirely different ways. (*WWR*, 1, 100)

The inner awareness of our bodies consists of direct experience of acts of will through which we exercise control over our body movements. It is this non-representational 'knowledge' of the body that we obtain through the inward direction and control of its motion when we choose to do something and then carry out the intent in voluntary activity.

The analogy crucial to Schopenhauer's first argument for thing-in-itself as Will identifies thing-in-itself as the hidden inner side of the world as representation. The non-representational understanding of the individual body or world as a whole in both cases provides

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insight into whatever it is that transcends perceptual experience of and rational reflection on all external phenomenal appearances. Inner awareness of the individual will is thus a kind of Trojan horse by which Schopenhauer proposes to move beyond the threshold dividing appearance from reality. He believes that in this way metaphysics can disclose the obscure nature of thing-in-itself which Kant had regarded as ineluctably noumenal. Inferring the transcendent nature of the world by analogy with the hidden inner nature of the individual body in acts of will in Schopenhauer's philosophy becomes an epistemic subterfuge by means of which we can try to gain entrance to the otherwise impenetrable fortress walls that curtain off thing-in-itself from within the empirical world as representation. The analogy implies that the world of representation is to thing-in-itself as our external bodies experienced in sensation are to the inner workings of individual phenomenal acts of will.

There is nothing we are more immediately familiar with or know more intimately than our own bodies. If there are only two ways in which we can know our bodies, through perceptual representation of the body's external appearance and inner understanding of the activity of will, then it seems reasonable to consider these same two modes of knowledge with respect to the world at large. The world is evidently divided into external and internal aspects, appearance or representation and thing-in-itself. Perhaps, then, the same inner faculty that produces one kind of knowledge of the body can also be used to reveal the hidden inner nature of thing-in-itself. If we have just these two and no other ways of knowing about our bodies, if we are so fortunately placed as to have external and inner knowledge here in the microcosm of reality, in which the representing, knowing and willing subject is embodied, then we might be justified in projecting these same two modes of knowing to the macrocosm of the world as a whole. The workings of the individual will are hidden and representationally unknowable to ourselves and others. We do not see or otherwise perceive the will in the bodies of other representing subjects. Nor, for that matter, do we perceive or represent to ourselves our own personal first-person individual acts of willing. We are directly aware of our own willing in another, non-representational, way, through the very act of willing our bodies to move and living through the motions that result as we exercise inward control of our bodies' movements. Thing-in-itself, by analogy, as the inner nature of the world as representation, might also

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best be understood as something like the individual will actively functioning as the hidden principle of motion in the inner nature of the individual subject's representational body. It is for this reason in his first, analogical argument, that Schopenhauer concludes that thing-in-itself is appropriately designated as Will.

Schopenhauer leans heavily on the consideration that, in addition to external knowledge by perception and inner awareness of the activity of will, there is, in familiarity with our own bodies, no other known or even conceivable mode of knowledge or understanding. Although he does not quite present things in this way, it is natural to add that were it not for the fact that we happen to be volitional as well as cognitive agents, willing as well as knowing beings, we would not even have a dual-mode capacity for knowing about and understanding the hidden inner nature of the world as representation and as thing-in-itself. When we reflect on the epistemology supported by the kinds of knowing subjects we are, in intuitive and abstract representation and in awareness of willing and the wilful active direction and control of our body movements, and ask whether we can make sense of anything over and above these two ways of 'knowing', it strengthens Schopenhauer's inference that these are the only two possibilities conceivable to us, given our nature as thinking subjects. Schopenhauer asks, in effect, What else could there be?

> The double knowledge which we have of the nature and action of our own body, and which is given in two completely different ways, has now been clearly brought out. Accordingly, we shall use it further as a key to the inner being of every phenomenon in nature. We shall judge all objects which are not our own body, and therefore are given to our consciousness not in the double way, but only as representations, according to the analogy of this body. We shall therefore assume that as, on the one hand, they are representation, just like our body, and are in this respect homogeneous with it, so on the other hand, if we set aside their existence as the subject's representation, what still remains over must be, according to its inner nature, the same as what in ourselves we call *will*. For what other kind of existence or reality could we attribute to the rest of the material world? From what source could we take the elements out of which we construct such a world? Besides the will and the representation, there is absolutely nothing known or conceivable for us. (*WWR*, 1, 104–5)

By analogy with our dual external and internal knowledge of our bodies, Schopenhauer maintains that we can analogically infer that

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thing-in-itself is Will. We misunderstand the purpose of his analogy, however, if we suppose that the argument is meant to be assimilated as an item of abstract theoretical knowledge. Schopenhauer proposes instead to guide thought to the same intuitive grasp of truth that led to his revelation of thing-in-itself as Will. The insight he describes depends on the role that a particular sort of *feeling* plays in his argument.

There are two different ways in which the feeling to which Schopenhauer refers in the first argument for thing-in-itself as Will might be supposed to enter into the analogy he poses between outer and inner knowledge of the body as a microcosm of the outer and inner nature of the world, as representation and as thing-in-itself, the latter identified, by means of the analogy in question, with Will. Schopenhauer appeals not to a feeling that thing-in-itself is Will, but rather to a feeling that the inner knowledge of at least certain aspects of the body is will. In both the first and later editions of *WWR*, Schopenhauer then concludes, on the basis of this feeling, that thing-in-itself is identical with, not merely analogous to Will. His argument in the first edition and first volume of later editions of the text is nevertheless analogical, based on the feeling abstracted as theoretical understanding that phenomenal will is the body's inner nature (*WWR*, 1, 109). This feeling and its theoretical formulation provide the foundation for Schopenhauer's first analogical proof, the analogy in question being between inner knowledge of the body as phenomenal will and transcendental knowledge of thing-in-itself as Will. Schopenhauer explicitly describes the first edition argument as involving this analogy (*WWR*, 1, 105), while appropriately avoiding any suggestion that episodic willing in inner knowledge of the body as will is identical with thing-in-itself.

