SUMMER 2019

Charles University

Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies

(BA Module + Erasmus students)

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**A. Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation* (1818, 1844, 1859). Book II**

• **On the Difference between “Will” and “Motive(s)” (§20)**

“these voluntary movements are nothing else than the visible aspect of the individual acts of will, with which they are directly coincident and identical” (152)

🡪 Even though we consider all our movements expression of the will, we still need to take into consideration their external principle: “these acts of will have always a ground or reason outside themselves in motives” (152)

*These motives only determine what I will* at this time*,* in this place*,* and under these circumstances*, nor that I will in general*. The occurrence of such and such a motive only determines the manifestation of my will *at a given point in time*

🡪 Motives determine and are determined by my “empirical personality”: yet, the will is outside the domain of the law of motivation: “It is only under the presupposition of my empirical character that the motive is a sufficient ground of explanation of my action”

**Two senses in which the body is the manifestation of my will**:

(1) Every single act of my body is a manifestation of the will;

(2) The whole existence of the body and the sum total of its functions are the manifestation of the will

“Upon this rests the perfect suitableness of the human and animal body to the human and animal will in general, resembling, though far surpassing, the correspondence between an instrument made for a purpose and the will of the maker, and on this account appearing as a design, i.e., the teleological explanation of the body. The parts of the body must, therefore, completely correspond to the principal desires through which the will manifests itself; they must be the visible expressions of these desires. Teeth, throat, and bowels are objectified hunger; the organs of generation are objectified sexual desire; the grasping hand, the hurrying feet correspond to the more indirect desires of the will, which they express. As the human form generally corresponds to the human will generally, so the individually bodily structure corresponds to the individually modified will” (155)

Teleological Explanation

• **Against “Theoretical” or “Metaphysical” Egoism (from the end of §23)**

“It only remains for us to take the final step, the extension of our way of looking at things to all those forces which act in accordance with universal, unchangeable laws, in conformity with which the movements of all those bodies take place, which are wholly without organs (…). Thus we must apply the key to the understanding of the inner nature of things, which the immediate knowledge of our own existence can give us, to those phenomena of the unorganized world that are most remote from us. And if we consider them attentively, if we observe the strong and unceasing impulse with which the magnet turns ever to the north pole, the readiness with which iron flies to the magnet, the eagerness with which the electric poles seek to be re-united, and which, just like human desires, is increased by obstacles; if we see the crystal quickly and suddenly take form with such wonderful regularity of construction, which is clearly only a perfectly definite and accurately determined impulse in different directions, seized and retained by crystallization; if we observe the choice with which bodies repel and attract each other, combine and separate when they are set free in a fluid state, and emancipate from the bonds of rigidness; (…) if we observe all this, I say, it will require no great effort of the imagination to recognize, even at so great a distance, our own nature” (167)

“For the name *will* denotes that which is the inner nature of everything in the world”

• **Other Ways for the Will to Manifest itself…**

Cause / Stimulus / Motive

the state of matter that, while a cause that sustains no causality accompanied by

introduces another state of the reaction proportional to its knowledge

matter, just as great a change effect (“the effect cannot be

itself as that which it causes measured by it”)

(“action and reaction are equal”)

EXAMPLES:

“Thus, for example, the rising of the sap in a plant follows upon stimuli, and cannot be explained from mere causes, according to the laws of hydraulics or capillary attraction; yet, it is certainly assisted by these, and altogether approaches very near to a purely causal change”

“The contraction of the pupils of the eyes as the light is increased is due to stimuli, but it passes into movement which is due to motive; for, it takes place because too strong lights would affect the retina painfully, and to avoid this we contract the pupils. The occasion of an erection is a motive, because it is a representation, yet it operates with the necessity of a stimulus, i.e., it cannot be resisted, but we must put the representation away in order to make it cease to affect us” (164)

• **The Hierarchy of Phenomena as Manifestations of the Will**

Human Beings 🡪 Higher degrees of objectivity: Great difference of individual characters; complete personality expressed in strongly marked individual physiognomy

Animals 🡪 None of them have this individuality in anything like so higher a degree, even though the higher species have a trace of it; but usually the character of the species predominates completely over it, and therefore they little individuality

Inorganic Realm 🡪 The father we go down, the more completely is every trace of the individual character lost. Finally, in the inorganic kingdom of nature all individuality disappears (“The crystal alone is to be regarded as to a certain extent individual” (184)

“But it is just the conformity to law of the phenomena of the lower grads of the objectification of will which gives them such a different aspect from the phenomena of the same will in the higher, i.e., the more distinct, grades of its objectification, in animals and humans and their actions, where the stronger or weaker influence of the individual character and the susceptibility to motives which often remain hidden from the spectator, because they lie in knowledge, has had the result that the identity of the inner nature of the two kinds of phenomena has hitherto been entirely overlooked” (186)

THE WILL

Space-Time (*Principium Individuations*)

Platonic Forms

Form1… Form2… Form3… Form4… Form5… Form6… Form7… Form8…