

SCHOPENHAUER: an evaluation of his *theory of will*

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Abstract

The aims of this paper are twofold: firstly, to give the reader a comprehensive- but not exhaustive- understanding of Schopenhauer's theory of will, and, secondly, to elucidate certain problems inherent in this theory. Schopenhauer's epistemology, dual aspect ontology, aesthetics, ethics, and pessimism are explored. Additionally, a cursory exposition of Kant's metaphysics is presented, along with Schopenhauer's critique of this. Possible solutions to problems in his theory are expounded and subsequently critiqued. Most salient of these problems is his identification of the will with the Kantian thing-in-itself. I argue that Schopenhauer's theory of will contradicts the Kantian confines on metaphysical knowledge. Consequently, and in light of his own epistemology, there are serious, if not intractable, problems with his contentions that the will is the Kantian thing-in-itself, and it is knowable.

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Abbreviations:

Abbreviations within the text:

PSR: principle of sufficient reason

Abbreviations within footnotes (works cited):

FR: *On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason*

WWR: *The World as Will and Representation*

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