We know the body externally through perception in representational knowledge, and internally from the effects of will on the body's actions. Schopenhauer claims that all thinkers in principle have both, but only both types of knowledge directly at their fingertips, if only it is pointed out to them. 'From all these considerations', he advises,

> the reader has now gained in the abstract, and hence in clear and certain terms, a knowledge which everyone possesses directly in the concrete, namely as feeling. This is the knowledge that the inner nature of his own phenomenon, which manifests itself to him as representation both

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> through his actions and through the permanent substratum of these his body, is his *will*. (*WWR*, 1, 109)

His purpose in working out an abstract analogical argument for the identification of thing-in-itself with Will is to bring to immediate awareness something that everyone already 'knows'. He believes that everyone possesses at least an implicit *feeling* that the body's inner nature is will, to which he then adds the reasonable analogical assumption that the world exhibits the same internal-external duality as the body.[15]

The body as a physical entity and wilful agent on this analogy is thus the miniature mirror image of the world, respectively, as representation and Will. Acting in a certain way, we reveal in outward body language our inner character that we feel and can come to know in abstract thought more immediately on the basis of inner awareness of first-person volitional control of the body's external movements. Schopenhauer relates the inner–outer dichotomy in body knowledge to a parallel inner–outer dichotomy in the world taken as a whole. There is a like understanding concerning the relation between external knowledge of the world as representation and the inner non-representational 'knowledge' or understanding, insight or feeling of thing-in-itself as something willing or will-like, which he refers to here by analogy in his first argument as Will (*WWR*, 1, 109).

Schopenhauer indicates the analogy by which he proposes to identify thing-in-itself as Will. He announces his intent to 'borrow' the terminology of willing from what he describes as the 'most complete' of thing-in-itself's appearances, which he attributes to individual episodic acts of willing:

> Now, if this *thing-in-itself* (we will retain the Kantian expression as a standing formula) – which as such is never object, since all object is its mere appearance or phenomenon, and not it itself – is to be thought of objectively, then we must borrow its name and concept from an object, from something in some way objectively given, and therefore from one of its phenomena. But in order to serve as a point of explanation, this can be none other than the most complete of all its phenomena, i.e., the most distinct, the most developed, the most directly enlightened by knowledge; but this is precisely man's *will*. (*WWR*, 1, 110)

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The analogy in Schopenhauer's first argument identifying thing-in-itself as Will raises several questions. There are conceptual problems affecting both parts of the comparison on which it depends. First, the perceptual knowledge of the body is not merely analogous to the perceptual mode of cognition involved in knowledge of the world as representation in its entirety, but is precisely the same as it. Perceptual knowledge of the body is not merely analogous to knowledge of the world as representation as a whole, and hence not a proper basis for analogical inference, but is rather a focus of perceptual knowledge directed specifically to the individual knowing subject's body. Second, the business end of the analogy concerning the relation between the will as the body's inner principle and Will as thing-in-itself for the greater 'body' of the world as representation is relatively weak and conjectural.

What must be true in order for the analogy to hold? How are we supposed to know that inner knowledge of the body in acts of will corresponds analogically to thing-in-itself as inner principle of the world, and is therefore interpretable as Will? The will as we experience it phenomenologically occurs as individual episodic acts of willing directed towards specific intended objects, motivated, purposive, and individuated as the willing of a particular subject at a particular time and place. In particular, it is the willing of the knowing subject reflecting on the analogy and considering its content in order to obtain understanding of the hidden inner nature of thing-in-itself. Why should a theorist conclude as a result of Schopenhauer's analogy that thing-in-itself is Will, given that there are also significant disanalogies between episodic acts of willing as internally experienced by individual subjects and thing-in-itself? What could possibly sustain the analogy if Schopenhauer does not simply beg the crucial question? He seems, indeed, to assume rather than prove that thing-in-itself is sufficiently will-like to merit referring to it as Will.[16] He believes from the outset that thing-in-itself is an active principle that moves the world from behind the scenes in something like the way that episodic acts of willing exercise control over the body. The assumption appears logically at odds with Schopenhauer's insistence that thing-in-itself has no causal efficacy, as he complains in criticizing Kant's proof for the existence of thing-in-itself.[17]

The analogical argument has only the following basis. There are exactly two ways of knowing the body, external perceptual

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knowledge and inner knowledge of the workings of will, based in feeling and then abstracted in reasoning. The study of empirical science is also conducted by means of external perceptual knowledge supplemented by the formal disciplines of logic and mathematics. Understanding the world through empirical science leaves us thirsting for a deeper understanding of why the principles that obtain and are codified in natural laws are as they are, but this further desire for knowledge cannot possibly be satisfied by external perceptual knowledge in and of itself. If there is to be metaphysical knowledge of the world, then, by analogy, we might hope to seek it by analogy in a kind of inner knowledge or knowledge of the hidden aspect of the world that transcends its perceptual and rational aspect as revealed to the greatest possible extent in the empirical sciences that take as their subject matter the world as representation. What remains unsettling about Schopenhauer's analogical reasoning in the first argument, that might give rise to the objection that it is circular or question-begging, is that it appears to offer no good reason to suppose that the analogy can be correctly completed by positing an internal knowledge of the world as Will. For all that Schopenhauer says in the first argument, it might be the case that there are two ways of knowing the body, and that we long for a deeper metaphysical understanding of why the world is as it is, but that this is a longing that can never be satisfied because there simply is no way of knowing thing-in-itself as there is of knowing the body through an immediate feeling and abstract theoretical knowledge about the workings of the individual phenomenal will.

