

THE PHILOSOPHY OF PESSIMISM:
THE RELATION OF SCHOPENHAUER'S
PHILOSOPHY TO HARDY'S ART

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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**THE PHILOSOPHY OF PESSIMISM: The relation
of Schopenhauer's philosophy to Hardy's art**

by
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ABSTRACT

Arthur Schopenhauer takes Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, particularly its transcendental idealism and the distinction between phenomena and things-in-themselves, as the point of departure for his own philosophy. However, Schopenhauer rejects Kant's method of deducing the thing-in-itself and he places his own idealism on an empirical foundation. Ethics also, according to Schopenhauer, is properly justified only from the existential standpoint of human subjectivity always "rooted" in the world. The upshot of Schopenhauer's philosophy is a dark, and profoundly pessimistic, picture of the human condition wherein redemptive possibilities must rely solely on human consciousness, on the denial of the manifest world, and on self-abnegation or complete suspension of the will-to-live through that freedom which consciousness is.

Schopenhauer's influence on writers and thinkers of the nineteenth century is well-documented in the literature and his philosophy of pessimism is there assigned an important role in the artistic development of Thomas Hardy. Yet, while key Schopenhauerian themes recur throughout Hardy's oeuvre, Schopenhauer's impact on Hardy is less decisive than is sometimes held to be the case. Indeed, a Schopenhauerian reading of Hardy's later works clearly

shows that the artist's mature thought is quite distinctly un-Schopenhauerian.

Chapter one addresses Schopenhauer's epistemology and metaphysics along with their background in Kantian philosophy and Schopenhauer's criticism of the latter. Chapter two is a discussion of Schopenhauer's ethics of compassion and his doctrine of asceticism. Chapters three and four then consider Hardy's art in relation to Schopenhauerian philosophy, especially with regard to Schopenhauer's theory of perception, metaphysics of nature and of character, his theory of freedom and his doctrine of self-abnegation. Chapter five summarizes those views which emerge from the foregoing discussion concerning the relation of Schopenhauer's philosophy to Hardy's art.

I would like to acknowledge a great indebtedness to my thesis supervisor, Professor F.L. Jackson, for his unstinting assistance and encouragement. I also wish to express my gratitude to my mother, Mary M. Solo-Power, now deceased, who set me on this path, and to my husband, Eric N. Dawe, who helped me stay the course. Finally, thank-you to my sister, Elizabeth, and my friend, Margaret Rosse, for your often proffered, and always appreciated, support.

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INTRODUCTION

While Schopenhauer is the acknowledged intellectual parent of a whole lineage of major thinkers, including Nietzsche, Freud, Heidegger and Wittgenstein, his relation to artists like Turgenev, Zola, Maupassant, Tolstoy, Proust, Conrad, Wagner, Shaw, and Mann is also well documented (Magee, 262-85,326-90). Most significant for the literary output of Thomas Hardy, however, is that Schopenhauer's philosophy appeared to offer an at least subjective escape from an existence perceived to be ultimately irrational through a pessimistic view of the world, a morality of sympathy and the cultivation of aesthetic detachment. It is precisely these elements in Schopenhauer's philosophy which confirmed and reinforced Hardy's own essentially pessimistic views giving these a philosophical foundation. The question to be addressed here is twofold: to what extent is Hardy's artistic output influenced by Schopenhauer's philosophy? and to what extent is Hardy's art illustrative of the epistemological, ontological, aesthetic, and ethical ideas of this philosopher?

On the nature and origin of Hardy's pessimism, Mary Ann Gauthier Kelly says in her doctoral thesis:

Hardy's pessimism originated in his own temperament and was, no doubt reinforced by his observations of the world around him, which

included the general atmosphere left in the wake of the revolutions on the continent and the poverty and degradation resulting from the industrial Revolution. (Hardy's Reading, 1980, p. iv)

In addition to thus stating that Hardy's pessimism is first and foremost a state of mind supported by personal and historical factors, Kelly also says that Schopenhauer's philosophy is the most apparent source of Hardy's later, more distilled views. Kelly argues that Hardy's novel, Tess of the D'Urbervilles, clearly illustrates Schopenhauerian ideas of the nature of perception, the determinism of existence, the pervasiveness of the blind, indifferent, ever-striving will, and the transitory nature of happiness in a purposeless universe (p. vi-viii).

Schopenhauer's adaptation of the Kantian epistemology uses the German term Vorstellung ("representation") to characterize his own theory that the world of phenomena is an appearance (or illusion) wholly dependent upon the nature of the intellect or knowing subject. Schopenhauer argues that behind this illusion (the world as representation) lies the "thing-in-itself" which transcends the forms of appearance and therefore of our cognitive functions, and hence which Kant himself maintains as unknowable. But Schopenhauer identifies the Kantian thing-in-itself with the will in ourselves and it is from the standpoint of the subject, not merely of knowing, but also

metaphysics of the phenomenal world. In his attempt to explain the whole of experience, Schopenhauer says that while the world is representation, phenomena, it is also will. According to Schopenhauer, the whole of the manifest world, all of nature and her phenomena, is the objectification of the will, the blind indifferent, irrational will, or will-to-live, that permeates and underlies all existence.

The only possibility of redemption in the face of this one, indivisible, eternal, insatiable and insufferable will-to-live which manifests itself in all phenomena is through an immediate knowledge on the part of the individual of these philosophical truths. Such knowledge, Schopenhauer holds, can lead to a free and total relinquishment of the will-to-live, or denial of the will-to-live, in which all willing, hence all suffering, ceases and in which death, when it finally comes, is gladly embraced with complete and total resignation. It is finally this Schopenhauerian doctrine of renunciation, together with the knowledge and self-conscious freedom implicit in it, which Kelly finds powerfully illustrated by Hardy's heroine, Tess.

Helen Garwood also argues that Hardy's art presents "an excellent illustration of Schopenhauer," particularly with reference to the doctrine of the striving, insatiable

will or will-to-live as the real or inner nature of the phenomenal world and the purposelessness of existence implicit in such a doctrine.¹ However, Garwood points out that Hardy never fully embraces Schopenhauer's final outcome of a purposeless view of life, asceticism and renunciation. "In Hardy we have not renunciation, but resignation" (Garwood, p. 66). Rather, Garwood says, Hardy offers a quite different solution to the purposelessness of existence which can only be understood in the context of an absolute determinism (in the forms of Fate, Chance etc.) wherein one can discover neither final purpose nor lasting peace. It is here, Garwood insists, where the "cause" or fault of all the world's ills, together with any possible remedy, is yet to be sought beyond the world and man's existence in it, that Hardy takes his leave of Schopenhauer. Hardy ultimately depicts the world as resulting from the workings of the Immanent and Unconscious Will, described in all its complexity in The Dynasts (Garwood, p. 31).² In such a world as pictured there,

¹Helen Garwood, Thomas Hardy: An Illustration of the Philosophy of Schopenhauer (Folcroft Press, 1911; rpt. 1969), p. 82.

²Evidently, Hardy borrows this terminology from Eduard von Hartmann. In her doctoral dissertation (pp. v, 60ff, and elsewhere), Kelly also discusses Hardy's reading of Hartmann's adaptation of Schopenhauer in The Philosophy of the Unconscious, which was translated by W. C. Coupland in 1884.

Hardy presents the single ray of hope and basis for optimism: the conscious-to-be of the heretofore unconscious, cosmic will.

While a review of the literature confirms Schopenhauer's influence on Hardy's art, I hope to demonstrate that Hardy's overall vision is, in fact, far from Schopenhauerian. Specifically, Schopenhauer's doctrines regarding objective vs. existential self-consciousness, and relative vs. transcendental freedom, get no airing in Hardy. Accordingly, Hardy's determinism ends up both more and less extensive than Schopenhauer's, Hardy's pessimism both more and less thoroughgoing, irredeemable, etc. There is, indeed, a discernible development wherein Hardy's art moves from a loosely Schopenhauerian philosophical position to positions progressively less so. I will trace this development in Hardy's art, beginning with what appears as a faithful reflection of Schopenhauer's views on the inexorability of character, and I will show how Hardy progressively strays from Schopenhauer's views and instead remains locked in a romantic-cum-Darwinian view of the world finally representing an immanentism wholly at odds with Schopenhauer's philosophy. I intend to demonstrate thereby that Hardy never transcends the empirical/phenomenal contexts of personalities and circumstances. Specifically,

Schopenhauer's metaphysical theory of the will, particularly with respect to the absolute freedom it is, never emerges in Hardy's art.

I wish only to indicate here how immensely useful, and imminently dangerous, it is to view Hardy's artistic interpretation of Schopenhauer's philosophical position as in any but a purely aesthetic sense adequate to that position. On the contrary, Hardy's literature, without denying anything of its own power and originality, may be said to actually distort certain of Schopenhauer's views in so far as the artist's work has been considered by some writers and critics as illustrative or "representative" of the philosopher's thought. The present thesis argues that while Hardy's writings reveal some sympathy with many of Schopenhauer's views, they are not his own and that any "philosophy" that underlies Hardy's novels is Hardy's rather than Schopenhauer's. Before turning to the work of Thomas Hardy and its relation to Schopenhauer's philosophy, I will first consider separately Schopenhauer's most important contributions to philosophical thought.

1. SCHOPENHAUER: THE METAPHYSICAL BACKGROUND

In his own attempt to discover and explain the inner nature of the world, Schopenhauer first recognizes, here following Kant, that to be an object is to be an object for a subject. In accepting subjectivity as a given, presupposed by objectivity of whatever kind, Schopenhauer is justified in posing the question: What constitutes a reason or ground of all being for a subject, given the subject as the condition of that being? Relative to the knowing consciousness, the world is not without substance, meaning, or necessity in Schopenhauer's philosophy. He only insists that one must begin with the knowing subject, and with the subject's "rootedness" in the world, in order to discover how a world, and one with such attributes as substantial, necessitated, and meaningful properly ascribed to it, is at all. This quite unique combination of transcendental idealism with an existential standpoint, the embodied subject, would profoundly influence the course of nineteenth and twentieth century thought.

While various commentators and translators of Schopenhauer's works feel free to suggest different writings by Schopenhauer as both central to his philosophy as a whole and, at the same time, as useful introductions

to it,³ Schopenhauer himself clearly tells his reader that his philosophy, in its entirety, is the elaboration of a single thought and he even specifies where that thought is to be found originally stated. Schopenhauer insists that his doctoral thesis of 1813, On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason, preceding his main work by some five years, is the "introduction and propaedeutic"⁴ of his entire philosophy and is everywhere presupposed by him. It is in The Fourfold Root that we find the explicit statement of Schopenhauer's epistemological argument and the starting-point of his metaphysics, aesthetics and ethics.

Schopenhauer considers the importance of his doctoral thesis to rest on the fact that here he follows, corrects where he considers it necessary, and enriches, Kant's own philosophy of Reason. Schopenhauer's later philosophy thereby has a firm foundation in his early work and this latter already contains the possibility of a resolution of some of the problems arising from Kant's philosophy. In the lengthy appendix to the first volume of his main work,

³See the introduction by the translator, Konstantin Kolenda, Essay on the Freedom of the Will (New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1960), p. vii.

⁴Arthur Schopenhauer, The World as Will and Representation, 2 vols, trans. E.F.J. Payne (New York: Dover, 1969), I p. xiv. Unless otherwise noted, all subsequent quotations are from this edition of Schopenhauer's main work, hereafter abbreviated 'WR'.

Schopenhauer speaks of his "deeply-felt veneration for and gratitude to Kant,"⁵ whom he extols as a true genius whose chief merit is the distinction of the phenomenon from the thing-in-itself based on his transcendental idealism. In his first Critique, Kant's accomplishment is two-fold: on the one hand, he lays down what rational or theoretical understanding contributes to objective knowledge of the world as a condition of the possibility of knowledge as such, while on the other hand, in establishing the limits of human understanding, he also limits the reach and scope of knowledge.

Kant's greatest merit is the distinction of the phenomenon from the thing-in-itself, based on the proof that between things and us there always stands the intellect, and that on this account they cannot be known according to what they may be in themselves. (WR 1, Appx, pp. 416-17)

It is Descartes who first establishes, through the cogito and the distinction of mind from body, the subjective principle which forms the theme of modern philosophy. Thus, consciousness has only to do with 'ideas', including certain innate ideas, and not with things as such. This applies equally to sensibility, imagination and the understanding. Following Descartes, the empiricists generally viewed the role of the understanding in our knowledge of the world as essentially

⁵Ibid., I, p. 417.

passive. Assigning primacy to existence rather than consciousness, insisting that there is nothing in consciousness that is not first in sensation, the empiricists reject the Cartesian notion of innate ideas. Human consciousness, originally an empty vessel, passively receives 'impressions' from the external world. On the basis of the passive synthesis of these single impressions, the understanding builds 'ideas' which thus all originate with experience. Empiricism develops the appearance/reality model in a certain passive way which seeks to account for the categories of objective structures empirically, that is, without reference to any act of human consciousness itself.

