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# Schopenhauer on inner awareness and world-understanding

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## ABSTRACT

I argue against a prevailing interpretation of Schopenhauer's account of inner awareness and world-understanding. Because scholars have typically taken on board the assumption that inner awareness is non-representational, they have concerned themselves in the main with how to transfer this immediate cognition of will in ourselves and apply it to our understanding of the world-as-representation. Some scholars propose that the relation of the world-as-will to the world-as-representation is to be understood in figurative or metaphorical terms. I disagree because, for Schopenhauer, inner awareness reveals a genuine philosophical truth. Some scholars also suggest that it is only via analogical transference that one can interpret the world as having the same inner nature as oneself. I disagree and point out the downside of this suggestion. I use both textual evidence and general philosophical considerations to demonstrate that inner awareness, for Schopenhauer, has a representational dimension. Overlooking this point has led scholars to misconstrue how inner awareness relates to world-understanding. I provide an alternative interpretation against figurative and analogical readings. I propose that, for Schopenhauer, we cognize partially a priori that all things are merely different expressions of the same activity that we are acquainted with in inner awareness.

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This paper explores Schopenhauer's account of inner awareness and how this pertains to his conceptions of the will, self-cognition, and comprehension of the external world (i.e. representation). The plan of the paper is as follows. In Section 1, I begin with introducing and clarifying some of the key ideas relating to Schopenhauer's account of inner awareness. In Section 2, I begin by arguing against a prevailing interpretation (specifically amongst some prominent English-writing scholars) of Schopenhauer's account of inner awareness and world-understanding. Because scholars have typically taken on board the

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assumption that inner awareness is non-representational, they have concerned themselves in the main with how to transfer this immediate cognition of will in ourselves and apply it to our understanding of the world-as-representation. Some scholars propose that the relation of the world-as-will to the world-as-representation is to be understood in figurative or metaphorical terms. I disagree because, for Schopenhauer, inner awareness reveals a genuine philosophical truth. Some scholars also suggest that it is only via analogical transference that one can interpret the world as having the same inner nature as oneself. I disagree and point out the downside of this suggestion. In Section 3, I argue against the assumption that inner awareness is non-representational, and use both textual evidence and general philosophical considerations to demonstrate that inner awareness, for Schopenhauer, has a representational dimension. Overlooking this point has led scholars to misconstrue how inner awareness relates to world-understanding. If inner awareness were non-representational, it would be impossible to explain how inner awareness would provide us with cognition of the outer world. If inner awareness is representational, as I argue it is for Schopenhauer, then it becomes possible to trace the connection between inner awareness and cognition of the outer world. In Section 4, I provide an alternative interpretation against figurative and analogical readings. I propose that, for Schopenhauer, we cognize partially a priori that all things (humans, non-human animals, all other inanimate objects, etc.) are merely different expressions of the same activity that we are acquainted with in inner awareness, namely 'will'. In Section 5, I summarize my findings and offer some brief concluding remarks.

## 1. Some preliminaries

According to Schopenhauer, inner awareness is manifest to us as *feeling* (*Gefühl*), as something that is "immediately" and "concretely" present to consciousness (WWR 1, §21, 130), which is "*neither a concept nor abstract rational cognition*" (WWR 1, §11, 61).

This felt experience is, Schopenhauer claims, the most essential fact about us. It is something that "we know so intimately and so much better than anything else" (WWR 1, §21, 131). It rests on "a wholly immediate awareness of [the body and] its successive activities" (WWR 2, 260), of its "continuous striving for activity in general" (WWR 2, 265). It is worth noting that this inner activity is incessantly excited by various motives, yet it does not need to outwardly express itself in visible bodily changes. Schopenhauer identifies the felt awareness of our continual inner directedness towards activity with the human will (*Wille*).

Schopenhauer refers to the inner awareness we have of our own will as inner cognition (*innere Erkenntnis*). In order to understand what kind of

cognition this is, we need firstly to look at the sharp distinction Schopenhauer draws in *The World As Will and Representation* between will and representation (*Vorstellung*). He refers to the former “as something that is not a representation at all, but is rather entirely different in kind from this” (WWR 1, §18, 123). Schopenhauer complicates things further by identifying the will with the thing-in-itself, something apart from all phenomena and hence incognizable to the representing and willing selves. Put simply, according to Schopenhauer, in the inner experience of one’s willing, one becomes conscious of oneself not as one appears to oneself, i.e. as mere representation of the cognizing self. Such experience, Schopenhauer contends, first and foremost consists in the awareness of one’s own body as it is in-itself, i.e. “what the body is, not as a representation, but apart from that, *in itself*” (WWR 1, §19, 123).

One major question that remains the subject of philosophical dispute is how to understand or conceptualize inner awareness. More specifically, philosophers still discuss whether inner awareness is explicable in terms of the representational properties of mental states. Representationalist theorists propose that the subject’s awareness of their conscious state is possible only if the state is represented by the subject in some way, for there cannot be awareness of anything unless it is possible for the mind to turn what it is that one is aware of into an object of one’s representation. Others, however, have argued that the relationship between inner awareness and that of which it makes one aware is more intimate than the relationship between a representation and that which it represents. And because inner awareness has a more direct and immediate relationship to that of which it makes one aware, it cannot be understood along representational lines. Such awareness must be non-representational in nature (see Kriegel, *Subjective Consciousness*, 106-108).

We are interested in clarifying the notion of ‘immediacy’ in Schopenhauer—the condition of being ‘immediate’ or ‘unmediated’—because we are interested in clarifying the difference between ‘representation’ and ‘non-representation’. The subject *S*’s awareness of *X* (AOX) counts as ‘immediate’ or ‘unmediated’ if and only if the disjunction of the following conditions is satisfied:

- (i) *S*’s AOX is not subject to the principle of sufficient reason, i.e. the subjective forms of space, time, and causality that characterize representation.
- (ii) *S*’s AOX does not involve the subject-object distinction, i.e. the correlation of the cognizing subject (the representer) and the cognized object (what is being represented).

Any experience that fulfils (i) or (ii) is ‘immediate’, but also, by definition, ‘non-representational’ because such experience either stands wholly apart from the subjective forms of representation, or it does not fall under the subject-object

distinction. On the other hand, S is said to have a 'mediated' AOX if S's AOX is brought under subjective forms of representation, or if it is possible for S to turn what it is that S is aware of into an object of S's representation. Any experience that is 'mediated' is also, by definition, 'representational'.