The individual willing subject exercises control over body movements by possessing certain properties of agency that Schopenhauer denies can ever hold true of thing-in-itself. The individual will, unlike thing-in-itself, is motivated to act; it directs its actions towards intended objects, and so may be caused to will by external events, while acting from within in turn to cause the body to move. If we are in a position to know that the Will is objectified in the individual willing subject, then of course there will be no causal connection involving Will and will, which is to say individual (episodic acts of) willing, even if the will causes body movement in the case of action. That, unfortunately, is the very point to be decided by a sound argument in support of the conclusion that thing-in-itself is Will, and cannot be appealed to here. An act of individual willing is an event in space and time, and as such caught up in the causal

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nexus like all other occurrences in the world as representation. In light of these disanalogies, we cannot judge whether or not the main part of the analogy holds without having prior knowledge of thing-in-itself as Will, which is the very thing the analogy is supposed to prove. If the most fundamental truths of metaphysics depend only on a subjective 'feeling' that thing-in-itself is one thing, if that is any way to do philosophy, then why might not a critic reply that he or she feels that thing-in-itself is God or matter or time or abstract form or something entirely different? If it is reasonable to think of Schopenhauer's early argument as an analogical inference, then it provides at best doubtful grounds for his transcendental metaphysics of thing-in-itself as Will.

5. Second Argument for Thing-in-Itself as Will

The argument in the first edition of *The World as Will and Representation* is not Schopenhauer's final word on the relation between individual will and thing-in-itself as Will. In the second volume, in Chapter XVIII, On the Possibility of Knowing the Thing-in-Itself, he amplified the original argument by offering another complementary style of proof.

Schopenhauer sets the stage for what appears to be a similar but notably non-analogical argument for the identification of thing-in-itself as Will. He emphasizes the limitations of approaching knowledge through representation alone, which he argues would constitute no advance over Kant.[18] The problem is that if we try to limit metaphysics to phenomena, then we have no choice but to collapse the real into the ideal. This is idealism of a more Berkeleyan sort, albeit a Berkeley *manqué* without the objectivity of the archetypal existence of sensible things guaranteed by God's infinite knowledge. Kant, in the *Critique*, refutes Berkeleyan idealism by arguing that there must exist spatiotemporal entities outside of consciousness in order for thinking subjects to be conscious of their own existence as determined in time. This, Schopenhauer remarks, could not possibly carry Kant beyond the limits of Berkeley's idealism, because Kant in the Transcendental Aesthetic regards space and time themselves as mind-dependent pure forms of intuition. Space and time are therefore every bit as subjectively ideal, though obviously not under individual wilful control, as the contents of representation

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considered only as Berkeley would classify them in his terminology as congeries of ideas. Schopenhauer reasons that thing-in-itself must be something altogether different:

> However, if, without questioning further, we stop altogether at the *world as representation*, then of course it is immaterial whether I declare objects to be representations in my head or phenomena that exhibit themselves in time and space, since time and space themselves are only in my head. In this sense, then, an identity of the ideal and the real might still be affirmed; yet since Kant, this would be to say nothing new. Moreover, the inner nature of things and of the phenomenal world would obviously not be exhausted in this way, but with it we should still always be only on the *ideal* side. The *real* side must be something *toto genere* different from the *world as representation*, namely that which things are *in themselves*; and it is this complete diversity between the ideal and the real that Kant has demonstrated most thoroughly. (*WWR*, 2, 193)

It is futile to attempt making contact with reality through even the most complete and detailed knowledge of the world as representation. We are then like the person Schopenhauer describes as trying to gain entrance to a fortress by repeatedly circling its walls and drawing pictures of the fortifications as they appear from the outside. Schopenhauer writes:

> In consequence of all this, on the path of *objective knowledge*, thus starting from the *representation*, we shall never get beyond the representation, i.e., the phenomenon. We shall therefore remain at the outside of things; we shall never be able to penetrate into their inner nature, and investigate what they are in themselves. So far I agree with Kant. (*WWR*, 2, 195)

Where Schopenhauer hopes to carry his own transcendental idealism an important step farther than Kant's C*ritical idealism is by explicating his intuitive insight into the hidden inner nature of thing-in-itself beyond the limits of representation. What is noteworthy about Schopenhauer's later argument in the book's second volume in its second and third editions is that in it the relation between the knowing subject's individual will and thing-in-itself as Will is not merely offered as an analogy among similar things, but instead proceeds more directly to prove that thing-in-itself is strictly numerically identical with a certain fundamental part of every individual act of phenomenal willing that might appropriately be described

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as 'pure' willing. The shift is subtle between these two versions of Schopenhauer's argument, when he continues the original line of thought:

> But now, as the counterpoise to this truth, I have stressed that other truth that we are not merely the *knowing subject*, but that *we ourselves* are also among those realities or entities we require to know, that *we ourselves are the thing-in-itself*. Consequently, a way *from within* stands open to us to that real inner nature of things to which we cannot penetrate *from without*. It is, so to speak, a subterranean passage, a secret alliance, which, as if by treachery, places us all at once in the fortress that could not be taken by attack from without. Precisely as such, the *thing-in-itself* can come into consciousness only quite directly, namely by *it itself being conscious of itself*; to try to know it objectively is to desire something contradictory. (*WWR*, 2, 195)

The change of perspective from the first to the second argument is significant. Schopenhauer now maintains that we falsely believe ourselves to be excluded from the fortress. The walls that seem to separate us from thing-in-itself are illusory. The truth is rather that all along we are already inside the gates, if only we recognize the fact that we are ourselves thing-in-itself, or that thing-in-itself is identical with the pure willing universal subject within us, identically at the core of every thinking, representing, willing subject. We can then understand that we are already 'all at once' within the fortress whose walls we previously thought would require some sort of frontal 'attack' to break through – a tactic that Schopenhauer in company with Kant acknowledges in any case could never possibly succeed.

Schopenhauer warns that we mistakenly impose the wrong cognitive model on insight into thing-in-itself as Will if we try to think of thing-in-itself as the individual will known by means of introspection. Inner perception involves a subject–object dichotomy. It remains a type of phenomenological representation in which willing and the individual will confronts the subject psychologically, through its own acts of willing, taken as object. That, for obvious reasons, given what Schopenhauer has said about the impossibility of gaining access to thing-in-itself via knowledge of the world as representation, cannot provide the basis for a correct understanding of thing-in-itself. Inner perception of individual willing is nevertheless the starting place for what Schopenhauer describes as a more

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complete method whereby thing-in-itself is identified with Will. It is the intervention of this further intermediate process that justifies preserving the typographical distinction we have observed throughout between 'will' and 'Will' (*WWR*, 2, 196–7).[19]

Thing-in-itself is a mystery even when we have identified it with Will and recognized that the pure willing within each of us is thing-in-itself. If we put all knowledge on the side of the world as representation, of explainable phenomena falling under the *principium individuationis* and principle of sufficient reason, there is nothing more to be said about thing-in-itself. We cannot subsume thing-in-itself in any of the categories of knowledge and explanation we are accustomed to apply in the world as representation. At best, we may come to an insight through what Schopenhauer refers to as an intuitive inner feeling as opposed to outward or external understanding. We cannot explain thing-in-itself, but only arrive intuitively at the insight that thing-in-itself is Will. The alternative is to admit that phenomena have a transcendent ground about which nothing substantive whatsoever can be known. Schopenhauer believes that we can attain non-representational insight into thing-in-itself in spite of these obstacles. He characterizes thing-in-itself by this choice of term after what he claims is the highest degree of thing-in-itself's objectification manifested in the world as representation, within our own inner lives, where it occurs as the foundational uncaused, unmotivated, objectless and subjectless willing that underlies the will to life (*der Wille zum Leben*). It is the pure or raw willing that occurs whenever in real time we will this or that.

We are familiar with willing in the ordinary sense through everyday first-person encounters with acts of volition. In willing to do something, we decide upon a course of action, and then as a rule make an effort to carry out the intention in practice. The idea is that in such instances we are engaged in the pursuit of a desire that impels us to motion. We must be careful not to confuse the properties of psychological willing as we experience it phenomenologically or introspectively with whatever Schopenhauer means by the non-representational nature of thing-in-itself as Will. We glimpse what Schopenhauer has in mind by this identification if we begin with a commonplace episode of volition and try to think away from it the prominent features that may otherwise seem to be essential to ordinary willing. These are the cause and motivation for willing, along with the particular object of will. Therewith, necessarily, given

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Schopenhauer's thesis of the interpresuppositionality of subject and object, we also think away the personality and individuality of the individual willing subject. If we can accomplish this conceptual feat, subtracting these factors from phenomenal willing, we will be left only with what is absolutely essential to any everyday act of will. This is pure willing, willing itself or as it is in itself, which Schopenhauer refers to as Will. Pure willing or Will in Schopenhauer's transcendental metaphysics in turn satisfies the conceptual requirements of thing-in-itself, implying that thing-in-itself is Will.

The account of thing-in-itself in Schopenhauer's transcendental metaphysics is more complicated than Schopenhauer sometimes makes it appear. It is not that each act of will in the ordinary sense, as when we desire a drink of water, is identical with thing-in-itself. Rather, it is within the desire for a drink of water that pure willing or Will as thing-in-itself can be recognized at the deepest core of ordinary episodes of phenomenologically experienced willing. We can locate Will by thinking away all of the external trappings of phenomenal willing to expose its pure naked form. Reflection then reveals that pure willing satisfies the theoretical requirements of the Kantian thing-in-itself. The pure willing or Will that underlies ordinary willing is not a mere analogue or something similar or corresponding to thing-in-itself, but is identical instead to thing-in-itself; it is, so to speak, the thing-in-itself itself, considered only as such rather than as it is objectified or manifests itself in any manner in the world as representation. Pure willing is non-representational, non-individualizable, and, as a further sign of its transcendence of the world as representation, it is not subject to but stands entirely outside the *principium individuationis* and principle of sufficient reason.