But with Hume's philosophy, empiricists must accept the fact that conclusions reached through empirical reasoning have reference only to our ideas, i.e., impressions, and not to things as such existing independently of our perception of them. There is no way to bridge the gap between the world and our perception of it. There can be no appeal, as in Cartesian philosophy, to the veracity of God, a transcendent and therefore imperceptible being, to provide the bridge. The concepts of causality, substance, etc. are beliefs arrived at through experience and the connection of these ideas with objects as such is without any foundation in empirical

reasoning. After Hume, the possibility of objective and exact knowledge becomes problematic. The problem Hume raises is essentially a logical one, regarding the foundations of knowledge through induction and probability, and Kant's Critique of Pure Reason is the first, and certainly the most influential attempt to resolve it.

Kant's central thesis is that objective-empirical knowledge of the world is not in any way a knowledge of 'things themselves' but rather such knowledge is wholly constituted in consciousness limited to phenomena. In criticizing and correcting the empiricists' account of the phenomenon/thing-in-itself dichotomy, Kant insists that while the content of knowledge remains empirically given, the 'objective' world as such is constituted through categories of an active, synthetic understanding, thereby retaining and strengthening the limitation of knowledge to the phenomenal. Kant, unlike the empiricists, views the human mind in its relation to objects as something more than a passive receptivity to sense-impressions upon which ideas are built. In the first place, Kant demonstrates the ideality of space and time as pure subjective forms of sensible intuition. In his further thorough and systematic analysis of the conditions of knowledge moreover, the human intellect plays an active, not passive, role in the constitution of objects, providing the determinate rules

and principles whereby objects of experience are constituted explicitly as objects in and for consciousness and not otherwise. He argues that the concepts or categories of the understanding are constitutive of objects-in-general, as principles of objective synthesis among phenomena. Here then is what is meant by Kant's 'Copernican Revolution' which entails redefining 'objects' exclusively as 'objects-for-consciousness'. It is through the agency of consciousness that we perceive objects as having spatial and temporal characteristics and view them as acting on one another in causal relations.

For Kant, there is no knowledge of reality beyond that given in experience. He argues, however, that the possibility of all knowledge depends nonetheless on a priori conditions lying in the human intellect itself, which conditions have no other application except to empirical knowledge (knowledge of phenomena). This argument is crucial to the philosophy of Schopenhauer, who summarizes its main points in the following manner:

He show[s] that the laws which reign with inviolable necessity in existence, i.e., in experience generally, are not to be applied to deduce and explain existence itself; that thus the validity of these laws is only relative, i.e., only arises after existence; the world of experience in general is already established and present; that consequently these laws cannot be our guide when we come to the explanation of the existence of the world and of ourselves. (WI 11,

pp. 9-10)⁶

Kant draws important distinctions between the human faculties of sensible intuition (in which phenomena are apprehended in space and time), understanding (as the faculty of rules of synthesis whereby the phenomena are constituted according to categories of 'objectivity-in-general'), and reason, which is the source of heuristic principles or regulative ideas governing the ordering of empirical knowledge. He criticizes the standpoint of rationalist or transcendent metaphysics at all three levels: how we only know phenomena and that space and time are not 'real'; how categories of the understanding (cause, substance, etc.) are not names or concepts of anything beyond experience but forms of objective synthesis only; and how the ideas of reason (psychological, cosmological, theological) do not address 'absolute objects' or refer in any way to a 'supersensible' world. The final upshot of the Kantian legacy is that metaphysics, as traditionally conceived, is an impossibility.

Schopenhauer wholly accepts the 'Aesthetic' part of Kant's first critique, with its doctrine of the ideality of space and time shown by Kant to constitute a priori forms

⁶Arthur Schopenhauer, The World as Will and Idea, 3 vols, trans. R.B. Haldane and J. Kemp (London: Routledge, 1883). All references to this translation of Schopenhauer's main work indicated by the abbreviation WI as opposed to WR.

of possible experience. He also admires and accepts Kant's critique of the whole tradition of speculative philosophy so far as that tradition sought to establish truths on matters which lie outside what is a possible object of human theoretical understanding. He fully agrees with Kant that there are a priori conditions of experience and its possibility and that the understanding has legitimate reference to nothing outside or beyond experience. Our knowledge is radically limited to that which is given exclusively in experience; i.e., the positive detail of sense-consciousness -- phenomena. But Schopenhauer criticizes Kant for retaining too much empirical realism in his transcendental idealism, namely the notion of a real world of things-in-themselves somehow still 'out there' which is, in some mysterious, inexplicable sense, the ground or cause of our representations. This empiricist residue Schopenhauer thinks he eliminates by showing that Kant's error springs from extending the a priori principle of causality illegitimately in his doctrine of the 'unconditioned' (a heuristic principle or concept of pure reason), something Kant himself elsewhere expressly forbids.⁷ For Schopenhauer, the whole notion of the 'unconditioned', of the thought of an uncaused cause, of an

⁷See Schopenhauer, WR, Appx. 434ff. Also Schopenhauer, FR, sec. 21, 26, 34.

unknowable reason or ground of experience, is an absurd contradiction.⁸ There simply is no appropriate application of the concept of causality beyond its use in subjectively determining relations between phenomena. Once this is established, Schopenhauer thinks, it is clear the notion that the objective world-for-consciousness in any way 'represents' or is grounded in a world beyond experience must simply be abandoned. The phenomenal, objective world is the world for the subject who represents it and nothing more. Schopenhauer rejects any notion of metaphysical causality, as in Unconditioned, Absolute, or Final Cause. Whatever is, stands in a relation of necessity to whatever else is, and in a necessary relation to the knowing subject always presupposed by its being just that which it is. Thus, the 'objective universe' is wholly phenomenal, that is, it exists relatively to human consciousness, its faculties and forms.

1.1. The Principle of Sufficient Reason

That causality is the only one of Kant's categories to play a significant role in Schopenhauer's philosophy, is a crucial point that helps characterize the philosophical

⁸Schopenhauer, WR, Appx. 479-488.

positions of both. Schopenhauer's 'clarification' of Kant renders the whole issue of the status of the 'in-itself' far more intense, since it is no longer sufficient to suggest it is somehow 'there' prior to perception, simply a presumed ground which must be thought but remains inaccessible and unknowable. It is in Schopenhauer's disagreement with Kant's account of causality and the understanding that the former's own positive thought is discerned.

Schopenhauer takes as the starting-point of his theory of perception neither the object of knowledge nor the knowing consciousness but the fact that we do have ideas or representations which contain and presuppose both subject and object, and his peculiar idealism thereby entails objectivity from the outset.⁹ With the exception of causality, all of Kant's categories of the understanding are rendered redundant as regards perception, that is, empirical reality, "for our thinking [i.e., judgment] does not help impart reality to perceptions; this they have in so far as they are capable of it (empirical reality) through themselves; but our thinking does serve to comprehend and embrace the common element and the results of perceptions, in order to be able to preserve them and

⁹Schopenhauer, WR, I 7. pp. 25, 34. See also D. W. Hamlyn, Schopenhauer (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980) pp. 7ff.

manipulate them more easily" (WR 1, Appx. p. 443). As abstract concepts of theoretical reason, Schopenhauer insists that Kantian concepts (categories) are discoverable through induction and expressible in accordance with the rules of logic and language.

Where the object-for-consciousness is a physical object, causality is the obvious, indeed the only, choice of 'category' as a condition of its possibility. According to Schopenhauer, all perception presupposes the objective world which is its only sphere of operation. Mere sensation, itself wholly subjective and governed by the form of inner sense, time, and therefore always successive, contains nothing that might be called 'perception'. Schopenhauer submits his own view of the a priori nature of the principle of causality together with empirical support for his transcendental idealism:

It is only when the Understanding begins to act...only when the understanding applies its sole form, the causal law, that a powerful transformation takes place whereby subjective sensation becomes objective perception. For, in virtue of its own peculiar form, therefore a priori, i.e., before all experience (since there could have been none till then), the Understanding conceives the given corporeal sensation as an effect (a word which the Understanding alone comprehends), which effect, as such, necessarily implies a cause. Simultaneously [the Understanding] summons to its assistance space, the form of the outer sense lying likewise ready in the intellect, (i.e., the brain), in order to remove that cause beyond the organism; for it is by this that the external

world first arises, space alone rendering it possible, so that pure intuition a priori must supply the foundation for empirical perception. ...For by [such operations] alone, ...therefore, exclusively in... and for the Understanding, does the real, objective, corporeal world, filling space in three dimensions, present itself and further proceed, according to the same law of causality, to change in time and to move in space. (FR, p. 77-8)¹⁰

In The Fourfold Root, Schopenhauer says that the common function of all the faculties of perception and thought, together with all the categories of theoretical reason, have no other significance than as a means by which objects or representations appear in and for consciousness and are ordered there.

Our knowing consciousness, which manifests itself as outer and inner Sensibility (or receptivity) and as Understanding and Reason, subdivides itself into Subject and Object and contains nothing else. To be Object for the Subject and to be our representation, are the same thing. All our representations stand towards one another in a regulated connection, which may be determined A PRIORI, and on account of which, nothing existing separately and independently, nothing single or detached, can become an Object for us.¹¹ (FR, sec. 16, p. 30, Schopenhauer's

¹⁰Arthur Schopenhauer, Two essays: On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason and On the Will in Nature, trans. Mme Karl Hillebrand (London: Bell, 1907). All subsequent references to Schopenhauer's The Fourfold Root are to this publication of that work, abbreviated FR.

¹¹This shows clearly how directly Schopenhauer appeals to the structure of Kant's Critique of Pure Reason. Kant defines 'representation' as the root term applying to sensible intuitions, imaginative schemata, concepts, ideas, etc., for example, in his dictum, "The I thin' must be able to accompany all my representations," quote:d by Schopenhauer in WR 1, p. 451.

emphasis)

Here, Schopenhauer emphasizes the representational subjective-objective form which indeed pervades all of the Kantian 'faculties'. He interprets this to mean that they are all species of a wholly subjective act, representation, which is determinative of their content. He insists it is the sole function of the understanding (for Schopenhauer a faculty of perception and not of judgment, as in Kant) to create the objective world, literally re-presenting (Vorstellen, to set forth) the raw material supplied by the senses, through application of the law of causality.

...In perception itself empirical reality, and consequently experience, is already given; but perception can also come about only by the application of knowledge of the causal nexus, the sole function of the understanding, to the sensation of the senses. Accordingly, perception is really intellectual, and this is just what Kant denies [since he does not allow the understanding to be a faculty of perception]. (NR 1, Appx., p. 443)

Kant always insists we only have one mode of intuition (perception), namely empirical, and that the one thing we absolutely do not have is 'intellectual intuition'. But in Schopenhauer, the intellect is nothing but the understanding and the understanding is a faculty of perception. Schopenhauer criticizes Kant for his failure to recognize the centrality of sense-consciousness and the world-creating role of the principle of causality in

perception. Identifying objective/perceived with physical/corporeal, Schopenhauer quite radically asserts that the physical world as physical is in no way different from the world construed in consciousness through intellectual intuition. He expresses the mutual conditionality or relative necessity among phenomena and between these and the knowing subject by a statement of the principle of sufficient reason borrowed from Wolff: "Nothing is without a reason for its being" (FR, sec 5, p. 5). With regard to the physical world, this reason is expressed by the principle of causality.

...[In the class of physical objects] this law refers solely and exclusively to changes of material states and to nothing else whatever; consequently, ...it ought not to be brought in when these are not in question. The law of causality is the regulator of the changes undergone in Time by objects of our outer experience; but these objects are all material. Each change can only be brought about by another having preceded it, which is determined by a rule, and then the new change takes place as being necessarily induced by the preceding one. This necessity is the causal nexus. (FR, sec. 20, p. 40).

It is the understanding, by means of its own peculiar function, which creates the basis of the whole complex of empirical reality as a general and comprehensive representation. While there is one principle of sufficient reason with its single role, that is, to determine the necessary relation among representations and between these

and the representing consciousness, there are different applications or expressions of this principle according to the characteristics of the representation to which it is applied. Schopenhauer, largely following his predecessors, says that there are four applications, hence the 'fourfold root' of the principle of sufficient reason. In addition to empirical objects belonging to the physical world, or the realm of becoming, which is governed by the principle of sufficient reason in the form of the law of causality, he finds that there are three other classes of objects or representations for the subject: rational or abstract (ultimately based on perceptual experience), mathematical (based on the pure intuitions of time and space) and motivational. Each of these classes of objects or representations, of knowing, of being, and of acting, respectively, is governed by its own peculiar form of the principle of sufficient reason. The laws of reason and truth (logic) determine rational or abstract representations in the sphere of knowing; laws governing the determinate relations of space and time (geometry and arithmetic) hold sway in the class of being; and motivation, a peculiar form of causality, is operative in the sphere of action. The whole of "objective reality" is thus governed by the simple a-priori forms of Time, Space, and Causality.

The four laws of our cognitive faculty, of which the Principle of Sufficient Reason is the common expression, by their common character as well as by the fact that all Objects for the Subject are divided amongst them, proclaim themselves to be posited by one and the same primary quality and inner peculiarity of our knowing faculty, which faculty manifests itself as Sensibility, Understanding, and Reason. (FR, sec. 52, p. 188-89)

The crux of Schopenhauer's theory of perception and knowledge is to be found in the following statement.