In several places (as cited above) Schopenhauer characterizes inner awareness as an immediate and, therefore, non-representational awareness of one's agency or inner activity. Schopenhauer also places a special emphasis on the epistemic status of inner awareness. And in my view, herein lies Schopenhauer's originality, which is to say, unlike any philosopher, contemporary or historical, Schopenhauer does not settle for the idea that inner awareness tells us about the subject's inner life and nothing else. Rather, for Schopenhauer, our awareness of our own agency predisposes us to attend to the world as something to be sensed rather than to be merely perceived, thought, and represented. More specifically, Schopenhauer claims that the feeling of one's inner nature brings the subject epistemically closer to the essence of the world.

Even though Schopenhauer opens his seminal work by proclaiming that "the world is my representation", a "truth" "more certain" and "more independent of all others" (WWR 1, §1, 3), the starting point of genuine philosophizing for Schopenhauer is inner awareness—yet this cannot be its end point. Philosophy, as Schopenhauer puts it in a late reflection, "is in its essence *world wisdom*: its problem is the world" (WWR 2, 197). Therefore, any analysis of Schopenhauer's views on inner awareness would be simply lacking if it did not address how inner awareness bears on the problem of world-understanding.

The fundamental idea that Schopenhauer conveys in *The World As Will and Representation* can be expressed as follows: the will reveals itself as the inner essence of our existence as human beings. The will (as the continual striving for activity) is, however, thought to be not only the inner essence of our being but also the essence of all that exists, of the world in which we live. Put differently, in our experience of willing or intentionally contributing to an action, we come to sense both the self and the world as will, and cease to view the relation between the self and the world merely as that between the cognizer (the representing subject) and the cognized (that which is represented).

According to Schopenhauer, "[w]hat we are acquainted with directly [i.e. the will] must serve to elucidate what we are acquainted with only indirectly [i.e. the world], not the other way around" (WWR 2, 207). In other words, for Schopenhauer, as John Atwell correctly observes, "only a philosophy that employs self-understanding as its starting point, and then applies it to nature, can succeed in rendering nature (the whole world as representation) understandable" (*Schopenhauer and the Character of the World*, 97). Atwell adds, and rightfully so, that "Schopenhauer's commitment to this general strategy briefly, world-understanding through self-understanding cannot be exaggerated" (*Schopenhauer and the Character of the World*, 97).

## 2. A prevailing interpretation of inner awareness and its relation to world-understanding

There is a prevailing interpretation among a prominent cohort of English-writing Schopenhauer scholars. According to this interpretation, Schopenhauer holds that inner cognition is non-representational. A fine articulation of non-representationalism (about inner awareness) can be found in Dale Jacquette:

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 [cognition] 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 Philosophy of Schopenhauer*, 77, my emphasis).<sup>1</sup>

In this section, I will simply assume, for the sake of argument, that this view is correct.<sup>2</sup> Recall that for Schopenhauer, while inner awareness offers an in-depth cognition of one's agency, a revelation about oneself, it is a revelation also about the world. However, if as scholars claim, inner awareness is non-representational, then this raises a crucial challenge: it is not obvious how a non-representational cognition proves to be relevant for understanding the world-as-representation.

Scholars suggest Schopenhauer can be read as extending the cognition of self to the cognition of the world, and conclude that the one and the same striving for activity that I recognize in my own nature also animates all organic and inorganic processes and activities of phenomena. Put formulaically, because I cognize my body as will, I can, and should, cognize that the rest of the world is as well.

Atwell claims that we are "confronted with two mutually exclusive alternatives": either I must "extend the [cognition] I have of myself as will" to the world-as-representation "*in the absence of rational proof and of direct accessibility*," or I must adopt "the 'mad' position" of the theoretical egoist that the natural world is my mere representation, and therefore nothing in it can count as real except myself (*Schopenhauer and the Character of the World*, 96, my emphasis). It is clear that we are much better off if we choose the former. Julian Young makes a similar suggestion when he states that "[i]f [...] we refuse to extend will to (so-called) inorganic nature the result is a sharp division between the organic and the inorganic" (*Schopenhauer*, 75). More specifically, Young explains, "just as the individual organism must be conceived as the product of a will, so must nature as a whole" (*Schopenhauer*,

<sup>1</sup>Among other advocates of non-representationalism are Janaway, "Nietzsche and Schopenhauer", 179; Vanden Auweele, *Schopenhauer's Pessimism*, 55; Carus, "Force in Nature", 155; Soll, "Schopenhauer on the Will as the Window to the World", 136.

<sup>2</sup>See my criticism of non-representationalism in Section 3.

77). It follows, then, “we have no choice” (*Schopenhauer*, 76). The will, Young contends, “must be extended all the way into the inorganic realm” (*Schopenhauer*, 76). Christopher Janaway makes an even stronger claim, that we have an epistemic obligation to make use of the non-representational cognition of our agency to further our cognition about the world around us:

If my self-consciousness as bodily agent gives me a uniquely unmediated [cognition] [...] 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 the limitation of scientific explanation leaves us crying out for a unifying metaphysical account, then it would be irresponsible not to apply the [cognition] of my own nature to the metaphysical unriddling of the world

(“Nietzsche and Schopenhauer”, 179).

Atwell, Young, and Janaway keep hammering on the same point: genuine cognition of the world legitimates or presupposes self-cognition. They merely suggest the possibility of the extension or transference of cognition, without any explication and clarification of this transference from ‘non-representational’ to ‘representational’ cognition.

In what follows, I will examine the interpretive debates that swirl around two closely interrelated concerns relating to Schopenhauer’s inference to the inner nature of the world. The first is the epistemic concern—with what right do I claim that what I cognize of this body hold of all bodies? Second, there is the concern of coherence—the question that is left dangling in the air, and which scholars need to address is, “*How can we think of the process of transference from non-representational to representational cognition?*”

Scholars seem to be in consensus that there is no transference in the literal sense of moving from non-representational to representational domain. They say that Schopenhauer’s discussion of inner awareness only allows for a kind of figurative or “metaphorical transference”, a position that, despite its ad hoc nature, has found support from several Schopenhauer scholars (see Gardner, “Schopenhauer’s Metaphilosophy”, 24). Sebastian Gardner seems to fully endorse this proposal:

If this means, and perhaps it does, that when we think of the world-as-will as ground of the world-as-representation, we are not strictly thinking that *anything is the case*, then Schopenhauer must accept the implication and agree that to think the world as will is not, formally speaking, to *judge* any state of affairs. But this does not leave him empty-handed. The species of thought (or “quasi”-thought) that the world-as-will admits of, Schopenhauer may say, is instead *expressive*

(“Schopenhauer’s Metaphilosophy”, 24).