We must ask, how can this be? How can individual willing in each individual willing subject fail to be individualizable? Why should we not be able to identify my willing to have a drink of water, as opposed to yours, and why should it not be individualizable precisely as my desire and no one else's? How can there not be a sufficient causal and motivational explanation of my willing to drink water, with logical and mathematical dimensions as well, if under the circumstances I am thirsty, I have not imbibed any liquids for a long time, my physiology is in such and such a state, I am not physically prevented or otherwise inhibited from drinking, and the like? If all aspects of my individual willing are individualizable and

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explainable in the manner of other representational phenomena, even if they are in this case psychological, how can my individual willing possibly be directly related to what is supposed to be non-representational thing-in-itself?

The pure willing or Will underlying any individual act of will is intuited by means of a thought experiment. Consider again the individual episodic psychological occurrence of desiring a drink of water with its specific object, causes and motivations, as the desire of this or that person on this or that occasion in space and time. Schopenhauer instructs us to ask a specific series of questions. We start out with an introspective representational recognition of willing to drink, and ask *why* we will to drink. The answer could be this or that, depending on the circumstances. A representing willing subject could have any number of reasons for wanting to drink some water. The exact reason does not matter so much as the fact that as an event in the world as representation the psychological act of willing to drink water implies that there exists some kind of motivation for the act of will. This much is already assumed by the proposition that all occurrences in the world of representation can be explained by appropriate, including motivational, laws, under the principle of sufficient reason. Suppose in a given case that the reason is because of thirst. Then we can ask regressively, why does one will to quench one's thirst? If the answer is that we will to quench our thirst because we will something else again, to survive, or to be happy, or the like, then we can continue to ask, why do we will these things? If Schopenhauer is right, then there is always a good motivational reason to explain why we will each of these things at each step in turn, in a complete account of the motivation for a willing subject's willing to drink.[20]

Schopenhauer further claims that the regress of motivations can proceed indefinitely. Eventually, and often quite quickly, however, we reach a point where we may decide to ask a slightly different question. Clearly, moreover, nothing prevents us from asking this kind of question right away without further ado. We can ask: Why does one (simply) will? We will to drink because we are thirsty. We may be thirsty for any number of complex reasons. But why do we will? Why is it that we will anything, as opposed to not willing at all or willing only this or that? Schopenhauer insists that this apparently legitimate question has no correct answer. The fact that one wills can be deduced from the fact that one wills this or that,

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a drink of water or to own a houseboat, or to become the prime minister of Cameroon. When one wills this or that, one always does so for a reason aimed at a particular object, as a result of particular causes, and with a particular motivation. Since motivational explanation is one root of the principle of sufficient reason, it follows for Schopenhauer that a subject's willing this or that is an explainable phenomenon, like other psychological events.

There is, by contrast, no correct answer to the general question why we will, as opposed to why we will this or that. Pure willing or Will as such is beyond the reach of explanation. If we reach back far enough, to the point where it no longer makes sense to enquire into the motivations generally for willing anything whatsoever, as opposed to willing this or that, then Schopenhauer holds we have passed beyond the power of the fourfold root, at which point we will have crossed over in intuitive understanding to thing-in-itself. It is precisely there and then that our reflections are met with the recognition of unmotivated, uncaused, objectless and subjectless willing that lies deep within us, at the heart of every act of ordinary willing. Pure, undirected, unmotivated and uncaused willing is not the willing of any particular object by any particular willing subject for any particular reason. As such, it is unindividualizable and inexplicable; it is pure willing, plain and simple. If we know how to look for it, we can find it at the core of any act of ordinary willing, when we dig deep enough and think away the objects, causes and reasons for willing this or that in order to arrive at willing in its purest form. It is because pure willing or Will is unmotivated, undirected towards any object, unindividualizable and inexplicable by any of the modes of explanation available under the fourfold root, that Schopenhauer regards it as satisfying the theoretical requirements of Kantian thing-in-itself.

The nature of thing-in-itself is thus found in the only place it could possibly be located, deep within every act of willing. The pure unmotivated willing that transcends my willing to drink water and your willing to drink wine, or my willing to acquire a houseboat and your willing to acquire a law degree, is indistinguishable. There is no difference between my unmotivated willing and yours, in so far as it is simply willing. If we begin with individual willing, and recognize that at the core of any act of willing this or that there must always be pure willing for which no motivational explanation is available, then, *voilà*, we will have discovered that thing-in-itself

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is Will. There is pure willing or Will underlying every particular act of will for every willing subject. Pure willing, moreover, must satisfy the requirements of thing-in-itself. Schopenhauer's reasoning can be divided into the following steps, in which we combine certain elements of his first and second arguments for identifying thing-in-itself as Will:

1. The only conceivable sources of insight into thing-in-itself are perceptual knowledge and inner acquaintance with individual willing, corresponding to the only two conceivable ways in which we can come to know our own bodies.
2 Perceptual knowledge is limited to representations, and cannot possibly offer knowledge or understanding of thing-in-itself; it must therefore be excluded.
3. This leaves only inner acquaintance with individual willing as the only possible source of insight into thing-in-itself.
4. Beginning with individual willing, we can abstract or think away from it all object, direction, causation and motivation, mentally substracting these features from individual willing.
5. What remains is pure willing or Will, which satisfies the requirements of thing-in-itself as beyond the *principium individuationis* and principle of sufficient reason.
6. Hence, thing-in-itself is Will, taking its name from the highest, most complete and immediate grade of thing-in-itself's objectification in acts of individual willing.

Schopenhauer says repeatedly throughout his philosophical writings that thing-in-itself is pure, uncaused, unmotivated, objectless and subjectless willing, which he also describes as undirected striving or blind urging. If we cannot imagine willing without its being directed upon a particular object by a particular subject at a particular place and time and without some sufficient cause and motivation for its occurrence, it is undoubtedly because we are stuck in the mould of thinking only about willing this or that rather than pure willing.