The Principle of Sufficient Reason in all its forms is the sole principle and the sole support of all necessity. For necessity has no other true and distinct meaning than that of the infallibility of the consequence when the reason is posited. Accordingly every necessity is conditioned: absolute, i.e., unconditioned, necessity therefore is a contradictio in adjecto. For to be necessary can never mean anything but to result from a given reason. (FR, p. 181)

As to the inner nature of the world, the answer to this question must lie outside the poles of the subjective-objective relativity of knowing consciousness, this purely finite relationship of human perception to what appears in it. It is this question of the in-itself which becomes the center of Schopenhauer's main work. Schopenhauer assimilates the whole sphere of consciousness (representation), whether perception, (traditionally understood as the representation of 'real' as opposed to merely posited objects), imagination, or conceptual reasoning, to the single form of representation, the understanding's sole function being the assigning of

'causes' within the world of representation. The aimed-for and unavoidable consequence of Schopenhauer's theory of objectivity is that at no level of consciousness, not even reason, does the subject have access to knowledge of 'the real'.

1.2. The World as Will

In The World as Will and Representation, Schopenhauer moves beyond that consciousness for which the world is utterly phenomenal to the self-consciousness of the real, 'embodied' subject. Schopenhauer expressly pushes the Kantian thesis, that the objective world we merely know and reason about is but a phenomenal world-for-consciousness and nothing more, to its radical limit: he argues accordingly that the subject of merely objective-rational or theoretical-reflective consciousness is only a pole in a secondary, subjective-objective relation, not the real subject of bodily self-awareness.

[The subject] is rooted in th[e] world; and thus finds himself in it as an individual, in other words, his knowledge, which is the conditional supporter of the whole world as representation, is nevertheless given entirely through the medium of a body, and the affections of this body are ...the starting-point for the understanding in its perception of this world. (WR, sec. 18, p. 99)

Schopenhauer says that the objective world of human reality

presupposes an ultimate reality and our understanding of the nature of the former provides a fundamental clue about the latter. This is because the body of the knowing subject is actually given in two ways. In section 22 of FR, Schopenhauer defines the body of the knowing subject as 'the immediate object'. He cautions that this term is to be understood in a figurative sense, since the body qua body, and not merely the subject of sensations, is known as an object in space just as any other object there is known, that is, indirectly, through the mediation of the understanding. That which is the immediate object is the body as pure affect wherein sensations become transformed through application of the law of causality to effects of a 'cause' outside the organism itself. This is Schopenhauer's 'proof' of the a priori nature of the principle of causality: that, "although the perception of the body's sensations is absolutely immediate, [governed solely by the form of inner sense, time], yet the body itself is by no means presented as object..." (FR sec. 22, p. 21).

It is the bodily organism which is the starting-place of all experience without itself entering into that experience as such. While the body is apprehended as an object among all the other objects of the world, it is at the same time given immediately and independent of

representation (unconditioned) in a way Schopenhauer denotes by the word will. This notion of two senses of one's body - as representation, i.e., as object of perception determined by the principle of sufficient reason along with other objects on the one hand, and on the other as immediately-given reality in so far as the body is the affectively self-given subject, there immediately for itself in feeling and in willing, and hence only my body and not an object of perception (representation) - is central to Schopenhauer's metaphysics. Schopenhauer says that every true act of will is a movement of the body such that this willing entails awareness of the identity of body and will. Where the body is regarded as an object among other objects in space, its actions, movements, changes in states and conditions, are causally, i.e., necessarily linked, to those other objects. But there is no relation of causality between the raising of my arm and my willing to reach for the light switch. The former is merely the outward manifestation of the latter; regarded from the inside, the two are one and the same. Schopenhauer expresses this identity of body/will as follows: "The action of the body is nothing but the act of will objectified, i.e., translated into perception" (WR, sec. 18, p. 100).

Thus, Schopenhauer's will is not will in the usual

sense of the word, but pure affect, the self-objectifying act which at once cancels that and returns to itself. Knowledge of the will is presupposed by knowledge of the body and its acts in time. Schopenhauer says that this "philosophical truth" of the identity of body and will can never be demonstrated but only variously explained. He instantiates the immediacy of this relation of real to phenomenal in the individual in various ways, in the psycho-somatic nature of the emotions, for instance, or the dependency of one's morals upon one's given character. His real interest, however, is in the metaphysical implications.

My body and my will are one; or, What as representation of perception I call my body, I call my will in so far as I am conscious of it in an entirely different way comparable with no other; or, My body is the objectivity of my will; or, Apart from the fact that my body is my representation, it is still my will, and so on. (WR, sec. 18, p. 102)

This existential awareness of oneself as will is "entirely different" precisely in being utterly unmediated: it is what is presupposed in any subjective-objective distinction such as one finds in theoretical or moral self-consciousness. As will, one encounters one's own inner nature, before any reflective self-objectification. It is as will that one knows one is absolutely and uniquely oneself and no one else, while in objective terms, there is

really no difference between one's own phenomenal body and anyone else's.

Schopenhauer then takes a controversial step - from the instance (my body as will) to the generality (the world as will) - wherein lies what Schopenhauer believes to be the clue to a wider metaphysical principle. Here, in this alleged immediate truth of human self-consciousness, is Schopenhauer's defence against the charges of theoretical egoism and solipsism.

From all these considerations the reader has now gained in the abstract... a knowledge which everyone possesses directly in the concrete, namely as feeling, ...a knowledge that the inner nature of his own phenomenon, which manifests itself to him as representation is his will. ...The reader who has gained this conviction, will find that of itself it will become the key to the knowledge of the innermost being of the whole of nature, since he now transfers it to all those phenomena that are given to him, not like his own phenomenon both in direct and in indirect knowledge, but in the latter solely, and hence merely in a one-sided way, as representation alone. (WR, sec. 21, p. 109)

Through application of the causal laws, we are conscious, as embodied subjects, of other phenomena. The representation of my body is in this sense not merely similar to my representation of other bodies, but in another sense dependent upon these latter, on their movement (action, actuality) in relation to my body. Yet we have seen that the movement of one's own body is merely the objectivity of the will with which it is one.

Therefore, says Schopenhauer:

We shall ...assume that as, on the one hand, [these other bodies] 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 representations, what still remains over must be, according to its inner nature, the same as what in ourselves we call will. (WR, sec.19, p. 105)

This crucial insight into the nature of an act of will, from the standpoint of one's own affective reality, as the innermost nature of the phenomenal world, provides the possibility for transition from the merely phenomenal to the real: all representation is the objectivity of one's will and is, at the same time, the self-objectification of the same will which exists as the innermost nature of the phenomenal world, independent of and apart from all spatio-temporal and causal determinations.

From his analysis of the nature of the world as representation, Schopenhauer thus moves toward knowledge of the thing-in-itself as first intimated in one's own affective reality. The manifestations of will vary enormously from the lowest (inorganic nature) where it shows itself as forces operating in accordance with universal laws, to the highest (organic) nature, where it manifests itself in the deliberate actions of man. But this known plurality, arising from the a priori conditions of all knowledge, is through and through phenomenal. As

regards the thing-in-itself, there is no plurality of wills; there is just will. "...This thing-in-itself, considered as such apart from phenomenon, ...lies outside time and space, and accordingly knows no plurality, and consequently is one" (WR, sec. 25, p. 128). And yet, the will is not 'one' in the sense of Parmenides, or Spinoza, or even Leibniz; it has in it the psychic meaning of an ultimate or 'absolute' affective reality. While Schopenhauer says he uses the term 'will' to denote this absolute because that is the form in which we discover it in ourselves, the forms in which it manifests itself in nature etc. still bear the psychic character of a subjective, self-expressive reality.

Schopenhauer observes the outward harmony and accommodation in nature generally but reflects on the inner antagonism of the metaphysical will towards itself, a blind, instinctive, primordial urging whose outward manifestation is the world. The consequent vision of worldly existence as a purposeless, insatiable, violent struggle for survival and self-assertion seemed to many of his own and later generations merely the articulation and explanation of an immediately-felt truth.

1.3. Human Nature and Pessimism

In his essay, On Human Nature,¹² Schopenhauer pessimistically and harshly asserts:

Every man ...has something in his nature which is positively evil. ...For it was just in virtue of this evil in him, this bad principle, that of necessity he became a man. And for the same reason the world in general is what my clear mirror of it has shown it to be. ...Man is at bottom a savage, horrible beast: ...no animal ever torments another for the mere purpose of tormenting, but man does it, and it is this that constitutes that diabolical feature in his character which is so much worse than the merely animal. ...In every man there dwells a colossal egoism. ...[At] the heart of every man there lies a wild beast which waits for opportunities to storm and rage in its desire to inflict pain on others or ...to kill them. It is this which is the source of all lust of war and battle. (HN, pp. 15-22)

Even the act of objectification by which the illusion of an ordered universe comes about for man is nothing other than the product of a particular manifestation of will, namely the brain of this absurd human brute. To view human reasonings and purposings in proper Schopenhauerian terms one must understand them to be essentially nothing but the peculiar techniques this particular species uses to satisfy its insatiable will-to-live, its egoistic craving to try to conform the whole of reality to itself, representing it as

¹²Arthur Schopenhauer, On Human Nature, trans. Thomas Bailey Saunders (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1957). All references to this essay are from this text, abbreviated HN.

if it were entirely subject to its own will. Thus we see in nature, including human nature so far as Schopenhauer is concerned, cause for a radical pessimism, since everything that particularly and contingently exists, being also an objectification of will, is impelled necessarily to render itself absolute. Hence we see, for example, that "in his unrelenting cruelty man is in no way inferior to the tiger and the hyaena," (HN, p. 18), his rationalizing only more efficient than mere physical strength or speed of movement as the means by which the will strives to realize itself absolutely.

Schopenhauer's philosophy establishes the philosophical concept (as distinct from the state of mind) of nihilism/pessimism as a counter-concept to classical skepticism or that of the seventeenth-century, as well as to the implicit optimism of the philosophy of the enlightenment era which he radically opposes. Since the whole phenomenal world is nothing but a product of the reflexivity of the human consciousness, nothing is exempt from will's all-manifesting and all-nihilating power. The noblest human passions are no different in principle from the blind struggle for survival of animals and plants or the push and pull of electro-magnetic or gravitational energies in elemental nature. They are different only objectively; in themselves they are but grades of the one

primal, cosmic impulsivity of will. The representation of an objective world in man is the highest expression of will only in this sense: in it the utter contingency and groundlessness of the world as the outward manifestation of will is finally and explicitly revealed. This ephemerality is least evident in the expression of will in elemental nature, where inorganic mechanisms seem to possess a certain brute reality and endurance. Schopenhauer asserts that in the successive stages of organic life, the essential separation of will and intellect is increasingly revealed. The intellect is, after all, together with the higher forms of organic life, a relative late-comer, a fact through which something more of the groundlessness of objective existence is recognized. Thus life, that is, will or will-to-live, is wholly revealed as a ceaseless, violent struggle for survival and an endless reproductive iteration of living and dying as organisms, plant, animal and human, manifest their phenomenality in the impermanence and instability of their existence.

But it is in the limitless vanity of the human ego that the utter negativity of merely objective existence is most explicitly expressed. In unremitting scheming, speculating and manipulating, we seek in endless ways to subject the world to our will. The truly wise individual comprehends the wholly illusory nature of positive

existence in its essential temporality, purposelessness, and absurdity. Anyone who has thus pierced the veil of 'Maya', or illusion, will know that even the most precious ideals or the most universal and clever explanations of things are the mere by-products of the consciousness which presupposes the organism which, in turn, presupposes the will. There is no access to the inner nature of the world, to the 'absolute', through reason; reason is but the most highly refined survival technique of the irrational metaphysical will.

Thus disciplined to know the world as maya, illusion, and even less than illusion, one will want to deny in oneself the incessant urging of the egoistic will and the pointless, endless round of suffering it entails. The individual will then be moved to observe the world dispassionately, apart from all self-interest, seeking only to contemplate how ultimate reality, being-in-itself, manifests itself in nature in manifold ways, everywhere and always demonstrating the utter phenomenality of all world-manifestation. Within this state, "the perceived individual thing is raised to the Idea¹³ of its species,

¹³Here is Schopenhauer's adaptation of the Platonic doctrine of ideas. Schopenhauer explains in his theory of art that between the particular phenomenon and the thing-in-itself the idea "stands as the only direct objectivity of the will, since it has not assumed any other form peculiar to knowledge as such, except that of the representation in general, i.e., that of being an object for

and the knowing individual to the pure subject of will-less knowing, and now the two, as such, no longer stand in the stream of time and of all other relations" (WR, sec. 38, p. 197). Schopenhauer views the character of contemplative consciousness as essentially aesthetic, and of such a nature as to be capable of overcoming the limitations of ordinary thought and knowledge. In will-less contemplation of what is essential to an object or objects, (in Schopenhauer, the idea, or the single immediate act of the metaphysical will), one attains to an albeit momentary and fleeting state of freedom from the suffering and want of the will.

It is thus only in the aesthetic or emotive mode of contemplation that the apprehension of the pure forms of will's spontaneous operations is possible, a contemplation which itself, however, is quite passionless. In this contemplative state the pure fatality that lies at the very bottom of things is revealed to one for whom the world must now cease to have any interest or hold whatever. This detachment is not the result of thought or discursive reason; rather it follows only upon radical suspension of the theoretical standpoint. As we have seen, this kind of

a subject" (WR 1, ii, sec. 32, p. 175). For Schopenhauer, there is only one idea, since the thing-in-itself which is directly manifest in it is itself one and indivisible.

detachment, hitherto unknown in the history of western philosophy, is the stand-point of a radical pessimism and it is for Schopenhauer the basis of an affirmation, the means of a certain liberation from the gods, if not from fate.¹⁴ It is a real or existential, that is, an affective detachment, whose first fruit is the recognition that the apparent independence of the world is, after all, illusion, pure expressionism; nothing but the work of the same will that is also one's own reality. With this insight, one is able to say with the Vedantic mystic, "I am all this creation collectively, and besides me there exists no other being" (WR, sec. 34, p. 181, n. 13). Thus, the Schopenhauerian pessimist achieves a certain overcoming of the alienating division between self and world. There is life beyond the meddling intellect: "I and reality are one". Pessimism is the gateway through which one must pass to arrive at this state of 'higher consciousness'.