Among the most prominent representatives of the figurative reading, Gardner mentions, is Sandra Shapshay. Perhaps the first thing to note is that, unlike other scholars discussed here, Shapshay does not seem to be

endorsing a strict non-representationalism about inner awareness. However, her interpretation is ultimately premised on the same assumption that other interpretations do depend on, namely that Schopenhauer treats inner awareness as *at least to some extent* non-representational. Shapshay admits that inner awareness is still tied to the form of time, and hence to the form of the representation. Yet, she continues to claim that, for Schopenhauer, “we can know about our bodies in a way that is quasi-non-representational” or that such “insight is close to being non-representational” (“Did Schopenhauer Neglect the ‘Neglected Alternative’ Objection?”, 342). One cannot help but wonder how something could be quasi-non-representational. Being representational or non-representational strikes me as akin to being pregnant or non-pregnant. It is either a yes or no situation. It seems to me more accurate to state that a representation tied to the form of time is fully representational, but just lacks some features that almost all representations possess (such as spatiality or susceptibility to causal influences).

Shapshay argues, for Schopenhauer, what is revealed in inner awareness is a “felt contiguity” between self and world, a feeling of our being part of the world of things and not separate from it which affirms a deep sense of contiguous harmony with events of the external world that surrounds us (“Poetic intuition”, 218). Gaining this special insight into the world-as-will requires the use of our imagination to “widen the extension of the concept ‘will’ which we know from our own immediate experience (in time) beyond the bounds of possible sensation” so that we can “feel for ourselves the *mysterious* connection between our wills and [...] the world” (“Poetic intuition”, 218, my emphasis).

I disagree with this interpretative strategy.<sup>3</sup> What is mysterious is undiscussable; therefore, it “cannot be clearly thought, much less literally true” (WWR 2, 175). The self-world connection— one’s recognition of oneself as interconnected with all that exists—is not mysterious or unusual; it is the primary reality that we can be certain of. According to Shapshay, inner awareness does not provide us with the cognition of the real, essential nature of the world-as-representation. At most, it can offer us a figurative insight into the inner nature of things on the basis of a ‘quasi-non-representational’ experience we have of our own will. Or put more forcefully, on Shapshay’s account, the contiguous harmony we feel with the world is animated and occasioned by representations of our imagination rather than by a sense of certainty about why the world is the way it is.

A genuine insight into the essence of all that exists does not merely involve a consciousness of connection or felt contiguity of the self and the world (as if the two were separate), but instead it “appeals to thinking and

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<sup>3</sup>For an extensive critique of Shapshay’s account and other figurative readings, see Özen, “Schopenhauer’s Doctrine of the Thing-in-Itself”, 267-282.



conviction” regarding the nature of (concrete) existence (WWR 2, 175). If the world-as-will does not provide any genuine meaning, if it only amounts to a figurative or metaphorical expression for one’s attempts to give meaning to one’s representations, then this is not how Schopenhauer understands inner cognition.

Some scholars also argued that it is only via analogical transference that one can interpret the world as having the same inner nature as oneself (see Jacqueline, *The Philosophy of Schopenhauer*, 74-82). David Carus offers the most recent and clearest articulation of this interpretation:

By paralleling the will as a source of movement in the human being with force in nature, Schopenhauer attempts to link force to human introspection and thereby make it explainable and knowable [...] *the transference of will to natural objects* as force and the explanation of force on that basis [...] i.e. *transferring by analogy that which is most knowable to that which is less knowable* (“Force in Nature”, 156).<sup>4</sup>

Put simply, we extend by analogy the cognition of our inner bodily activity and apply it to our understanding of the hidden inner nature of the world and the things around us. More specifically, the consciousness of one’s own act of willing constitutes a direct insight into one’s own inner processes. However, in order to gain insight into others’ inner working (i.e. of their inner drives, motivations, and what comes to manifestation), one has to take others’ inner processes to be in some way analogous to one’s own.

The issue with this interpretation is that the resultant cognition is not a qualitatively distinct or uniquely different kind; it is simply mediated by analogical thinking, i.e. it results from the awareness of *some observed or inferred similarity*. If so, then it is to be conceded that we have not yet succeeded in establishing that “the inner and primordial element in everything is *identical in essence*” (WWR 2, 306, my emphasis). We have not yet demonstrated that, for Schopenhauer, the world and the bodies outside are the will in essence. According to Atwell,

This should not really be surprising, given the fact that one’s own body as object belongs entirely to the world as representation and that, in Schopenhauer’s view, no examination of anything as representation yields access to anything beyond or other than representation  
(*Schopenhauer and the Character of the World*, 91).

Atwell suggests a solution to this impasse without, however, spelling it out explicitly:

Possibly, then, the attribution of will to outer bodies has to commence with a conception of one’s own body in a totally different light, in one wholly unlike

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<sup>4</sup>Carus boldly claims that ultimately Schopenhauer’s “attempt to know the ‘inner essence of the world’ fails in view of the fact that there is no access to it beyond the principle of sufficient reason” (“Force in Nature”, 156). I disagree and offer my solution to this issue in Section 4.

that of object; and possibly this attribution does not proceed by means of inference, or at least not by inference in accord with any argument by analogy (*Schopenhauer and the Character of the World*, 91).

### 3. Against the prevailing interpretation

In the remaining sections of the paper, I will provide an alternative interpretation of Schopenhauer's attribution of will to outer bodies by incorporating and expanding on Atwell's suggestion. However, to substantiate my positive interpretation, I first need to establish a number of points.

First, in addition to understandings of body as object of perception, or as the locus of sensations and the import of perceiving, Schopenhauer's conception, as highlighted in Section 1, also stresses the importance of having the capacity to feel one's own body as activity.

Second, as I have demonstrated in Section 2, scholars have a hard time addressing the question of transference, because, as I want to demonstrate in what follows, they are misguided to assume that inner cognition is non-representational. The reason for this interpretive mishap is, in my view, to be attributed to scholars' neglect of Schopenhauer's conception of the nature of cognition.<sup>5</sup> I will now present a case against non-representationalism about inner awareness.