We may wonder whether Schopenhauer speaks literally when he describes thing-in-itself in the first person as 'my' will. This parallels his idealist designations of the empirical world as 'my' representation, relative in the first person to each individual subject. Thing-in-itself, on the other hand, by definition, is supposed to be

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non-individual and altogether non-individualizable. It can no more be my will in particular than any other individual thinking subject's will. It must rather be understood as pure willing, as the Will that underlies all phenomenal acts of willing on the part of individual willing subjects. Schopenhauer nevertheless writes unqualifiedly:

> The inner reluctance with which everyone accepts the world as his mere representation warns him that this consideration, quite apart from its truth, is nevertheless one-sided, and so is occasioned by some arbitrary abstraction. On the other hand, he can never withdraw from this acceptance. However, the one-sidedness of this consideration will be made good in the following book through a truth that is not so immediately certain as that from which we start here. Only deeper investigation, more difficult abstraction, the separation of what is different, and the combination of what is identical can lead us to this truth. This truth, which must be very serious and grave if not terrible to everyone, is that a man also can say and must say: 'The world is my will'. (*WWR*, 1, 4)

In adopting a first-person way of relating thing-in-itself to Will, Schopenhauer means to emphasize the fact that thing-in-itself transcends each individual subject's phenomenal acts of willing. We begin, in his methodology, with each willing subject's personal acts of will. By the time the enquiry is complete, we will have transcended all personality and individuality, gaining intuitive insight into the hidden inner nature of thing-in-itself. We must, as Schopenhauer remarks, undertake a 'deeper investigation'. If we have accurately described his mode of transcendental reasoning, then the more penetrating procedure he requires is to think away or abstract from willing, as inner knowledge of the body, all objects, causes, and motivations for individual willing. Then we will have arrived at an understanding of thing-in-itself as Will.

With a grain of salt, we can accept Schopenhauer's otherwise paradoxical first-person statement that the world is 'my' will. The pronouncement is true enough, provided that Will is understood to transcend each representing subject's individual acts of will. Thing-in-itself, in that case, uncaused, unmotivated and objectless, also transcends all particular phenomenal psychological acts of personalized individual willing, and hence all particular subjects. It is subjectless because it is blind, undirected or objectless, and because there is no subject without an object. Schopenhauer's conclusion is not that thing-in-itself is identical with my individual will or any of

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my individual acts of willing. It is rather that through first-person individual acts of willing each willing subject engaged in abstraction, thinking away the particularity of their individual acts of willing, can reveal thing-in-itself as pure willing. Will as thing-in-itself universally transcends each individual thinking subject's first-person acquaintance with personal acts of will.[21]

6. Criticisms of Schopenhauer's Proof that Thing-in-Itself is Will

Why does Schopenhauer fasten onto acts of individual willing rather than other equally 'inner' psychological processes? Why does he not begin instead with reason or passion and think away their individuality, causation, motivation, and the like, until he arrives at pure reason or pure passion stripped down to satisfy the requirements of thing-in-itself?

The answer is that we cannot perform the same abstraction with reason or passion as with willing in order to arrive at something that in its pure form is beyond the principles of individuation and sufficient reason. Reason, for example, because of its nature, even in its purest most abstract form, can never stand outside the logical root of the principle of sufficient reason. It is by the same argument that perception can never be so purified as to stand outside of the principle's causal root, and no doubt of the logical and mathematical roots as well, if perception by definition, as an effect of phenomena on the body's sense organs, is always of something that occurs in space and time.

What, then, of passion? Can we not purify an individual experience of passion to deprive it of all its individuality? Can we not abstract from it all of the same kinds of accidental qualities that Schopenhauer thinks away in abstracting pure willing from phenomenal acts of will, in order to arrive at Will as thing-in-itself? Why could we not similarly arrive at pure passion as thing-in-itself? Passion, needless to say, is something passive. As such, it is the very opposite of willing, which Schopenhauer regards as an active force directing and controlling the body's movements. This is what makes the consideration of abstract passion so intriguing as the most extreme alternative to the conclusions Schopenhauer wants to draw concerning Will as thing-in-itself. If pure passion or Passion is not a

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suitable candidate for thing-in-itself because it does not offer insight into the hidden forces that transcend phenomenal appearance, then perhaps we should begin to be more sceptical about the possibility of ever achieving such understanding of the relation between thing-in-itself and the world as representation. If we are not quite at that stage, it may only be because we do not yet know whether or not Passion is an acceptable rival to Will as thing-in-itself.

A moment's reflection nevertheless shows that Passion does not seriously compete with Will in Schopenhauer's uncovering of thing-in-itself. The concept of passion, and hence of Passion, is inherently of something done to a subject, whereas an action is something a willing subject does. We suffer passions as a result of different sorts of interactions with the world. This makes the concept of passion, individual or abstracted as much as possible from all individuality, necessarily causal. Willing, in contrast, in its most pure abstract form, need not be causal because willing as such need logically or conceptually be neither caused nor causally efficacious. If, on the contrary, we try to subtract from passion the fact that the experience has been brought about or visited upon a subject, something that has been caused to happen, often against the subject's will, then we have either contradicted ourselves or are no longer talking about passion in the proper sense of the word. The passive nature of passion is necessarily of something caused or inflicted. This, in turn, makes it altogether unsuitable for abstraction beyond the principle of sufficient reason, disqualifying it as something other than Will to stand as a possible counter-Schopenhauerian thing-in-itself.