The general outline of Schopenhauer's ethics, founded as it is on presumably empirical facts of human existence (self-consciousness, egoism, malice, and compassion), is adumbrated in what has already been discussed. It is in

¹⁴Schopenhauer often alludes to the philosophies of the east seeing in these a paradigm for his own renunciatory philosophy. In Schopenhauer, Peter Gardiner says that a statue of Buddha and a bust of Kant were the only ornaments to be found in Schopenhauer's austere living quarters (p. 21)

his two essays on ethics, On the Freedom of the Will¹⁵ and On the Basis of Morality¹⁶, that Schopenhauer most clearly articulates his views on the possibility of ethics and human morality. These themes are central to Hardy's literature since they strike at the very heart of what it specifically means to be a human being, to live, to work, and to die. Both writers are generally spoken of as pessimists and their writings are included in what might be called the literature of pessimism. In the essays of Schopenhauer to be discussed below, the essence of this characterization of his vision is explicitly expressed. The question as to whether or not Schopenhauerian pessimism is that pessimism which is reflected in the quite fatalistic and deterministic pessimism of Hardy's works will then be explored.

¹⁵Arthur Schopenhauer, Essay on the Freedom of the Will, trans. Konstantin Kolenda, (Indianapolis/New York: Bobbs-Merrill, Library of Liberal Arts, 1966). All references to this work will be found in this text, abbreviated FW.

¹⁶Arthur Schopenhauer, On the Basis of Morality, trans. E.F.J. Payne, intro. Richard Taylor (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965). All references to this work are to this edition, abbreviated BM.

2. SCHOPENHAUER: THE ETHICS OF PESSIMISM

For Schopenhauer, as we have seen, the whole of perception is objectification or manifestation of the will; what it expresses is simply the will-to-live, the continuation of existence throughout all the gradations of the will's self-objectification. This is the innermost nature of the world as, also, of our own innermost being. In Schopenhauer's philosophy, each phenomenon expresses in itself, in its species-being, the inner necessity of the gradations of all the will's phenomena, inseparable from the adequate objectivity of the will. This objectivity is reflected in the whole of nature and is intelligibly expressed, according to Schopenhauer, in the Platonic ideas, although for Schopenhauer there is really only one idea. Schopenhauer defines 'idea' as "every definite and fixed grade of the will's objectification, in so far as it is thing-in-itself and is therefore foreign to plurality" (WR, I, ii, sec. 25, n. 11, p. 130).

Thus the intelligible character coincides with the Idea, or more properly with the original act of will that reveals itself in the Idea. Therefore to this extent, not only the empirical character of every person, but also that of every animal species, nay, of every plant species, and even of every original force of inorganic nature, is to be regarded as phenomenon or manifestation of an intelligible character, in other words, of an indivisible act of will that is outside time. (WR, I, ii, sec. 28, p. 156)

As a consequence of the above distinction between the intelligible and empirical character, Schopenhauer places all freedom in the sphere of being (the will and its immediate manifestation, the idea), all necessity in the sphere of existence (nature and the sum-total of all phenomena and activity). The intelligible character is manifest in the whole conduct and life of the individual and constitutes the empirical character. This last is determined by the fixed and unalterable intelligible character and flows necessarily from it. All the acts of the individual, animal or human, are called forth by intellectually-presented motives, but even in the deliberate acts of man, these acts are always in accordance with fixed intelligible character. While the lower animal responds only to what is immediately present, man, with his higher powers of reason and memory, operates from elective choice. That is, his understanding can survey any number of motives, present or otherwise, yet that choice which finally determines his particular act is always of a particular type and always presupposes his intelligible character which governs it.

Thus, while man has the conviction that he is free, that he possesses liberum arbitrium indifferentiae, this belief is based on an illusion. His is only a relative (elective) freedom, relative both to the principle of

sufficient reason, and to the kind of individual (rational) he is. The essential character of every being expresses the special will of its species and manifests the fixed and eternal gradations of the objectification of will through time. An individual may know a priori i.e, prior to and independent of all experience, that he is, that he feels or is affected, but only as an objective entity, an object among other objects, can he know what he is or what affects him. Therefore, the individual can only come to know himself a posteriori, since "he is once for all, and subsequently knows what he is" (WR, sec. 55, p. 293).

Schopenhauer writes extensively on morality and ethics, attempting to give to these a metaphysical foundation. Matters concerning moral conduct and ethical belief are discussed at length in his main work, The World as Will and Representation, as well as the in the collection of his writings, Parerga and Paralipomena. However, the most thorough-going discussion on this topic is found in the two essays, On the Freedom of the Will and On the Foundation of Morality.¹⁷ It is in the second

¹⁷For a more thorough discussion of Schopenhauer's philosophy in general, and his moral philosophy in particular, I refer the reader to several works which I have found extremely helpful here: Frederick Copleston, S.J., Arthur Schopenhauer: Philosopher of Pessimism (London: Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 1946). D. W. Hamlyn, Schopenhauer (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), esp. pp. 123ff. Patrick Gardiner, Schopenhauer (Baltimore: Penguin, 1963).

chapter of the latter essay that Kant's contribution to the whole realm of moral value and ethics is intensely scrutinized and 'clarified'. Here also is the starting-point of Schopenhauer's own moral philosophy.

2.1. Critique of Kantian Morality

In the Preface to the second edition of his first Critique, Kant says that he "found it necessary to deny knowledge, in order to make room for faith."¹⁸ For Kant, the unitary principles or 'ideas of reason' are implied in an analysis of experience thereby serving as the foundation of a rational faith in the real and abiding existence of God, of the universe as His creation, in immortality, and in ourselves as moral agents. Accepting as given the premise that morality necessarily presupposes freedom (in the strictest sense) as a property of our will, Kant explains the possibility of freedom and morality (in reference to the human soul) as follows:

...If our Critique is not in error in teaching that the object is to be taken in a twofold sense, namely as appearance and as thing in itself; if the deduction of the concepts of the understanding is valid, and the principle of causality therefore applies only to things taken

¹⁸Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (London: Macmillan, 1929), p. 29. Any references to Kant's first Critique will be to this publication.

in the former sense, namely in so far as they are objects of experience--these same objects, taken in the other sense, not being subject to the principle--then there is no contradiction in supposing that one and the same will is, in the appearance, that is, in its visible acts, necessarily subject to the law of nature, and so far not free, while yet, as belonging to a thing in itself, it is not subject to that law, and is therefore free. (Critique, Pref. p. 28)

According to Kant, we cannot know noumena or things-in-themselves. The categories of human understanding are limited to the domain of empirical experience, of phenomena, and although the mind can conceive of a supersensible object (eg. the soul), the mind cannot produce knowledge of such a transcendent entity. That is, metaphysical concepts such as the self (as originator of all my acts and bearer of all my representations), being as such, Final Cause (the unconditioned) or highest intelligence, are not matters of experience and, if known at all, must be known in some other way. These metaphysical concepts, or what Kant calls 'transcendental ideas', can never be objects of knowledge, but neither are they vain illusions; they are natural to reason and do have a regulative use. These heuristic ideas or concepts function as regulative maxims in guiding our scientific enquiry. Kant attempts to show that our relation to the world is not limited to scientific knowledge (fact); we do act in the world and thus enter into a realm of moral

value. In the Preface to the second edition of his first Critique, he says that the limits of scientific understanding (empirical knowledge), as ascertained in his Critique, serve not merely to furnish assurance as to the grounds for certitude concerning scientific knowledge. These limits also point to a reason operative in practical life. That is, there are certain a priori propositions or principles of reason which constitute the moral order or realm of value and practical life. For Kant, the most fundamental principles of practical, moral life (human freedom, the existence of God, the immortality of the soul) are completely independent of empirical experience and the principles which govern it. Our knowledge of what we ought to do is prior to and more certain than any scientific findings.

Kant begins his moral philosophy with the presupposition that we live in a moral world and that, though we experience different moral obligations, the experience of an 'ought' is universally shared. According to Kant, to act morally is not to act from inclination or even prudence but from a sense of duty. And dutiful action derives its necessity not from its consequences but from the conformity of such actions with some general law which can serve the will as a principle of action. Such a moral law is a 'fact of reason' since it is not an empirical fact

but announces itself as originally legislative.¹⁹ The form of this originally legislative principle is the categorical imperative: "so act that the maxim of your will could always hold at the same time as a principle establishing universal law" (CPR, p. 30). Kant holds that we respect the moral law because it is a law which we, as rational beings, legislate for ourselves and voluntarily obey. Moral commands are not derived from any external source, such as divine ordinance. He denies any theological foundation for his theory of ethics. Rather, knowledge of God is to be viewed as a postulate of moral reason. This is Kant's 'Copernican Revolution' in theology. Morals are not grounded in theology; on the contrary, the fundamental beliefs of religion find their support in pure practical reason and its principle of morality.²⁰

Contrary to his general acceptance (with the required 'clarification' on points of detail and doctrine) of Kant's first Critique, Schopenhauer rejects Kant's moral philosophy as entirely unfounded. Schopenhauer's criticism on the whole is, of course, directly related to that of the

¹⁹Kant, Critique of Practical Reason, trans. Lewis White Beck (Indianapolis/New York: Bobbs-Merrill, Library of Liberal Arts, 1956), p. 18-19. All subsequent references to this work will be to this edition and employ the abbreviation CPR.

²⁰Kant, CPR, p. 137ff. On this point, see also James C. Livingston, Modern Christian Thought: From the Enlightenment to Vatican II (New York: Macmillan, 1971). p. 69.

first Critique in the areas of perception, the nature and content of the understanding, the nature and role of the principle of causality in objectivity, and the nature of the faculty of reason, which have already been discussed. He admires Kant's theory of freedom and its emphasis on the distinction between objects and things-in-themselves, between objective reason and moral or 'practical' reason. But he utterly rejects Kant's admonition that a metaphysics of morals must have a non-empirical source, derived not from certain facts of human nature, but from abstract self-subsistent reason, just as he rejects Kant's notion of the impossibility of a metaphysics of the phenomenal world. There are a number of specific but fundamental points in Kant's theory of morality which Schopenhauer analyses and rejects as either false or absurd.

Schopenhauer criticizes the assumption of the imperative form (the ought or 'moral law') of Kantian ethics, together with all its 'legalistic' terms (eg. 'law', 'absolute obligation', and 'unconditioned duty').²¹ In the absence of the 'theological hypotheses' from which all such 'imperatival' ideas first emerge, hypotheses from which Kant pointedly separates them, these concepts are no longer even intelligible. All such ideas are intelligible

²¹See Hamlyn, pp. 123-55.

only in relation to the idea of a superior power capable of enforcing its laws through a system of reward and punishment. Yet, in attempting to discover the kind of world required by the fact of the moral law, Kant ultimately comes forward with the existence of God and the promise of immortality as postulates or conditions demanded by reason itself in its quest for happiness and the Good.²² Schopenhauer will have nothing to do with this rational theology and he points out the ambiguity in Kant's view.

Every ought is necessarily conditioned by punishment or reward; consequently, to use Kant's language, it is essentially and inevitably hypothetical, and never categorical, as he asserts. But if all those conditions are thought away, the concept is left without meaning; and so absolute obligation is certainly a contradictio in adjecto. (EM II 4. p. 55)

Schopenhauer alludes to Kant's Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals, where he points out that Kant undertakes there to provide an a priori foundation of ethics, and furthermore that Kant insists this foundation " 'must not be sought in man's nature (the subjective) or in the circumstances of the world (the objective)' and that 'here nothing whatever can be borrowed from knowledge relating to man, i.e., from anthropology'" (qtd. with emphasis by Schopenhauer in EM, II 6, p. 61-2). In order

²²Kant, CPR, p. 137ff.

to provide such a pure concept a priori, valid for all rational beings (for Kant, man is but one species belonging to this genus), Kant looks to the abstract concept of universal validity, i.e., valid equally for all rational beings, to provide substance to the notion conformity to law contained in his statement of the Categorical Imperative quoted above.²³ Thus in Kantian ethics, self-subsistent 'reason', that is, independent of human nature, legislates for itself and consequently for all men in so far as they are rational beings.

Having examined and rejected Kant's procedure here, Schopenhauer demonstrates that the notions of 'absolute worth' and 'the necessity of an action out of respect for the law' are simply without meaning since all evaluations are comparative of one thing in reference to another and the word 'respect' in relation to law always means 'obedience' together with the notions of enforcement, reward, and punishment. But it is in the area of moral conscience that Schopenhauer registers his greatest objections to Kantian ethics since here, according to Kant's Categorical Imperative, the mind is "a complete court of justice with trial, proceedings, judge, prosecutor, counsel for the defense, and sentence" (BM, II

²³Schopenhauer, BM, II 6, p. 73.