Among the advocates of non-representationalism, Dennis Vanden Auweele, for instance, claims that inner cognition is "non-representational since it is independent of the principle of sufficient reason [i.e. the forms of space, time, and causality that characterize representation]" (*Schopenhauer's Pessimism*, 55, the parenthetical expression is mine).<sup>6</sup> However, this, as Janaway notes, brings forth a crucial question regarding the nature of inner cognition: "How can there be a way of knowing about oneself which is not a matter of representation?" (*Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 192). Vanden Auweele is aware of this issue, for he repeats the same question in different words, yet more emphatically: "A type of [cognition] that is characterized as 'not representational' but 'mediated' might appear contradictory: how can [cognition] be mediated but not based on a representation?" (*Schopenhauer's Pessimism*, 48). While his reasoning is not entirely clear, it appears that Vanden Auweele contends that the will does not occupy a particular

<sup>5</sup>Perhaps I should single David W. Hamlyn out from the rest of the scholars, as he explicitly notes that, for Schopenhauer, "we cannot know of agency simply by way of representations, *even if representations are involved in some way*, through the body, in what we are conscious of in action" ("Schopenhauer and Knowledge", 52, my emphasis). However, as far as I am aware, Hamlyn does not offer an account of how representations relate to acts of will.

<sup>6</sup>Vanden Auweele's language is vague and contradictory. He also states that inner knowledge is "largely independent of the principle of sufficient reason" (*Schopenhauer's Pessimism*, 55, my emphasis), or that it is "to some extent non-representational" (*Schopenhauer's Pessimism*, 49, my emphasis). However, if I understand Vanden Auweele right, he does not want to argue for the strong thesis that inner knowledge is wholly non-representational.

position in space and time, nor is it subject to causal laws, and hence he proposes to understand our awareness of our will not as representation, but as a kind of direct, bodily sense, which breaks free from the representational realm. It is possible to find some support for this in Schopenhauer: “But there is no extension, shape, causality given to me immediately (in the general feeling of the body for instance, or in inner self-consciousness) in a way that would then coincide with my being itself [...]” (WWR 2, 9). Here Schopenhauer is saying that inner awareness does not present us with a particular object at some determinate spatio-temporal loci. Or, put differently, one’s inner activity is not among the objects one perceives.

However, for Schopenhauer, time is the primary form of our introspective awareness of our own causal efficacy over our bodies and mental states. In other words, we become aware of our own will in a temporal manner. “Time is thus”, Schopenhauer holds, “the form that makes self-cognition (*Selbsterkenntniß*) possible for the individual will” (WWR 2, 39). Because, for Schopenhauer, time is a form of representation within the intellect, and inner cognition is possible only through time, we cannot sensibly speak of some form of non-representational cognition of the body.

Another non-representationalist, Ivan Soll, raises a similar concern, though in his case it is connected with his concern for the presence of the subject-object dichotomy in the self-conscious experience of one’s will. He remarks:

Since for Schopenhauer the subject–object dichotomy is the most fundamental structure of all representation, it is crucial for him to claim that it is absent in one’s experience of one’s own will if he is to claim that this experience is not representational. He suggests that an introspective consideration of our experience of our acts of will support this claim

(“Schopenhauer on the Will as the Window to the World” 136).

Soll attributes to Schopenhauer the thesis that it is only in one’s experience of oneself as will that the subject–object dichotomy dissolves. This means that one does not stand to one’s awareness of willing in the relation of observer.<sup>7</sup> In the first volume of WWR, Schopenhauer makes remarks that support this thesis. He says: “We immediately recognize our own individuality in the essence of this immediate consciousness that has no form, not even that of subject and object” (WWR 1, §22, 133).

It is clear that, in the above passage, Schopenhauer understands inner awareness to be non-representational (in the sense of being wholly immediate and cognitively unconditioned), as it is free from all form, even that of subject and object, which he takes it to be the most essential form of representation (WWR

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<sup>7</sup>Certainly one can find select passages in Schopenhauer that seem to confirm this reading. But close attention to Schopenhauer’s more robust conception of the act of will undermines Soll’s interpretation: “Everyone will soon become aware, *on observing his own self-consciousness*, that *its object* is at all times his own willing” (FW I, 11, my emphasis).

1, §17, 114). This is then consistent with Soll's suggestion that, for Schopenhauer, inner cognition is free from the subject-object dichotomy. But how can we think of cognition independently of the subject-object relation? To cognize is to cognize something; thus, cognition requires object or content of thought.

I maintain that the position Schopenhauer takes in WWR 1, §22, 133 does not reflect his more considered views on inner awareness—if it did, it would simply clash with much else he says. Aware of the difficulties, Schopenhauer modifies his understanding of inner cognition by noting elsewhere that inner awareness is “the most immediate thing in our consciousness, and thus has *not passed completely into the form of representation* in which object and subject stand opposed to each other” (WWR 1, §21, 130, my emphasis). This suggests that because it has partially passed into the realm of representation, inner awareness is, for Schopenhauer, representational, at least in some minimal sense (i.e. in the sense of being less cognitively conditioned than any other experience). And ultimately, in WWR 2, Schopenhauer explicitly acknowledges that even in self-consciousness, the I, or the self—which is the source of all representations—is not simple, but consists of a representing intellect (subject) and a represented, willing self (object). “And thus”, Schopenhauer concludes, “in inner cognition (*in der innern Erkenntniß*) too there is still a difference between the being in itself of its object and of the perception of the object in the cognitive subject” (WWR 2, 208). In other words, contrary to Soll's contention, in inner cognition, the subject-object dichotomy is never overcome but, quite to the contrary, presupposed.