If we try to think away from an act of phenomenal willing its cause, motivation, object and therefore its subject, do we have reason to suppose that there will be anything left at all? Is the situation not like that of peeling all the layers from an onion only to discover at the end that there is nothing more inside at the centre because an onion consists entirely of its layers? Schopenhauer would have us believe that pure willing, Will as thing-in-itself, is at the core of every episode of ordinary willing in willing this or that. The conclusion can be upheld if we suppose that the same four factors of cause, motivation, object and subject attach to phenomenal psychological occurrences other than willing, but in those applications there will be nothing left over. Pure willing remains behind as distinctive of a phenomenal act of willing in the process of subtracting these factors; for otherwise there can be no way of distinguishing phenomenal

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willing from phenomenal believing, doubting, suffering passion, being in pain, or the like. We can think away from these mental states the same four factors, but what is left behind in such cases has no pretence of qualifying as thing-in-itself. Only pure willing seems to meet the test, satisfying the requirements for Kantian thing-in-itself by virtue of falling outside the principles of individuation and sufficient reason.[22]

Notes

[1] I find it more natural to speak of Kant's *Ding an sich* as thing-in-itself, rather than as *the* thing-in-itself. Schopenhauer holds that thing-in-itself is one, which recommends the definite article, but he also maintains that thing-in-itself is not subject to the principle of individuation or *principium individuationis*. Accordingly, I prefer to remain as neutral as possible with respect to its numerical uniqueness. Schopenhauer's usage in this regard is not entirely consistent. He generally includes the definite article, '*das Ding an sich*', as Richard Aquila informs me in private correspondence, but typically omits it in the phrase '*als Ding an sich*'; he nevertheless inserts the article in '*als das Ding an sich*' twice in the second volume of *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, Chapter 19, and three times in *Über den Willen in der Natur: Eine Erörterung der Bestätigungen, welche die Philosophie des Verfassers, seit ihrem Auftreten, durch die empirischen Wissenschaften erhalten hat*. I follow the same practice, more consistently in keeping with Schopenhauer's own preference, with respect to the article-less numerical neutrality of Will rather than *the* Will identified as thing-in-itself. Schopenhauer's most prolific English translator, E.F.J. Payne, on whose texts I rely in the present context, as a rule renders Schopenhauer's terminology with the definite article as 'the will', rather than simply as 'will'. See Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation* (hereafter, *WWR*, 1, 2) (New York: Dover Publications, 1966), two vols. I go beyond Payne in another way, by distinguishing typographically, in the service, hopefully, of greater philosophical clarity, between the individual, phenomenal or empirical will and Will as thing-in-itself. Payne renders both with the lower-case 'will', which in a way is more faithful to their orthographic indistinguishability in Schopenhauer's German, in which all nouns are capitalized.

[2] There are logical and mathematical aspects of the empirical world, according to Schopenhauer, and by describing the world as representation also as empirical, I do not mean to preclude these important formal roots of the principle of sufficient reason. Even the most extreme empiricists, prominently including George Berkeley and David Hume, among others, do not preclude the use of logic and mathematics,

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despite championing the view that experience is sovereign in philosophy and the natural sciences.

3 Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Norman Kemp Smith, trans. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965), A 19–B 73; on thing-in-itself, see B 67–8 and *passim*. Bryan Magee does not seem to understand that Schopenhauer deliberately avoids speaking of thing-in-itself as noumenon or noumenal. See Magee, *The Philosophy of Schopenhauer* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1983; revised and enlarged edition 1997), especially pp. 96, 210–11.

4 See Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation* (hereafter, *WWR*), two vols., E. F. J. Payne, trans. (New York: Dover Publications, 1966), two vols., especially his Appendix to vol. 1, 'Criticism of the Kantian Philosophy', *WWR*, 1, 469–70, 474–6.

5 Schopenhauer insists that we cannot possibly arrive at an 'exhaustive and adequate' knowledge of thing-in-itself on the grounds that such knowledge is 'tied to the form of representation'. See *WWR*, 2, 196–7; also, Schopenhauer, *Parerga and Paralipomena* (*PP*), new edition, E. F. J. Payne, trans. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), two vols., *PP*, 2, 92–4.

6 Elsewhere, Schopenhauer distinguishes between individual subjects and the 'pure' or universal subject of which individuals are mere 'bearers'. See, for example, *WWR*, 1, 197–8, where Schopenhauer refers metaphorically to 'the one eye that looks out from all subjects'.

7 John E. Atwell, *Schopenhauer on the Character of the World: The Metaphysics of Will* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), p. 86.

8 Ibid., p. 88. Note that I adopt Schopenhauer's elisions in speaking relatively freely of (individual phenomenal) 'will' in nominalized fashion as equivalent to willing in gerundival form. Schopenhauer in this way tends to treat the (individual phenomenon) will as the agency within the world as representation that is causally responsible for individual episodic acts of willing within the world as representation, as when we say colloquially of a person with strong determination that he or she has an iron will. Needless to say, and for reasons Schopenhauer makes abundantly clear, the Will as thing-in-itself is not causally involved in any of its objectifications or manifestations. It is worthwhile in some contexts, especially when considering and in developing the most charitable readings of what I take to be Schopenhauer's first-edition analogical argument for the identification of thing-in-itself as Will to follow his lead in speaking of will and Will as entities. This is not meant to preclude proper acknowledgement also when appropriate that the individual phenomenal will is encountered only in, and may ultimately be only an elliptical way of referring to, a subject's individual phenomenal episodic acts of willing.