9, p. 105). In Schopenhauer's view, moral self-judgment originates from an empirical, rather than an a priori source.

For conscience is precisely the acquaintance with ourselves which arises from our own mode of conduct and which becomes more and more intimate. Thus, though the operari (what we do) does, of course, furnish the occasion, it is really the esse (what we are) that is incriminated by conscience. As we are conscious of freedom only through the medium of responsibility, the former must also lie where the latter is to be found, and hence in the esse (what we are). The operari (what we do) is subject to necessity; but only empirically do we become acquainted with others as with ourselves, and we have no a priori knowledge of our character. (BM, II 10, p. 113)

Even if a law can tell a man that he can do that which he 'wills' (since his doing is merely the outward manifestation of his willing) universally, the question remains as to what it is that he can truly 'will'. In his essay, On the Freedom of the Will Schopenhauer thinks he answers this question, at least negatively, and places that 'freedom' which is for Kant a 'fact of reason' in a true light.

2.2. Necessity, Freedom, and Intelligible character

Schopenhauer holds that metaphysical insights regarding nature as such, and human nature and volition in particular, furnish an understanding both of their true

essence and of the inherent character of universal will. Here, he takes as the starting-point of his ethics, man's alleged double knowledge of the nature and activity of his body: as representation and as will. The actions of the body are seen as objectifications of the will and thus identical (not in any causal relation) with the will. Schopenhauer thus accepts the fact of the assertion of freedom in inner consciousness, "I can do what I will," in so far as this "refers [only] to the ability to act in accordance with the will. ...The self-consciousness affirms the freedom of action--when the willing is presupposed. But what is inquired into is precisely the freedom of willing" (FW, p. 16). In complete agreement with his views as set down in The Fourfold Root, Schopenhauer insists that all actions are determined by motives (causes); there is no such thing as liberum arbitrium indifferentiae - an absolutely free will. The motive is a cause, and it operates with the necessity entailed by all causes.

This necessity is easy to see in the case of the animal whose intellect is simpler and thus furnishes only knowledge of the present. Man's intellect is double; in addition to knowledge of intuitive perception, he has also abstract knowledge, and this is not bound to the present; in other words, he has the faculty of reason (Vernunft). He therefore has an elective decision with clear consciousness; thus he can balance mutually exclusive motives as such one against the other, in other words, he can let

them try their strength on his will; whereupon the more powerful motive then decides him, and his action ensues with precisely the same necessity with which the rolling of a ball results from its being struck. (LD, sec. 20, p. 72)

There is, according to Schopenhauer (above, and FW, pp. 36-37), a relative free will made possible by man's capacity to think, to deliberate. This deliberation results in a relative freedom (a 'modified determinism', i.e., circumstances together with character) from an immediate determination to action in relation to objects perceived as present and as motives for the will, as in the case of animals. The thoughts that the deliberation produces, however, function precisely as motives, determining the will just as much as do objects perceived as present.

Schopenhauer agrees that in any particular set of circumstances the individual considers various possibilities or alternatives (motives). But these are, as with all causes, necessarily physical possibilities and the realization of any one of them depends on which motive is operative. Schopenhauer introduces the concept of character and its relations through motives with action. He appreciates, in the sphere of human action, the force of the determinist thesis which he fully embraces. He says: "...man does at all times only what he wills, and yet he does this necessarily. But this is due to the fact that he

already is what he wills. For from that which he is, there follows of necessity everything that he, at any time, does" (FW, p. 98).

For Schopenhauer, what is commonly called the 'character' of an individual never changes over the entire course of the individual's life and this character manifests itself in what motives determine the individual to action. Any suggestion to the contrary, as far as Schopenhauer is concerned, is to imply "an existence without an essence, which means that something is and at the same time is nothing, which in turn means is not, and consequently is a self-contradiction" (FW, p. 60). Schopenhauer also draws an important distinction between the whole of nature and human nature (character) as such, in relation to intelligible and empirical character. All of nature, the totality of her phenomena, exhibits strict necessity in accordance with the principle of sufficient reason while the will, which manifests itself in this same nature, is not subject to any such conditioning and is therefore free. Only man, through aesthetic contemplation, has the capacity to gain a knowledge of what is essential, in the whole, or in some part of nature; this is "the apprehension of the Ideas, the pure mirror of the world" (WR, iv. sec 55, p. 287-88). In this will-less contemplation of the intelligible, as we have seen, man

experiences a fleeting freedom. But each man's mirroring, beginning as it does with each one's peculiar person (bodily organism including the intellect or brain), is distinctly one's own, and one's own unique, and therefore valuable, expression of the immediate act of the will as this 'appears' in aesthetic contemplation. In artistic portrayal of the human being, the artist therefore strives to make manifest, not merely the species-being, as in the case of animals or plants, but the idea peculiar to this one individual, distinct from all others, even of his own kind, since

the character of each individual man, in so far as it is thoroughly individual and not entirely included in that of the species, can be regarded as a special Idea, corresponding to a particular act of objectification of the will. (WR, ii. sec. 28, 158)

The individual's intelligible character, i.e., his will as thing-in-itself, is absolutely free, since it is completely independent of the law of causality which is merely a form of appearances. This freedom, however, is transcendental; it never actually appears in the world. While it can be thought, it must be thought of as the inner being of man-in-himself.²⁴ Thus, all the individual's acts

²⁴In "Conclusion and a Higher View" of his Essay on the Freedom of the Will, Schopenhauer invokes Kant as he explains the relation between necessity and freedom, between the phenomenon and the thing-in-itself. "As for him [Kant] the complete empirical reality of the world of experience co-exists with its transcendental

are entirely his own doing, regardless with what necessity these proceed from his empirical character when it encounters the operative motives. As regards the relation of necessity between the intelligible character ('immediate act of will') and the empirical character (its phenomenon), Schopenhauer is adamant.

The intelligible character of every man is to be regarded as an act of will outside time, and therefore indivisible and unalterable. The phenomenon of this act of will, developed and drawn out in time, space, and all the forms of the principle of sufficient reason [the form of the phenomenon] is the empirical character as it exhibits itself for experience in the man's whole manner of action and course of life. (WR, iv, sec. 55, p. 289)

And again,

This particularly and individually constituted nature of the will, by virtue of which its reaction to the same motives in every man is different, makes up that which one calls his character and, what is more, because it is not known a priori but only through experience, the empirical character. It is by its means that, to start with, the way in which various motives affect the given man is determined. (FW, p. 49)

Any notion that this character undergoes alteration or modification is mere illusion (FW, pp. 51ff). According to Schopenhauer, the empirical character unfolds itself over

ideality, so the strict empirical necessity of action coexists with its transcendental freedom. ...My exposition does not eliminate freedom. It merely moves it out, namely out of the area of simple actions, where it demonstrably cannot be found, up to a region which lies higher, but is not so easily accessible to our knowledge. In other words, freedom is transcendental (FW V, p. 97-99)."

the whole course of the individual's life, in his conduct and activities. Knowledge (including self-knowledge) of an individual (empirical character) makes possible, not merely character judgments in relation to the individual's past actions, but also both predictive and predicative determinations in relation to future actions. While some particular action (as means) might be ill-advised due to lack of knowledge or a judgment erroneous due to ignorance of relevant circumstances, "the character is unchangeable, and the motives operate of necessity" (FW, p. 53). It is on the truth of the unalterability of character that both the possibility of conscience (profound sense of remorse) and the efficacy of the whole penal system, (which addresses itself to altering the means, not the ends) rests.

It is in cognition alone that the sphere and realm of improvement and ennobling is found. ...[Motives] must pass through cognition, which is the medium of motives. The cognition is capable of the most varied enlargement, of constant correction, in innumerable gradations. That is the goal of all education. The development of reason through information and insights of all kinds is morally important because it provides access for motives to which a man would otherwise remain inaccessible. "The final cause (goal, motive) acts not according to its zeal, but according to its cognized essence."²⁵ (FW, p. 54)

²⁵Quoted by Schopenhauer from Apuleius, The Works of Apuleius (London: 1853). The last several lines here are somewhat vague. I take it that Schopenhauer means that while knowledge of that

While Schopenhauer contends that it is impossible for characters to change, he does allow something he calls 'acquired character'. That is, when one has learned through experience what one will and can do, and has gained an intimate knowledge of the nature and limitations of one's actual character, one is enabled thereby to fulfil in a deliberate and methodical manner, one's own peculiar and unchangeable 'role'. This learnt role, however, is really "nothing but the most complete possible knowledge of our own individuality" (WR, iv. sec. 55, p. 305), that is, the 'acquired character'. Thus, while the individual cannot change what he is, he can learn to act and to conduct his life in a manner consistent with his character and thus achieve a measure of acceptance and contentment in being what he is.

From the standpoint of his empirical character, the individual, like every other phenomenon in the world, is wholly determined, neither responsible nor free, and he can only accept himself for what he is. When the individual is considered from the standpoint of inner will or intelligible character, however, one recognizes that the empirical character proceeds, after all, from that which is not subject to the determinate forms of the phenomenon, and

which is a motive for the will is a sufficient condition of action, character remains the necessary condition.

is thus both responsible and free. This higher knowledge provides the clue to the Schopenhauerian solution of ethical responsibility and in this knowledge is the source of human morality.

2.3. Beyond Morality: Asceticism

According to Schopenhauer, there can be no a priori basis for ethics; "there is no other way for discovering the foundation of ethics than the empirical, namely, to investigate whether there are generally any actions to which we must attribute genuine moral worth" (BM, III 13, p. 130). He maintains that the actions so designated are those of 'voluntary justice, pure philanthropy, and real magnanimity'. While in the normal course of events, "the chief and fundamental incentive in man as in the animal is egoism" (BM, III 14, p. 131), Kant insists on 'disinterestedness' (however inconsistently according to Schopenhauer), in moral conduct. It is Kant's stress on a 'self-subsistent' reason's disinterestedness, on moral action for the mere sake of duty or respect for the law and not originating in feelings of sympathy and compassion, which Schopenhauer rejects as utterly untenable.

Schopenhauer defines egoism in general as the craving or passion for existence and absolute well-being that is

shared by animals and human beings alike. Everything that opposes a man's egoism excites his will to anger, even destruction, directed against whatever stands between himself and his own interests or desires. Considered in the practical sense, the egoistic individual regards himself alone as real, and his will alone as deserving of serious consideration. As we have seen in Schopenhauer's epistemology, "everyone is given to himself directly, but the rest are given to him only indirectly through their representation in his head; and the directness asserts its right" (BM, III 14. p. 132). From a wholly subjective view, an individual's own self thus presents a colossal aspect, but "in the objective view it shrinks to almost nothing, to a thousand millionth part of the present human race" (BM, III 14. p. 133). In any case, in egoism, one's own self and interests remain separate and apart from others and their interests. Only through compassion or sympathy is it possible to identify ourselves with others and with their suffering.

Schopenhauer asserts that while it is egoism which ordinarily governs one's actions, there are, as a matter of fact, certain actions determined by two other fundamental motivations, namely, malice and compassion. Schopenhauer claims that compassion is the only genuine moral motivation and it provides "the real basis of all voluntary justice

and genuine loving-kindness" (BM, III 17, p. 148). That egoism and moral worth are mutually exclusive is a basic premise of Schopenhauer's 'proof' of the above claim (BM, III 16, p. 141), since only through compassion is it possible to desire "another's weal" rather than "another's woe" (i.e., non-malicious), and even to desire another's weal as opposed to "one's own weal" (i.e., non-egoistical). The question remains as to how it is possible to feel compassion and thus to be motivated to actions of genuine moral worth. That is, how is it possible, given Schopenhauer's account of the will, and its manifestations in human behavior, for any individual to act in a non-egoistical manner?

In his main work, Schopenhauer describes the will in all its manifestations (all life) as always striving, hence, always suffering, since all striving springs from want or deficiency and dissatisfaction. No satisfaction is more than temporary; rather, momentary satisfaction merely leads to more striving, more suffering. In man, with his greater capacity for knowledge, suffering is more evident and pain more acute. In Schopenhauer's view, pain is the positive state, satisfaction the negative. "To this is due, first of all, the fact that only another's suffering, want, danger, and helplessness awaken our sympathy directly and as such" (BM, sec. 16. p. 149). Thus, optimism is not

merely a thoughtless, even absurd view of the human condition; it is "a really wicked way of thinking, a bitter mockery of the unspeakable sufferings of mankind" (NR i, sec. 59, p. 326).

For Schopenhauer, it is imperative that morality be distinguished from legality. In consideration of the State, its legal and political institutions, Schopenhauer gives an essentially Hobbesian account, wherein the sole purpose of the state is to protect individuals, whose chief characteristic is egoism, from the suffering each might inflict on the other. Thus, ordinary justice is a matter of the positive enactments of the state, the laws and decrees, together with the punishments and penalties (which Schopenhauer characterizes as deterrents) necessarily attached to these. This justice is directed, not at the character or disposition of the man, but at the unjust or injurious deed, whose commission it seeks to prevent. The citizen of the state, in so far as he obeys the laws of the state whose protection he enjoys, is a prudent but not necessarily a truly good or even just man. The truly just man identifies himself with others to the extent that, even without state sanctions and laws, he refrains from causing injury to others and seeks to render to these that which he receives from them. Justice, however, remains for Schopenhauer a merely negative concept, concerned with

'deeds' rather than character itself. The question of morality is one of the 'inner significance' of a deed, that is, it goes to the heart of what a man is, his character, from which proceeds all his acts and from which these arise as the outward manifestation of that character. Education, laws, etc. may very well re-direct an individual's efforts in relation to his desires, ends, or goals, but they cannot change these since they proceed from the unalterable character of the individual concerned.