A close reading reveals that Schopenhauer, at times, steps back from his bold claims and admits that inner awareness is not the awareness of one's own body as it is in-itself. We do not experience our own body “in perfect accordance with its essence; rather [we] cognize it only in its individual acts, which is to say in time, time being the form in which [our] body (like every other object) appears [to us]” (WWR 1, §18, 121). Schopenhauer addresses this point most explicitly in his 1820–1821 Berlin manuscripts, noting that “[t]he will, as we perceive it in ourselves, is not the thing-in-itself, for it only shows itself in individual and successive acts of will; these have time as their form and therefore are already a phenomenon” (MR 3, §98). It is interesting to note that in places Schopenhauer appeared to be distancing himself from his original insight and leaned towards a somewhat Kantian position on the relation between the will and the thing-in-itself.<sup>8</sup> In the second volume of WWR (published in 1844, twenty-six years after the first volume), Schopenhauer now characterizes the will, strictly speaking, not as the thing-in-itself, but rather as that which “stands in its place for us” (WWR 2, 209). It is suggested that what distinguishes the will from all

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<sup>8</sup>For a recent analysis of Schopenhauer's challenging and complex position on the concept of the thing-in-itself, see Özen, “Schopenhauer's Doctrine of the Thing-in-Itself”.

other appearances is that the will is “the closest and clearest *appearance* of the thing in itself” (WWR 2, 208), mediated only by time. In line with this, Schopenhauer adds the following:

[...] even the inner perception we have of our own will in no way provides an exhaustive and adequate cognition (*Erkenntniß*) of the thing in itself [...] *it is tied to the form of the representation*

(WWR 2, 207-208, my emphasis).

In order to grasp the significance of Schopenhauer’s claim in italics in the above passage, we need to consider his general understanding of what specifically cognition is. According to Schopenhauer, cognition in the most basic sense of the term (*Erkenntniß*), “is first and foremost *representation*” (WWR 2, 202). This suggests that inner cognition is, by nature, just as representational as any other form of cognition. To put the same point more technically, all cognition is representational, and inner cognition lacks some features that almost all representations possess, but is still representational. So, even if we assume with Schopenhauer that the will is in some crucial way distinct from representation, our conscious awareness of our will cannot be plausibly described as non-representational since it has, on Schopenhauer’s own admission, an ineliminable representational dimension.

To sum up briefly: against the prevailing interpretation, I have attempted to show on textual grounds that it is misleading to characterize the awareness we have of our will (as well as the kind of cognition this can be said to amount to) as non-representational, because such awareness is, in all its manifestations, always conditioned by temporal succession and the subject–object relation. For Schopenhauer, representation is the only medium of cognition—we necessarily rely on representations (even if minimally) to think and to articulate what we think.

If the notion of non-representational cognition is implausible, however, then the question of transference seems to dissolve. Schopenhauer should not be interpreted as requiring metaphorical or analogical transference, which involves the redirection or conversion of self-cognition to world-understanding. This is not only too demanding, but also, we do not have an appropriate cognitive framework or conceptual tools to achieve this transference and disclose the fundamental philosophical truth. In my view, all Schopenhauer requires, for the metaphysical unriddling of the world, is that we expose the connection between our inner and outer experiences.

#### **4. An alternative interpretation: a priori certainty about the inner nature of things**

On the basis of the above analysis, I would now like to propose that the association of will with outer bodies, or the world, for Schopenhauer, is

based neither on analogical reasoning in which one thing is inferred to be similar to another, or on figurative reasoning which involves establishing some relationship of contiguity between two things, but rather on an a priori certainty (*Sicherheit*) of one's continuing identity with the rest of nature. Because Schopenhauer is not as explicit as one might expect in explaining this crucial phenomenon, typically, scholars altogether dismiss that his conception of will assigns a specific epistemic status to a priori certainty about the inner nature of things. And, as a result, they fail to capture the nuances required to fully make sense of his attribution of will to outer bodies. In *WWR 2*, Schopenhauer provides us with a phenomenology of a kind of cognition that is certain for everyone and partially a priori:

Thus, what is always found in *each* animal consciousness, even in the weakest and most imperfect, indeed the basis of this consciousness, is the direct awareness of a *longing* (albeit at very different degrees) and the alternating satisfaction and non-satisfaction of this longing. We know this a priori to a certain extent. For however wonderfully various the innumerable species of animal might be, however strange we find the form of a new, never-before seen animal species, we nevertheless assume in advance, and with certainty, that we have a deep familiarity—indeed an intimate acquaintance—with its innermost nature. To be precise: we know that the animal *wills*; in fact, we also know *what it wills*, namely existence, well-being, life and propagation: and in presupposing with complete certainty an identity with ourselves, we do not hesitate to attribute to this animal all the affections of the will that we are familiar in ourselves [...] (WWR 2, 215).

Let us begin by noting that, in the above passage, Schopenhauer claims unambiguously that one's cognition about the essence of outer bodies is not reached primarily or exclusively on the basis of observation of similarities or continuities of humans with other bodies, or on the basis of experience. He claims that we are certain, primarily and at least partially on a priori grounds, that all bodies, human and non-human animals, are merely different expressions of the same striving for activity, i.e. the will.

Some issues lurk around the notion of a partially a priori cognition and require clarification. One issue concerns the potentially contradictory nature of this notion. How can something be partially a priori and partially derived from experience?

Elsewhere Schopenhauer makes a similar point by claiming that, "in a sense", "the will is a priori cognition of the body, and the body is *a posteriori* cognition of the will" (WWR 1, §18, 120). One might point out that since the cognition of the will is always mediated by one's experience of one's body, such cognition cannot be a priori. Schopenhauer's seemingly contradictory claims on this front convey a crucial insight into the nature of self-cognition: we are known to ourselves "in two entirely different ways" (WWR 1, §18, 119). We are aware of ourselves as a body in the world or a body among the bodies

of others, hence in an a posteriori fashion. But we are also familiar with our self in our experience of willing, that is to say in time, time being an a priori form of intuition that makes the cognition of the will possible. An underlying assumption of Schopenhauer's argument is that every movement of the will is "immediately and inevitably" a movement of the body: "they are one and the same thing" (WWR 1, §18, 119). This suggests that the cognition we have of our will (which is a priori) cannot be possible without the cognition of our body (which is a posteriori). Hence, for Schopenhauer, the will can be cognized in an a priori way, though not a strictly a priori way.

What Schopenhauer is promoting in WWR 2, 215 is the idea that the cognition we have of our will brings us a "complete certainty" on the basis of which our experience and genuine cognition of the world is possible. To put it more explicitly, the cognition of the will necessarily presupposes bodily situatedness as well as one's active engagement with the world. It is precisely on the basis of such self-cognition one is able to presuppose a priori and "with complete certainty" that the same striving for activity that we experience as our inner essence also characterizes the inner workings of all outer bodies.

Another related issue concerns what the precise relation or proportion between a priori insight and empirical observation is on the issue of the cognition of outer bodies as will. One may legitimately wonder whether Schopenhauer is guilty of relying too heavily on a priori insight, free from empirical considerations.