9 Ibid., p. 87.

10 Ibid., p. 88.

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[11] Christopher Janaway, 'Will and Nature', in Janaway (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Schopenhauer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 145–6.

[12] Ibid., pp. 146–7.

[13] See also Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1989), pp. 191–207. On pp. 202–3, Janaway writes: 'The phenomena of conscious willing are those of which we have direct inner cognition and which alert us to the inadequacy of the subject/object model provided by the doctrine of representation. In honour of this special status, whatever lies behind the veil of representation is to be called "will", even though the majority of its manifestations are not instances of conscious willing at all. A great many are teleologically explicable, however, and may be thought of in terms of a kind of unconscious "striving" whose end is the propagation and maintenance of life. Others are merely the action of one thing upon another. All are manifestations of the same thing in itself that manifests itself in us as conscious willing. Admittedly, this argument leaves the term "will" fairly vacuous in its application to the thing in itself. But it is important to see that Schopenhauer is not anthropomorphizing nature.'

[14] Here we take note of Schopenhauer's distinction between inner and outer perception (*innere, äussere Wahrnehmung*). By referring specifically to sensation or sense perception we designate external ways of knowing the body as distinct from inner knowledge of will-driven action and movement.

[15] *WWR*, 1, 101–2: 'Finally, the knowledge I have of my will, although an immediate knowledge, cannot be separated from that of my body. I know my will not as a whole, not as a unity, not completely according to its nature, but only in its individual acts, and hence in time, which is the form of the body's appearing, as it is of every body. Therefore, the body is the condition of knowledge of my will. Accordingly, I cannot really imagine this will without my body.' See also *WWR*, 2, 196–7: 'Meanwhile it is to be carefully noted, and I have always kept it in mind, that even the inward observation we have of our own will still does not by any means furnish an exhaustive and adequate knowledge of the thing-in-itself . . . In the first place, such knowledge is tied to the form of the representation; it is perception or observation, and as such falls apart into subject and object . . . Hence even in inner knowledge there still occurs a difference between the being-in-itself of its object and the observation or perception of this object in the knowing subject.' The point is that thing-in-itself is not directly encountered in introspection of any act of phenomenal willing. The inner sense of phenomenal willing provides only the starting place for inquiry, from which it is necessary to arrive at an intuitive grasp and theoretical understanding of thing-in-itself as pure willing or Will only by a process of abstraction. We think away the cause, motivation, object and subject of phenomenal willing to arrive at something that on reflection

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is understood as not governed by the principles of individuation and sufficient reason.

16 Schopenhauer's otherwise unsupported assumption of the analogy between the inner nature of things as will-like and ultimately as Will is evident in the following passages. *WWR*, 1, 105: 'As we proceed, we shall see that this belongs not to the inner nature of the will, but merely to its most distinct phenomena as animal and human being. Therefore, if I say that the force which attracts a stone to the earth is of its nature, in itself, and apart from all representation, will, then no one will attach to this proposition the absurd meaning that the stone moves itself according to a known motive, because it is thus that the will appears in man.' *WWR*, 1, 107: 'Now if every action of my body is an appearance or phenomenon of an act of will in which my will itself in general and as a whole, and hence my character, again expresses itself under given motives, then phenomenon or appearance of the will must also be the indispensable condition and presupposition of every action. For the will's appearance cannot depend on something which does not exist directly and only through it, and would therefore be merely accidental for it, whereby the will's appearance itself would be only accidental. But that condition is the whole body itself. Therefore this body itself must be phenomenon of the will, and must be related to my will as a whole, that is to say, to my intelligible character, the phenomenon of which in time is my empirical character, in the same way as the particular action of the body is to the particular act of the will. Therefore the whole body must be nothing but my will become visible, must be my will itself, in so far as this is object of perception, representation of the first class.'

17 *WWR*, 1, Appendix: Criticism of the Kantian Philosophy, p. 422: '[Kant] did not deduce the thing-in-itself in the right way, as I shall soon show, but by means of an inconsistency; and he had to pay the penalty for this in the frequent and irresistible attacks on this principal part of his teaching. He did not recognize the thing-in-itself directly in the will, but made a great and original step towards this knowledge, since he demonstrated the undeniable moral significance of human conduct to be quite different from, and not dependent on, the laws of the phenomenon, to be not even capable of explanation according to them, but to be something directly touching the thing-in-itself.' Ibid., p. 437: 'I now return to Kant's great mistake, already touched on above, namely that he did not properly separate knowledge of perception from abstract knowledge; from this there arose a terrible confusion which we have now to consider more closely. If he had sharply separated representations of perception from concepts thought merely *in abstracto*, he would have kept these two apart, and would have known with which of the two he had to deal in each case.'

18 *WWR*, 1, 82. Janaway, 'Will and Nature', in Janaway (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Schopenhauer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 138–70. Michael Kelly, *Kant's Philosophy as Rectified by Schopenhauer* (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1909).

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[19] See final comment in note 1 above.

[20] *WWR*, 1, 164–5.

[21] *WWR*, 1, 162: 'Thus everyone in this twofold regard is the whole world itself, the microcosm; he finds its two sides whole and complete within himself. And what he thus recognizes as his own inner being also exhausts the inner being of the whole world, of the macrocosm. Thus the whole world, like man himself, is through and through will and through and through representation, and beyond this there is nothing.'

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