Legality may be enforced through motives, but not morality; we can remodel what we do, but not really what we will to do, to which alone moral worth attaches. We cannot change the goal which the will aspires to, but only the path it follows there. Instruction can alter the choice of means, but not that of the ultimate general aims; every will determines these for itself in accordance with its original nature. (BM, III 20. p. 194)

True, or disinterested, justice and genuine philanthropy thus has its source in morality which in turn has its root in love or genuine human compassion, which Schopenhauer characterizes as a fact of human nature. All notions of right and wrong, just or unjust, whether civil or moral, are relative to character and will, but morality is ultimately based on the feeling of compassion, on a complete empathy between oneself and others.

In an appendix to his essay on morality, as well as in the fourth book of his main work, Schopenhauer finally

provides a metaphysical account of the possibility of compassion. He says that the character of a man which manifests itself in the virtues of justice and philanthropy, whose source is compassion, "makes less of a distinction than do the rest between himself and others" (BM, sec. 22, p. 204), even to the extent of laying down his own life that others might have life and well-being. For the egoist, on the other hand, this distinction is sufficiently great as to permit the carrying out of a wrong or harmful act against another in the pursuit of one's own goals. For the truly malicious, this distinction is so great as to afford the individual actual delight in another's suffering even to the extent of inflicting such suffering at some cost or disadvantage to oneself. But where is the justification for these varied relations between one's self and others, which is the basis of the actions of a good (or bad) character?

Empirically, the notion of 'distinct selves' or egos is a product of intuitive perception. Here, in accordance with the forms of time, space and causality, all plurality, and hence, all distinctions between one's own person and another's, is strictly justified. The concepts of 'good' and 'bad' ('evil') are described by Schopenhauer as essentially relative and denote the fitness and suitability, or unfitness and unsuitability, "of any object

to any definite effort of the will" (WR, 1 iv, sec. 65, p. 360). Thus, what is good for one person may be bad for another; there is no 'absolute good'. Nor can the will, in any particular manifestation, or indeed in the totality of its manifestation, the whole world as objectivity of the will, ever have complete and permanent happiness (satisfaction). It is for this reason that the truly wicked or cruel individual also suffers much himself from the great and unremitting intensity of asserting his will against that of others, since all willing springs from want, and therefore from suffering. Indeed, this individual is already dimly aware that the suffering he causes others he inflicts also upon himself, although this knowledge of the inner nature and unity of the will merely serves to corrupt his own further, whereby this last becomes 'absolute'.

In the strength with which the wicked person affirms life, and which is exhibited to him in the suffering he perpetrates on others, he estimates how far he is from the surrender and denial of that very will, from the only possible deliverance from the world and its miseries. He sees to what extent he belongs to the world, and how firmly he is bound to it. The known suffering of others has not been able to move him; he is given up to life and to felt or experienced suffering. It remains doubtful whether this will ever break and overcome the vehemence of his will. (WR, 1 iv, sec. 65, p. 367)

In ethics as in art, the 'veil of maya' is penetrated

in various degrees. To be sure, the artist who recognizes and represents that which is essential in an individual, for the purpose of his art, apprehends the idea of which the individual is phenomenon. To this extent the artist transcends the limitations of perception. But the moral agent attains to a still higher knowledge of the inner nature of others in relation to himself--"Tat tvam asi (This thou art)" (BM, sec. 22, p. 211).²⁶ Such an individual, in his manner and actions toward others, shows that he makes less distinction between himself and others than is ordinarily the case (in the egoist) and has to this extent raised himself above the ordinary, the phenomenal, even the merely artistic, and all division and separateness is abolished. This moral insight leaves behind the merely quantitative character distinctions of the egoist and affirms rather the qualitative, essential identity of all individuals with oneself and one's own inner nature. For Schopenhauer, such penetration into, or higher consciousness of, the inner nature of everything and everyone, is the basis of all morality. The conduct and action on the part of a character with the moral designation good thus goes far beyond prudence or ordinary

²⁶Schopenhauer here refers to the Sanskrit expression of the knowledge that, beyond mere phenomenal individuation, we are all one and the same entity which Schopenhauer calls the will.

justice, but seeks to further and enhance the life and well-being of others, even at personal cost or hardship to oneself. To act compassionately in relation to another is at the same time to recognize, "I share the suffering in him, in spite of the fact that his skin does not enclose my nerves" (BM, sec. 18, p. 166). According to Schopenhauer, reason cannot directly account for the actual occurrence in which another's suffering becomes a motive for me; this occurrence remains mysterious. Its possibility is rather to be sought in the fact of that alleged double-knowledge the individual has, first of himself as representation and will, and thence of the world itself as representation and will. This double knowledge forms the basis of Schopenhauer's moral philosophy, and is inseparably bound up with the whole of his epistemology and metaphysics in general.

In addition to the egoistical, the malicious, and the ethical or moral, character types, Schopenhauer introduces the notion of the mystic and essentially ascetic archetype. We have already seen in the first three how an individual, depending on the particular character type and his degree of knowledge about the inner nature or the world, i.e., the unitary, all-pervasive metaphysical will, may exhibit real goodness of disposition, "a goodness that shows itself as pure, i.e., disinterested, affection towards others" (WR,

I iv. sec. 67, p. 375). The morally good character, no longer wholly captivated by the principium individuationis of empirical reality, penetrates the 'veil of maya'.

This penetration alone, by abolishing the distinction between our own individuality and that of others, makes possible and explains perfect goodness of disposition, extending to the most disinterested love, and the most generous self-sacrifice for others. (WR, I iv, sec. 68, p. 378)

But the highest expression of this clarity of 'vision' is found not in morality, but in asceticism which has as its source this same knowledge of what lies behind the veil. Here, the knowledge the virtuous man has of the inner nature of the world "becomes the quieter of all and every willing" (WR, I iv, sec. 68, p. 379).

The will now turns away from life; it shudders at the pleasures in which it recognizes the affirmation of life. Man attains to the state of voluntary renunciation, resignation, true composure, and complete will-lessness. ...His will turns about; it no longer affirms its own inner nature, mirrored in the phenomenon, but denies it. The phenomenon by which this becomes manifest is the transition from virtue to asceticism. (WR, I iv, sec. 68, pp. 379-380)

With regard to such a man, as described above, Schopenhauer claims that it is not enough for him to love others as himself and to do as much for these as for himself. The sacrifice of his own pleasures for the greater pleasure (less pain) of others is now a self-renunciation he makes for its own sake alone. This

voluntarily trodden path of self-renunciation, as far as Schopenhauer is concerned, is the path to salvation. But one is not to imagine that the individual makes a conscious and deliberate choice, in the sense of 'absolute freedom' to change his whole personality at will. This reversal is rather experienced as something immediate, a kind of conversion; it involves a 'transcendental change' in his whole being, through which the knowledge of the inner nature of 'the whole' becomes 'faith' or inner conviction.²⁷ The ascetic or 'saintly' character is raised above the perceptual and practical limitations of human nature and attains to a transcendental freedom. In ascetic acts, in the mortification of one's own will, sometimes even resulting in unsought-after death, is found the phenomenal expression of "the denial of the will-to-live, which appears after the complete knowledge of its own inner being has become for it the quieter of all willing" (WR, I iv, sec. 68, p. 383). Schopenhauer's views regarding the act of suicide and the notion of immortality have particular relevance to his distinction between the egoist

²⁷In the fourth book of the first volume of his main work, Schopenhauer, describing the nature of this conversion, quotes Asmus, who speaks of the "catholic, transcendental change." Schopenhauer goes on to say that the conversion of which he speaks is "that which in the Christian Church is very appropriately called new birth or regeneration, and the knowledge from which it springs, the effect of divine grace" (WR I iv, sec. 70. p. 403).

and the ascetic or self-abnegating character. Schopenhauer rejects the deliberate act of suicide as redemptive, since it is not a denial of the will-to-live in the manner described above, but rather, a denial of life's sufferings, a wish to be done with own's own personal sorrows and afflictions.

The suicide gives up by no means the will-to-live, but merely life, since he destroys the individual phenomenon. He wills life, wills the unchecked existence and affirmation of the body; but the combination of circumstances does not allow of these, and the result for him is great suffering. The will-to-live finds itself so hampered in this particular phenomenon, that it cannot develop and display its efforts. (WR, I iv, sec. 69, p. 398)

According to Schopenhauer, an act of suicide is thus clearly an affirmation of one's will, rather than its denial. If the unsatisfactory conditions of his life were otherwise than what they are for him, the individual would not choose to end his life.

The conviction of personal immortality (survival of individual consciousness after death) is an illusion since the continuance of phenomenal existence through endless time is an absurd contradiction in terms. But for the person who, in the face of all its attendant suffering, nonetheless dreads death and thus continues to affirm life, Schopenhauer offers some consolation. For death generally brings with it no more than the particular end of a merely

phenomenal existence; for that of which this existence is the outer manifestation, the timeless and eternal will-to-live, "life is certain to the will, and the present is certain to life". For Schopenhauer, the egoist need have no more fear of losing the present, the form of all life, than of falling off the globe.

...Just as on the globe everywhere is above, so the form of all life is the present; and to fear death because it robs us of the present is no wiser than to fear that we can slip down from the round globe on the tip of which we are now fortunately standing. The form of the present is essential to the objectification of the will. As an extensionless point, it cuts time which extends infinitely in both directions, and stands firm and immovable, like an everlasting midday without a cool evening, just as the actual sun burns without intermission, while only apparently does it sink into the bosom of the night. If, therefore, a person fears death as his annihilation, it is just as if he were to think that the sun can lament in the evening and say: "Woe is me! I am going down into eternal night." ...Only by a false illusion does the cool shade of Orcus allure him as a haven of rest. The earth rolls on from day into night; the individual dies; but the sun itself burns without intermission, an eternal noon. Life is certain to the will-to-live. ... (WR, 1 iv, p. 280-81)

Yet, when all willing, hence all 'affirmation of the will-to-live', ceases, there is its opposite, not-willing, i.e., 'denial of the will-to-live', and with this last, the consequent abolishment of the world as representation, the 'mirror' of the will. Thus Schopenhauer ends the first volume of his main work with these exceedingly apt, though

somewhat cryptic, remarks.

We freely acknowledge that what remains after the complete abolition of the will is, for all who are still full of the will, assuredly nothing. But also conversely, to those in whom the will has turned and denied itself, this very real world of ours with all its suns and galaxies, is-nothing. (WR, 1 iv, p. 412)

Many Schopenhauerian doctrines find expression in the works of Thomas Hardy. As we consider below the 'Hardyan World' and the nature of those who people it, we will be considering what is sometimes characterized as an artistic interpretation or portrayal of the world as Schopenhauer viewed it. Hence it will be possible to examine Hardy's employment of Schopenhauer's philosophy of pessimism by holding up the Hardyan World as a 'mirror' thereby seeing if that which it reflects is genuinely Schopenhauerian.

3. HARDY: HUMAN NATURE AND CIRCUMSTANCE

There are four works by Hardy which are most significant in relation to a discussion of Schopenhauer's philosophy, since it is precisely these which are subsequent to Hardy's study of Schopenhauer²⁸: Mayor of Casterbridge; Tess of the d'Urbervilles; Jude the Obscure; and The Dynasts. Helen Garwood, speaks of a "curious sympathy of outlook upon life" (p. 10) between Schopenhauer's expressed thought and that which emerges even in Hardy's earliest works. Hardy's outlook, generally denoted by the term 'pessimism', that is, a sense of the universal suffering and apparent purposelessness of existence, would seem to find a philosophical, indeed a metaphysical, foundation and justification in Schopenhauer's writings. The consequence of Schopenhauer's epistemology in relation to man's quest for scientific knowledge is a happy one wherein certainty may be assured. Schopenhauer would, however, maintain that the greater scientific truth is to be found in his metaphysics of the phenomenal world, his metaphysics of character and his views on ethics, which render the attitude of optimism, or even

²⁸Kelly, "Hardy's Reading," p. v. See also Walter F. Wright, The Shaping of The Dynasts: A Study in Thomas Hardy (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967), pp. 39ff; Robert Gittings, The Older Hardy (London: Heinemann, 1978), pp. 114, 192.

mere complacency, with regard to life itself, in all its manifestations, absurd if not downright wicked. Schopenhauer does offer an insight into the metaphysical underpinnings of the phenomenal, thus in some sense going beyond the pessimism concerning the world from which we must nonetheless begin. Whether in Hardy's art the individual is ever able to free himself from the phenomenal, or instead remains attached always to this while striving to discover some redemption in it, will surely offer some insight into the relation between Schopenhauer's philosophy and Hardy's art.

For Schopenhauer, individual life is unspeakably mean, miserable, and mercifully brief. But everything that exists, in all its plurality and apparent separateness and autonomy, is only the outward manifestation of one and the same eternal, and insatiable will, to which life is always assured. That man exists at all is, as it were, an ill-fated accident, since the will, as thing-in-itself, is absolutely free and unencumbered by any notion of end or ultimate plan or purpose. But as he is, so must he be, and it is this question, of what man is, where it is he finds himself, how he best accommodates himself there, where or to what he must look for explanation and justification of the misery and suffering within and all about him, that Hardy explores in his art. Is there any possible reprieve

or escape for man from the prison of his consciousness and the treachery of his body, from the eternal grip of the will-to-live that he is, or must there be only and ever a hard-won and undignified sufferance - that is the unifying theme of Hardy's four works to be discussed below.