In WWR 2, 215, Schopenhauer is quick to acknowledge the limits of a priori cognition (cognition acquired independent of experience). He states that "we are confident only in attributing to [the animal] representations in general". That is to say, "we talk confidently about" its outward facial and behavioural expressions of "fear, anger, hatred, love, joy, sadness, yearning, etc.", which "express movements of the will" and hence are "always direct" and relatable to human nature. However, Schopenhauer adds, as the discussion pushes towards "phenomena of pure cognition, we become uncertain", because "we have only an indeterminate and conjectural conception of the exact mode of the cognition of animals, and the exact extent of cognition in a given species". Consequently, Schopenhauer concludes, "it is often difficult to reach an understanding with animals and we can only do so artfully, *with experience and practice*" (my emphasis). So, for Schopenhauer, we cognize the outer bodies as will a priori only to the extent that it is directly deducible from the awareness of our own inner activity. Providing an adequate account of phenomena will however require that our a priori cognition be supplemented by empirical considerations.

With these clarifications in place the discussion turns to the more technically complicated details pertaining to Schopenhauer's position. Schopenhauer's account seems to be facing an immediate problem: one might

point out that the insight described in WWR 2, 215 will not get us very far. More specifically, the insight into oneself, at best, leads to insight into other living beings, human and non-human animals. It is unclear, however, how we should also think of it as providing insight into the essence of objects of inanimate or inorganic nature. For Schopenhauer, the will manifests itself in all scales of existence, and in both organic and inorganic things. "Everything", he claims, "strains and drives towards *existence*, towards *organic* existence if possible, i.e. towards *life*, and then towards the highest possible level of this" (WWR 2, 365).<sup>9</sup> Put differently, at its core and in all its forms and determinations, the will appears as "the drive to life [*Lebenstrieb*]" (WWR 2, 374). One key assumption underlying Schopenhauer's theory is that the will in inanimate matter has a tendency to organize itself into organic life. A caveat is in order here: this should not be thought of as an endorsement of some variant of abiogenesis theory or theory of origin of life (where the basic presumption is that primitive life, i.e. simple organic compounds, arises from non-living matter over a span of millions of years), since Schopenhauer is primarily concerned with metaphysical rather than evolutionary explanations of physical phenomena and natural processes. Schopenhauer illustrates the idea of inorganic matter's tendency towards life and organization with the example of the phenomena of crystallization:

In the development of a crystal we see a beginning, an attempt at life [*einen Versuch zum Leben*], but one that does not succeed because, although it consists of fluidity, like a living thing, this fluidity is not, at the moment of that movement, enclosed in a *skin* as a living thing is, and accordingly a crystal has neither *vesicles* in which that motion can continue, nor anything to divide it from the external world. Thus the momentary motion is instantly gripped by solidification, and only the trace of the motion remains, as the crystal

(Werke 2, 384/WWR 2, 309).

What follows is Schopenhauer's main thesis in the passage above: there is no essential difference in the underlying inner workings between the things of inorganic nature and living beings. The will in all its activity is invariably determined by the same tendency to life. The only (empirically) relevant difference worth noting between them is the following: since inorganic things lack the structural materials that support organic life (e.g. skin or vesicles), unlike organic bodies, they fall short of actualizing the tendency to life. In other words, the tendency to life pervades all of existence, all the way down to the inorganic realm, even if therein this tendency remains latent and unactualized.

The question to be tackled now is, how exactly do we come to recognize the tendency to life in inorganic things, especially given that such tendency

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<sup>9</sup>Schopenhauer employs the term 'life' exclusively as a designation of biological or 'organic' existence: "Only the organic deserves the predicate life" (WWR 2, 308).



seems to be rather counter-intuitive and far less obvious in the inorganic realm than Schopenhauer seems to suppose? As Schopenhauer claims in WWR 2, 215, we are able to recognize intuitively and with complete certainty an identity between ourselves and the objects that surround us and make up the material world. Our cognition of this identity, Schopenhauer assumes, is partially a priori, which implies that it is not entirely independent of any empirical considerations. So I would like to propose that, for Schopenhauer, our intuitive recognition of the tendency to life in all things organic and inorganic is partially a priori and partially derived from experience, in particular by means of attentive direct observation. The most direct textual support for my claim is to be found in the later parts of WWR 2 where Schopenhauer expands upon his characterization of our (partially) a priori intuitive recognition of the will in its blind pursuit of objectivation, which is understood to be fundamentally untied to consciousness or cognition, appearing simply as the tendency to life. In the 23rd chapter of WWR 2, titled “On the Objectivation of the Will in Nature Devoid of Cognition”, Schopenhauer provides various examples as a further illustration of how we “achieve intuitive cognition of the existence and actions of the will in inorganic nature” (WWR 2, 312). One particularly intriguing example involves the fall of a stone. Here is the relevant excerpt:

[The will] announces itself just as directly in the falling of a stone as in the deeds of a person: the difference is only that its individual expression is the result of a motive in the second case but of a mechanically acting cause in the first [...] *This identity of the fundamental essence is even apparent to the senses when we look carefully at something like a body thrown off balance which, due to its shape, rolls back and forth for a long time until it finds its balance again, and we are struck by how alive it looks, and we feel immediately that something analogous to the foundation of life is at work here*

(WWR 2, 311, my emphasis).

Fundamental to Schopenhauer’s metaphysics is the phenomenological insight that we not only spontaneously perceive causality in the movements of inanimate things, but also intuitively attribute a tendency to life or animacy to them. The latter in turn helps us bridge “the border between the organic and the inorganic”, which is, Schopenhauer observes, “the most sharply drawn in the whole of nature” (WWR 2, 308). As hinted at earlier above in WWR 2, 215, this intuitive attribution of animacy to outer bodies proceeds from a partially a priori awareness of the essence of life and nature, marked by a feeling of certainty that is, in an important sense, independent of any inference that begins with observations, such as the argument from analogy.

However, one might suspect that Schopenhauer’s use of the phrase “something analogous to the foundation of life” in the above-quoted passage is enough to revive the claim that his attribution of will to outer bodies is undeniably based on analogical inference. I disagree with this for the reasons outlined below. First, a close attention to Schopenhauer’s

terminology actually indicates that this suspicion is unwarranted. In the next sentence following the sentence with the mention of that phrase in WWR 2, 311, Schopenhauer replaces the term ‘analogous’ with ‘identical’: “This is of course the universal natural force which, being in itself identical with the *will*, becomes the soul, as it were, of a very short quasi-life”.