3.1. Character and Fatality: The Mayor of Casterbridge

In The Mayor of Casterbridge,²⁹ Hardy illustrates certain Schopenhauerian ideas, particularly the notions of the inexorability of character, human suffering, and aesthetic or emotive detachment, while not in every way remaining consistent with Schopenhauer's views regarding these. In the opening chapter, where Michael Henchard's sale of his wife Susan occurs, Hardy places the human desires, strife, and hostility exhibited at the Weydon Fair within a wider, and distinctly Schopenhauerian, perspective.

In contrast with the harshness of the act just ended within the tent was the sight of several horses crossing their necks and rubbing each other lovingly as they waited in patience to be harnessed for the homeward journey. Outside the fair, in the valleys and woods, all was quiet. The sun had recently set, and the west heaven was hung with rosy cloud, which seemed permanent, yet

²⁹Thomas Hardy, The Mayor of Casterbridge, ed. Dale Kramer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987). In subsequent references title is abbreviated MC.

slowly changing. To watch it was like looking at some grand feat of stagery from a darkened auditorium. In presence of this scene after the other there was a natural instinct to abjure man as the blot on an otherwise kindly universe; till it was remembered that all terrestrial conditions were intermittent, and that mankind might some night be innocently sleeping when these quiet objects were raging loud. (MC, p. 15)

It is this particular insight into the inner nature of all existence which, while not eliciting the reader's sympathy for Michael Henchard, nonetheless asks that judgment on him, on his behavior and conduct, be withheld until full justification (explanation) is tendered. Henchard, in a drunken rage and encouraged by others who share his temperament, sells his wife to the highest bidder. "I'd challenge England to beat me in the fodder business;" he boasts, "and if I were a free man again I'd be worth a thousand pound before I'd done o't. Will anybody buy her?" (MC, p. 10-11) That Susan departs with the sailor who bought her, taking with her their child Elizabeth-Jane, is regrettable, but Henchard quickly recovers from the loss and proceeds, apparently unencumbered now, to satisfy his lust for social position and prosperity. Though hoping, on the one hand, that nobody could ever connect his name with the shameful deed, he loudly proclaims his personal identity in a church as he swears an oath to abstain from liquor for twenty-one years, as many as he has already lived. Thus he plans to put his past behind him and start

his life anew. However, according to Schopenhauer, a man does what he is and his past, as well as his future, are inextricably bound up with his present, which alone is real. His life's conduct and the whole of his experience are merely the outward manifestation, phenomenon, of his unchangeable disposition and character. While perceptions vary and the means to desired ends change or are modified through knowledge and discovery, those motives which determine a man to action remain invariable throughout his life. The real tragedy of human existence, as compared to nature generally, is that only man attains to a consciousness of the "vanity of all effort." Quoting Schopenhauer, Hardy writes in one of his notebooks: "Only when intellect rises to the point where the vanity of all effort is manifest, and the will proceeds to an act of self-annulment, is the drama tragic in the true sense" (MC, Intro. p. xxix). It is, then, Schopenhauer's doctrines of the world as will and his metaphysics of character, which inform the tragedy of Henchard, the Mayor of Casterbridge.

Of the four archetypes described by Schopenhauer, Hardy offers in Henchard an artistic representation of a truly egoistical, even malicious, character. By the end of the novel, it is evident both to Henchard and to the reader, that the rise and fall of the mayor is not causally related to the various events that occur in the novel.

Rather the action of the novel, its plot, is merely the phenomenal expression of the fixed and unalterable character of Henchard as this last unfolds itself through time. From his first despicable willingness to sacrifice others for his own ends, to his scheming against Farfrae, his impulsion to lie, to cheat in business as in life generally, and finally even to 'steal' the child of another man that he himself might have all that he desires, are only reflections that mirror what Henchard truly is: a robust, defiant, wilful, egoist, the tragic victim of his own character, of his own will which is essentially, and ironically, one with all that he would defy, even destroy.

In the face of the losses, first of his wife, whose return to him is quickly followed by her death, then of his mistress, Lucetta, whose death his own unremitting scheming inadvertently brings about, and finally, the alienation of his one-time friend and manager and now rival, Farfrae, Henchard remains defiant and unrepenting. But with the loss of his business and mayoralship to his rival, the loss of his reputation, his social identity, his 'name' which he fought so zealously to protect and enhance, he is finally shaken to acknowledge the utter barrenness of his life. His past does live on in the present as symbolized by the furmity woman from the long-ago fair who stands to accuse

the Mayor of the heinous event she witnessed and participated in there. Henchard, humiliated and ashamed, resolves to take his own life but when he peers into the waters that would serve that end, he sees himself floating there, an effigy of himself the townspeople have cast there in mockery and disgust. Still driven by self-love and vaulting ambition, he pulls back from death, momentarily taken by the thought: "Who is such a reprobate as I! And yet it seems that even I be in Somebody's hand!" (MC, p. 299)

In the course of the novel, Henchard learns that the young woman, Elizabeth-Jane, who came to him with his returning wife, is not his own child by that name, but the offspring of Susan and the sailor, Newson. Susan left a letter to be opened by Michael only on Elizabeth-Jane's wedding day, explaining that their girl had died in childhood and she had named a child fathered by Newson for the one she had lost. Disregarding even the last wish of his dead wife so long as it does not accord with his own desires, Henchard reads the letter as soon as he discovers it. Though Henchard rejects Elizabeth-Jane in his rage, he soon changes his mind. And he would keep the knowledge of her origins from her so that, failing all else, he might keep her lovingly beside him. The image of Newson haunts him, threatens him and finally, like the furmity woman,

Newson also emerges from the past, in search of his child. Henchard is unrelenting in his egoism as he repeats once more the essential characteristics of the deed enacted at the fair: he separates a child from its natural father. But his contrivances recoil upon himself and Elizabeth-Jane is re-united with Newson. Bearing upon him the whole weight of his entire life's experience and accepting full responsibility for what he is, for all he has done, Henchard withdraws from the family and the community to wander aimless, alone, yet with his will remaining essentially unbroken: "I--Cain--go alone as I deserve--an outcast and a vagabond. But my punishment is not greater than I can bear!" (MC, p. 313) This is a powerful representation of Schopenhauer's doctrine of the malicious and the truly wicked character (previously quoted):

In the strength with which the wicked person affirms life, and which is exhibited to him in the suffering he perpetrates on others, he estimates how far he is from the surrender and denial of that very will, from the only possible deliverance from the world and its miseries. He sees to what extent he belongs to the world, and how firmly he is bound to it. The KNOWN suffering of others has not been able to move him; he is given up to life and to felt or experienced suffering. It remains doubtful whether this will ever break and overcome the vehemence of his will. (WR, 1 iv, sec. 65, p. 367)

Henchard's tragedy is reminiscent of an Oedipus without morals, conscience, truth, or even a daughter,

finally, to guide his blind steps, a Lear whose real tragedy lies not in the knowledge of what is without, but of what is within. But this is not an illustration of the Greek Fate, standing over against man and even the gods; this is a Schopenhauerian fate that is man, in a world where no gods abide. Man is the hapless victim of his own traits and the inner nature of the world, which is anything but law-abiding. Helen Garwood quotes from Schopenhauer's "The Art of Controversy" on this doctrine.

"Consider that chance, which with error, its brother, and folly, its aunt, and malice, its grandmother, rules in this world; which every year and every day, by blows great and small, embitters the life of every son of earth, and yours too; consider, I say, that it is to this wicked power you owe your prosperity and independence; for it gave you what it refused to many thousands, just to be able to give it to individuals like you. Remembering all this, you will not behave as though you had a right to the possession of its gifts; but you will perceive what a capricious mistress it is that gives you her favours; and therefore when she takes it into her head to deprive you of some or all of them, you will recognize that what chance gave, chance has taken away." (Thomas Hardy, p. 25)

It is important to recognize that in Henchard, Hardy presents no possibility of change or transition from egoistical to aesthetic, moral, or ascetic character. These Schopenhaurian transformative possibilities only appear in the presence of self-conscious knowledge concerning the inner nature of oneself and of the world - a knowledge sometimes arrived at by the artistic,

contemplative character but also sometimes discovered as the result of great and often undeserved suffering. For Schopenhauer, such knowledge, in so far as it is liberating or redemptive, leads necessarily to renunciation and self-abnegation. Such knowledge, and thus such redemption, is denied Hardy's Henchard. Throughout Henchard's life there are only oft-repeated schemes and patterns; his knowledge of his own past, its sins and errors, never presents itself to him as a liberating experience. The whole of his life remains for Henchard an immediately felt and experienced phenomenon. His life never raises itself before him as an object of knowing, rather than simply one of immediate perception; he never contemplates life aesthetically rather than merely attempting a theoretical understanding of it. He relies instead on instinct and even on traditional ways of knowing, such as conjurors, superstition, omens, and miracles.

A dawning insight into the "contrarious inconsistencies" (MC, p. 319) of existence works to make Henchard wish to wash his hands of life, but he remains bitter and unappeased to the end. He steadfastly refuses to defend himself in the face of his step-daughter's rejection of him as one unworthy of her love. Henchard subjects himself to a mean and harsh existence, finally dying for lack of food and sustenance, a sought-after death

by slow degrees, as just punishment for his actions. His final act is the writing of a will insisting that the bearer of the attached signature and representative of the will so inscribed be forgotten, ironically recalling the Psalm³⁰ sung at the Three Mariners on the occasion of his return-bout with liquor: "And the next age his hated name shall utterly deface" (MC, p 233). His will is a suicide-note, more a final demand, an ultimate and irremediable willing, than a prayer. Elizabeth-Jane recognizes the bitterness, and unalterability, of Henchard's final act and testament. It is his name, twice recorded there, that looms large amidst his final utterances, and "she knew the directions to be a piece of the same stuff that his whole life was made of" (MC, p. 334).

While Hardy's reader may respond, not with sympathy or admiration but with fear, even with awe, to the immensity of a character such as that displayed by Henchard, this last is yet recognized, from a Schopenhauerian point of view, as representative of a fundamental aspect of human

³⁰Psalm 109:10-15. There is an irony in Hardy's employment of these verses here, since it is not the justice of a vengeful God but the eternal justice of the will itself that destroys Henchard, a victim of his own characteristics. Henchard has a dim awareness of this 'philosophical truth'. "By this hour the volcanic fires of his nature had burnt down, and having drunk no great quantity as yet, he was inclined to acquiesce. She [Elizabeth-Jane] took his arm, and together they went on. Henchard walked blankly, like a blind man, repeating to himself the last words of the singers" (p. 235).

nature, only richly coloured and boldly highlighted by the skillful strokes of Hardy's art. The indomitable, insatiable will, beyond all judgment of fair or good or right, lies at the heart of each of us, of all things, and renders itself perceptible to the intellect in the plurality and multiplicity of temporal events. Henchard is, from beginning to end, a figure of isolation, lacking that higher, and alone liberating, knowledge of the nature and unity of all existence. In Hardy's novel, there is a sense that something in the sheer greatness of Henchard's egoism, in the tenacity with which he holds on to life, wills that it be bent to serve only himself and his own interests, is yet something noble.

Elizabeth-Jane's own knowledge of life and of character, gained through experience and reflection on the irrational, senseless, and capricious nature of existence and its attendant suffering, is by no means inferior to that of Henchard's. Less robust and rapacious in her own zeal for life, she quietly, but not too thankfully, endures. It is Elizabeth-Jane's response to life's vagaries which presents another possibility, the single ray of hope in Hardy's novel. Having put the events of the past aside even as these remain central to who and what she is, informing her present and shaping her future, Elizabeth-Jane settles into married life and a secure

social position. Hardy describes her new-found circumstances and her responses to these in the following manner.

...The finer movements of her nature found scope in discovering to the narrow-lived ones around her the secret (as she had once learnt it) of making limited opportunities endurable; which she deemed to consist in the cunning enlargement by a species of microscopic treatment, of those minute forms of satisfaction that offer themselves to everybody not in positive pain... Her teaching had a reflex action upon herself, ...her position was indeed, to a marked degree, one that in the common phrase afforded much to be thankful for. That she was not demonstratively thankful was no fault of hers. Her experience had been of a kind to teach her, rightly or wrongly, that the doubtful honour of a brief transit through a sorry world hardly called for effusiveness, even when the path was suddenly irradiated at some half-way point by daybeams rich as hers. But her strong sense that neither she nor any human being deserved less than was given, did not blind her to the fact that there were others receiving less who had deserved much more. And in being forced to class herself among the fortunate she did not cease to wonder at the persistence of the unforeseen, when the one to whom such unbroken tranquillity had been accorded in the adult stage was she whose youth had seemed to teach that happiness was but the occasional episode in a general drama of pain. (MC, p. 334)

It is Elizabeth-Jane's stoicism, her quiet though 'cunning' knowledge and acceptance of the 'persistence of the unforeseen' that suggests a way, if not of escape then at least of something slightly better than sufferance. In this character, the reader discerns a quiet resignation in the face of some unknown, blind and uncaring fate which remains outside the individual, thus presenting an aspect

quite antithetical to Schopenhauer's philosophy. In the passage quoted above, the individual is no more responsible for present happiness than of past suffering; Elizabeth-Jane therefore allows her past pain to recede, while ever aware that her present joy, also, is as transient and possibly as undeserved. There is here a possibility of endurance that is not stupid or wicked optimism, and which is neither malicious nor mocking. Schopenhauer, in a letter once written to his mother, expresses essentially that insight which Hardy permits Elizabeth-Jane.