The term ‘identical’ refers to exact uniformity. What an inference from analogy is supposed to establish is a relation of similarity and not of exact uniformity or essential identity among things. Analogical inference can be best viewed as supplying some plausible evidence, but not complete assurance, of the essence of things in general. It seems conspicuous that in the above-quoted two sentences Schopenhauer is suggesting an intuitive recognition of identity rather than a recognition of some similarity. Moreover, this consciousness of the identity of the will in all its manifestations is affectively charged and accompanied by a feeling of certitude and the perception that one’s intuitions are correct (and not merely plausible), despite the lack of direct rational reflection or empirical analysis.

Now, it is true that Schopenhauer often evokes the term ‘analogy’ in relation to his discussions of the manifestation of the will in the world of appearance (which is, I should admit, rather misleading and confusing). And Schopenhauer’s frequent appeals to analogy is perhaps the main reason why one could be inclined to think that Schopenhauer cannot be altogether exonerated from the suspicion that he primarily draws analogical inferences to establish the claim that the world is my will. Unless we attempt to clarify Schopenhauer’s exact meaning behind his use of the term ‘analogy’, the aforementioned suspicion holds no water. It should be noted, at this point, that most scholars are aware that, when it comes to Schopenhauer, the textual situation is not always as straightforward as one might expect, however, it is also not so bleak. Let me then address more closely the interpretive issue that I think has so far misled scholars about Schopenhauer’s understanding of the world-as-will. In the second book of WWR 1, titled “The world as will, first consideration. The objectivation of the will”, Schopenhauer explains his methodology by stating that he intends to use the insight into our own inner experience (i.e. the most immediate consciousness of our own agency or inner activity) “as a key to the essence of every appearance in nature” (WWR 1, §19, 125). And he adds immediately that “when it comes to objects other than our own body, objects that have [...] been given to us [...] only as representations in our consciousness, we will judge them on *the analogy with our body*” (WWR 1, §19, 125, my emphasis; see also WWR 2, 287).

Schopenhauer claims that the unity of the will makes itself known beneath the diversity and multiplicity of all phenomena. And for this reason, he contends, “there is a *perfect analogy* in the law-likeness of both [organic and inorganic] appearances” (WWR 2, 309, my emphasis).

At this point we seem to be facing a crucial interpretative issue. Schopenhauer unambiguously claims that we cognize partially a priori that the will that we encounter in self-consciousness also manifests itself as a tendency to life in bodies other than our own, especially animals. But then elsewhere he also rather unambiguously suggests that the cognition of other bodies, whether organic or inorganic, is derived from the observed analogy with the human body. How are we to make sense of this apparent contradiction? It is remarkable that no scholar has ever, to my knowledge, discussed this matter fully. My analysis above reveals that the apparent contradiction is only apparent since, upon closer inspection, it is unmistakably clear that Schopenhauer assigns to analogy a role only subsidiary to intuitive cognition, that analogy plays a different, and less important, role in his thought. In other words, Schopenhauer just wants to help his reader to build some intuition for his central claims through analogy. He defines the function that analogy is supposed to serve as follows: "Things that cannot be approached directly must be made clear by an analogy" (WWR 2, 359). Although it is impossible that the inner nature of the objects of representation should ever be cognized entirely a priori, though, Schopenhauer contends, it is cognized partially a priori. And what we intuit on a partially a priori basis can further be made more accessible and intelligible with the use of analogies and theoretical explanations. In other words, analogy can serve as a guide to our understanding of the world and the objects that comprise it, but, and this is important, it cannot by itself supply the ground for explaining and justifying the essence of things.

Taking a clue from the analogy with our own inner nature, it becomes feasible to expose in a more systematic fashion the workings of nature and the universe at large, and thus mold the cognition of our inner experience into something beyond a mere intuition, into an objective, conceptual representation, which belongs to the sphere of abstract cognition and scientific thought. Our systematic empirical investigations enable us to see the will manifesting itself even at the lowest grade of inorganic nature, as a blind impulse, a tendency to life that is in itself devoid of any intelligibility or cognition (see WWR 2, 309-311). Put differently, it is the business of natural sciences to clarify and further investigate, by means of an analogical connection with our inner activity, the conditions and possibility of life as well as the primary driving forces operating within the phenomenal sphere (see also WWR 1, §27, 178). For instance, we see how analogy functions as a means of comparing distinct entities (i.e. the movement of human and celestial bodies) and enhancing the clarity of our insight into the essence of things.<sup>10</sup>

With that being said, it is important to add the caveat that Schopenhauer's above remarks about the role of analogy in relation to world-understanding

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<sup>10</sup>See WWR 2, 312 for Schopenhauer's discussion of the orbital rotations of the moon and the earth around the sun.

should by no means be taken as implying analogical transference of self-cognition to world-understanding in any sense whatsoever. Strictly speaking, analogical transference does not proceed from any a priori intuition (whether purely or only partially a priori). Rather, it presumes the possibility of comparative judgments of similarity acquired by a posteriori or experiential insight, i.e. it is based on observation and empirical connections. As typically understood, an analogy is meant to transfer intuitions from a familiar domain to some unknown or unfamiliar context that needs explanation or justification. However, for Schopenhauer, the analogy's function is not to transfer or explain any experience, but rather to validate and further illustrate that which is given to us a priori, and hence already cognized by us subjectively through inner awareness.

Let us now briefly recapitulate the main result of our discussion so far. We have shown that there is some degree of a priori intuition we have of the world-as-will that does not emerge from observation but nevertheless must be supplemented by further reflection on the phenomena in order for such intuition to carry theoretical weight and serve as the basis for scientific investigations. Put differently, I argue that Schopenhauer's attribution of will to outer bodies does not proceed by means of inference, whether analogical or not, which is incompatible with the prevailing scholarly view that suggests otherwise. It should also be firmly kept in mind that those who still insist on a strictly analogical reading may do so by simply omitting the presence of an a priori element in Schopenhauer's characterization of our grasp of a basic tendency to life in all phenomena, i.e. the partially a priori awareness of the unity and identity of the will in all of its appearances.

Having laid out my interpretation of Schopenhauer, I would now like to reflect more particularly on his underlying assumption of the primacy of the conscious subject over everything objective. This in turn will hopefully contribute to a deeper appreciation and comprehension of Schopenhauer's characterization of the world-as-will.

According to Schopenhauer, "in beings with cognition, the individual is the bearer of the cognitive subject, and this is the bearer of the world" (WWR 1, §61, 391). In less technical language, what this means is that there exists outside the individual a material world of objects, including other individuals in the environment, relating and corresponding to the subject's representations. Because, for the human being, there can be no other world than that which exists in her or his representation of the world, the individual is always conscious of it only as her or his representation, i.e. as dependent on her or his own essence and existence (WWR 1, §61, 391). This, Schopenhauer thinks, gives us a "reason why we must emphatically deny the dogmatist's declaration that the external world is real apart from the subject" (WWR 1, §5, 17). By presuming that the character of our experience of the world is mediated by the activity of the mind, i.e. by the transformation of

disorganized sensations into organized mental representations via the two fundamental forms of space and time (as well as the principle of sufficient reason), Schopenhauer in effect places the consciousness of being the condition of all that is, both of one's own being and of the world of which one is aware, at the centre of philosophy.

Schopenhauer concedes that we always experience the world through a mediating set of conceptual categories, i.e. at the level of our representational cognition. This creates an issue, however. The inner nature of things is not comprehensible at all "along the path of mere *cognition* and *representation*, because these always come to things *from the outside*, and hence must always remain *on the outside*" (WWR 2, 15). So Schopenhauer needs to get across the idea that we possess some a priori certainty about the inner nature of things. But how can such awareness originate a priori or *from within* the individual and not directly from outward experience? For Schopenhauer, the answer is straightforward. Only in so far as every cognitive subject is "at the same time an individual and hence a part of nature", is it possible to discover the inner nature of all things directly, in self-consciousness alone, as will (WWR 2, 382). More specifically Schopenhauer's claim is that because the individual (as the cognitive subject) is the conditioning bearer of the world (as representation), and because a human is part of nature and its processes, one can, Schopenhauer maintains, identify automatically, and partially on a priori grounds, that the same striving we experience directly in the form of our own bodies is also present in nature and everything belonging to it, i.e. the metaphysical unity of the will in nature, which relates us with all beings (WWR 2, 15 & 336).

But how exactly does the cognizing subject's status as (i) the representing condition of the world, and (ii) a part of nature, generate this a priori cognition? How exactly does the individual arrive at cognition of other parts of nature? The insight that the world depends on the subject's representation of it, according to Schopenhauer, is "the proper point of departure for philosophy", because, Schopenhauer assumes, "everywhere the root of things must lie in what they are for themselves, which is to say in the subjective" (WWR 2, 502). As we touched on above, this insight arises out of the realization that the world has no independent existence in that it does not occupy an independent realm of existence distinct from that of the cognizing subject but rather is ontologically continuous with the latter. However, the cognizing subject, which relates to the world through the medium of representation, "is a mere function of the brain and not our ownmost self" (WWR 2, 252). "Our true self", according to Schopenhauer, "is what lies behind this" (WWR 2, 252). Since the cognizing subject is one particular objectivation of the will to life itself (WWR 1, §54, 334), the self is able to conceive of the world as something different from a mere series of representations. Schopenhauer's central insight is that the will is that which decidedly determines all our actions and the feelings or sensations that precede them. It is the condition of the exercise of all faculties, including

the very cognitive faculties by which any representation of the world appears to the subject's mind. This entails that, as the bearer of the world, the subject is not merely directed at the world through representations in his or her mind, but he or she also experiences within himself or herself the innermost essence of nature as a whole because he or she is a part of nature. We apprehend the world a priori by means of a specific kind of self-awareness that goes beyond a practical self-awareness involved in ordinary conscious activity. Schopenhauer alleges that "we cannot get rid of the feeling that the world is no less in us than we are in it" (WWR 2, 503). Of course, for some this may still prompt the question: how can one have a priori certainty about things that exist independently of oneself? That question, however, becomes moot, because Schopenhauer would say that, at the fundamental level, things are not independent of each other but that somehow this is hidden from our ordinary awareness. Hence Schopenhauer's remark: "Fundamentally however we are much more at one with the world than we normally think: its inner essence is our will; its appearance our representation" (WWR 2, 502). Thus, ultimately for Schopenhauer, cognizing the world is dependent on being with the world, on thinking, feeling, and acting as a part of the world. Schopenhauer holds that his account is phenomenologically plausible, since "every cognizing individual is in fact—and finds himself to be—the entire will to life, the in-itself of the world itself, the condition that completes the world as representation" (WWR 1, §61, 392). To sum up this point about a priori certainty in Schopenhauer's own words:

Nature itself, which is always and everywhere truthful, gives [the individual] this cognition spontaneously and independently of all reflection, as simple and immediately certain

(WWR 1, §61, 392).

Schopenhauer appears well aware of his puzzling philosophical reflections and exorbitant pronouncements, and thus he simply embraces the critical reception of his system. In one place he makes the following intriguing remark:

That the essence of forces in inorganic nature is identical with will in us presents itself with complete certainty and as demonstrated truth to anyone who seriously reflects on it. That it appears paradoxical merely indicates the importance of the discovery

(WN, "Physical astronomy", fn. 104).

At this point, Schopenhauer's goal is not so much to convince the skeptic of his own position by means of further argumentation. His strategy is merely to remind us that there is no sufficient prospect of an argument to the contrary: "After all, what other sort of existence or reality could we attribute to the rest of the corporeal world?" (WWR 1, §19, 125–126).

## 5. Concluding remarks

We are now in a position to conclude. One way to make sense of Schopenhauer's attribution of will to outer bodies is to suggest that such attribution involves a process of figurative or analogical transference of meaning or cognition from one domain (non-representational) to the other (representational). All transference suggests or relies on a gap between one form of understanding and other modes. I have shown that this is not the case with Schopenhauer's attribution of will to outer bodies. Furthermore, as Atwell correctly observes, "arguments by analogy are notoriously weak; they yield at most a probable conclusion" (*Schopenhauer and the Character of the World*, 89). Schopenhauer's attribution of will to outer bodies, however, as I have shown, signifies an a priori certainty of cognizing some truth about the world, not a presumption or probability, which comes in degrees, and which may be rebutted by evidence or substantial inference otherwise.

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