"Allowing our past despair to fall into oblivion is such a strange trait of human nature. One might not believe it to be possible if one did not see it with one's own eyes. Tieck expressed it splendidly in approximately these words: we stand and wail and ask the stars: who might have been more unhappy than we, while behind our back stands the scoffing future and laughs at the transient pain of man" (qtd. in Hubscher, The Philosophy of Schopenhauer, p. 39)

As we have seen in Hardy, it depends on the peculiar character of the individual and such knowledge as one possesses of the world or of oneself, a 'Henchard' or an 'Elizabeth-Jane', an egoistic or a gentler, less voracious individual, how one will acquit oneself in the face of such knowledge and of life generally.

3.2. Suffering Innocence and Social Corruption: Tess of the D'Urbervilles

With the next novel to be discussed in relation to Schopenhauer's philosophy, Tess of the d'Urbervilles,³¹ Hardy ironically, and interestingly enough, gives his book the subtitle "A Pure Woman". The story of Tess's purity, in the sense of her natural or pure self and of her original innocence and virginity, her gradual and painful 'education' in the ways of men and the world, her final purification, serves to illuminate a number of key Schopenhauerian doctrines. This novel is arguably the best and fullest literary 'experiment' with regard to Schopenhauer's views on life and the human condition. Yet within the context of this novel, the deeper consequences of Schopenhauer's teachings, denial-of-the-will as the only real and permanent salvation from the constant turning and turning about again of life doomed by its very nature to be suffered, at best endured, are not borne out. Indeed, they are rejected as, if not untenable, then at least premature in Hardy's view, given the relative 'youth' of this world we inhabit.

Hardy never permits his characters to experience the

³¹Thomas Hardy, Tess of the D'Urbervilles, 2nd edition, ed. Scott Elledge (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1979).

final Schopenhauerian transition from morality to asceticism and self-abnegation. His heroes and heroines are never granted 'redemptive' consciousness, that is, they never present with a truly Schopenhauerian self-consciousness. Rather, what is revealed in Hardy's art is a profoundly pessimistic view of existence as it actually presents itself intermingled with a hopeful proposition which finds its support in an absolutely deterministic philosophical position: life really ought to be better than it is; it is only a matter of process and time for such betterment to be realized. Thus with Tess, Hardy begins to develop a vision essentially inconsistent with a Schopenhauerian view of the world, adopting rather an evolutionary and distinctly late nineteenth-century notion concerning the perfectibility of life and species.³²

In Tess, Hardy does present a vivid illustration of the subjective idealism of Schopenhauer's epistemology.

Upon her sensations the whole world depended to Tess; through her existence all her fellow-creatures existed, to her. The universe itself only came into being for Tess on the particular day in the particular year in which she was born. (Tess, p. 130)

Her own experience demonstrates to Tess the faulty nature of human perception and the inevitable cost in misery and

³²Bruce Johnson, " 'The Perfection of Species' and Hardy's Tess" in Thomas Hardy's Tess of the D'Urbervilles, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1987), pp. 25-43.

suffering of errors committed by herself and all those around her. The world is not at all what we imagine or would wish it to be, and Hardy passionately demands an explanation, in the case of the Durbeyfield family, for example, why that should be the case. That there is an all-pervasive, deterministic, irrationality underlying the seeming law and order of the universe, is a distinctly Schopenhauerian view toward which Hardy leans with a great deal of sympathy and artistry. Hardy entertains the possibility, (a certainty for Schopenhauer), that there is an evil and cruel caprice at the very heart of all existence. Looking up into the starry heavens, Tess points out to her brother the many "splendid and sound" worlds that appear in the universe and the "blighted one" on which they are born and must abide. Her brother replies with an natural insight often found among Hardy's rustics, even the very young: "'Tis very unlucky that we didn't pitch on a sound one, when there were so many more of 'em!" (Tess, p. 25)

In the developing plot, the young, innocent, naturally beautiful and sensuous Tess Durbeyfield, whose impoverished family is descended from the ancient and knightly d'Urbervilles, is sent to claim kinship with a family using the ancient name with no blood-claim to it. Misled, seduced, taken as mistress by Alec Stoke-d'Urberville, and

returning to her home once more, Tess bears the child of that ill-fated union, Sorrow. Hardy's treatment of this theme of ravished innocence and woman's 'fallen state' is interesting and must have appeared quite shocking to a large part of his contemporary audience. His narrator, after all, does not simply ask the reader on Tess's behalf for compassion and forgiveness on the grounds of a shared humanity, her youthful ignorance, an inherited incautiousness combined with an exceedingly well-endowed, unconsciously inviting, responsive body. All this might be reasonable, acceptable and at the same time quite Schopenhauerian and consistent with Schopenhauer's ethics of sympathy as we have seen in chapter two above. But the narrator rejects even Tess's own feelings of guilt, suffering and remorse as unfounded and her sin non-existent except in the realm of faulty perception and in the judgment of society's conventionality which has lost sight of its roots (Tess, p. 77).

Contrary to Schopenhauerian philosophy, Hardy consistently characterizes Tess as in complete harmony with the purely physical, biological and evolutionary processes of organic nature.³³ He repeatedly presses home the point, that it is her social environment which is antagonistic to,

³³Ibid., p. 42.

even destructive of, Tess. In The Mayor (see above, 3.1), Hardy focuses on the malicious character, circumstance entering only in the form of various contingencies and fatalities. With Tess, he develops a more distinct conflict of character vs. circumstance. Specifically, the natural virtue of Tess's will-to-live is constantly opposed by prevalent social attitudes represented here as corruptions of what ought to be, were social forms and mores true to their natural origins. Thus Tess is more distinctly romantic (in the sense of Darwinian not Wordsworthian "naturalism"): the natural innocence of the individual pitted against the decadence of society.³⁴

In Tess, Hardy does not employ or illustrate Schopenhauer's doctrine of the metaphysical will as manifest in all existence; rather he affirms, in order to celebrate, a certain vitality and regenerative capacity in nature generally, and in Tess in particular, a natural will-to-live apparent in all her suffering innocence. Hardy then pits this natural (and hence, for Hardy, virtuous) vitality generally, against a cruel and capricious fate which ever stands over and against the

³⁴ibid., pp. 41-43. Johnson says that it is Tess's evolutionary oneness with life that is her great virtue. The Darwinian "happiness" open to her is defeated by Angel's more distinctly romantic, Wordsworthian "naturalism" and by modern society unaware of its evolutionary kinship with all existence.

individual, and particularly, in the case of Tess, against the evils of a stagnant and corrupt society. In the insistent affirmation of life and creative evolution which Hardy presents, with its explicit pessimism and implicit optimism as to the conditions of life, Hardy appears quite un-Schopenhauerian.

In Tess, Hardy explores the notions of human agency and 'redemptive' possibilities so that some solution, however tentative, might be discovered in answer to the riddle of life: "Why it was that upon this beautiful feminine tissue, sensitive as gossamer, and practically blank as snow as yet, there should have been traced such a coarse pattern as it was doomed to receive..." (Tess, p. 62). And the first step toward the final outcome is to offer social (in Schopenhauerian terms, phenomenological) rather than metaphysical explanations.

As Tess's own people down in those retreats are never tired of saying among each other in their fatalistic way: 'It was to be'. There lay the pity of it. An immeasurable social chasm was to divide our heroine's personality thereafter from that previous self of hers who stepped from her mother's door to try her fortune at Trantridge... (Tess, p. 63, emphasis mine)

Tess survives her first lesson on what will be a long road of worldly education and self-discovery through painful experience rather than formal tutelage or abstract reasoning. Hardy does not hesitate to suggest, however,

that a maternal word of caution or advise would not have been amiss, and it might even have obviated much of the pain that accompanies Tess's initiation (*Tess*, p. 70). For a time, Tess is passive, her movements trance-like and mechanical and she avoids the company of others but "a resolution which had surprised her had brought her into the fields ...for the first time during many months" (*Tess*, p. 77). Tess may have wished for death, as she so often does when faced with the sorrows and iniquities of life, but she could not die, even if she would.

She might have seen that what had bowed her head so profoundly--the thought of the world's concern at her situation--was founded on an illusion. She was not an existence, an experience a passion, a structure of sensations, to anybody but herself. To all mankind besides Tess was only a passing thought. (*Tess*, p. 77)

Now, it is most interesting that to this distinctly Schopenhauerian view, Hardy's narrator adds this psychological/sociological observation:

Moreover, alone in a desert island would she have been wretched at what had happened to her? Not greatly. If she could have been but just created, to discover herself as a spouseless mother, with no experience of life except as the parent of a nameless child, would the position have caused her to despair? No, she would have taken it calmly, and found pleasures therein. Most of the misery had been generated by her conventional aspect, and not by her innate sensations. (*Tess*, p. 77, emphasis mine)

But the experiment that is *Tess*, a representation of pure will-to-live, that is, the abstract rendered visible,

is far from over. In contrast to Schopenhauer's philosophy of life, Hardy emphasizes the circumstantial joys and pleasures of life rather than its inherent characteristics of frustration, unhappiness and pain in the following passage:

There are counterpoises and compensations in life; and the event which had made of her a social warning had also for the moment made her the most interesting personage in the village to many. Their friendliness won her still farther away from herself, their lively spirits were contagious, and she became almost gay. ...The baby's offence against society in coming into the world was forgotten by the girl-mother; her soul's desire was to continue that offence by preserving the life of the child. (Tess, p. 78, emphasis mine.)

Tess's child does not survive and Tess is as fierce in her defence of the child's immortal soul as she has been of his living body. She does not wish the child punished for her 'sin'. It is with much poetry and not a little irony, that in the face of Tess's ritualistic baptism of the infant, necessitated by Mr. Durbeyfield's pride and arrogance, and the burial of Sorrow outside church grounds, as required by canon law, the sincere but personally-perplexed parson finds himself twice assuring the distraught Tess, "It will be the same" as if all had been properly official and in accordance with usual practices. This harsh experience, however, serves only to bring to Tess's character a depth and complexity which is at the same time liberating.

Determined to shake off the past, in Schopenhauerian terms, to "annihilate" it, Tess moves on, finding work in a nearby dairy. "The irresistible, universal, automatic tendency to find pleasure somewhere, which pervades all life, from the meanest to the highest, had at length mastered Tess" (*Tess*, p. 88).

Both Hardy and Schopenhauer share the notion of the persistence of the will-to-live and the impossibility, in the ordinary course of events, of the annihilation of the past (though in Schopenhauer's case this is because of the inexorability of character, while for Hardy it is more a brute fact of evolutionary process). For Schopenhauer, insight into these philosophical truths may result in self-abnegation and renunciation of all life, the individual's only path to salvation from life and human suffering. Schopenhauer considers neither individual life as such, nor historical and evolutionary processes, as meaningful in the sense of redemptive or transformative. But in *Tess*, while Hardy is critical of the value of attempts at either annihilation of the past, on the one hand, or forced and artificial re-construction and restoration on the other hand, he does embrace the notion of organic, processive change and renewal, that is, he is unable to relinquish the phenomenal and therefore strives to discover some redemption in it. In the novel, he often shifts visual

perspective from the telescopic, or bird's-eye view to the ordinary surface view to the microscopic view seen from below. Here he demonstrates that all nature is eternally changing, eternally the same. Viewed from a great distance, the apparent immobility of the land hides the complexity and imperceptible though constant motion and vitality of its inner life. The surface landscape, with its present form and varied inhabitants rendered visible, is merely the most recent strata of a vast natural and historical past, covering over, and itself shaped by, that past which includes Roman and pre-historic societies no less than fossilized remains of vegetable and animal life.

For Hardy, all living organisms and systems, human or otherwise, carry in them the unconscious memory of their origins and the whole of their evolutionary history, past, present and future. By analogy, the complex of human society, its people, conventions, laws and institutions, has the capacity, through oral and written tradition, the natural sciences, the arts and humanities, history, archaeology, anthropology, etc., to 'remember', not merely unconsciously, but consciously, its own evolutionary history. In Tess, the loss of Tess's own family history is endemic to her society's forgetfulness of its own origins with regard to its laws, institutions, and conventional practices resulting in the absence of an integrated and

stabilizing social order. For example, Hardy chooses to apprise his reader of the historical significance of the Durbeyfield spoon with its coat of arms, a significance entirely forgotten by the family who owns it, though Tess herself manifests traces of her fierce and knightly ancestry. And the mythic significance of the club-day festivities of young Tess and her companions, its relation to agriculture, to renewal and rebirth, has long ceased to be a consciously remembered element of the annually-repeated exercise. Hardy is not suggesting in Tess a simple return to origins. Rather he seeks to demonstrate that the conscious memory of origins, of evolutionary and historical processes, is as imperative to the health and well-being of individuals and societies as the unconscious memory is to any reproductive system.

The vital principle reasserts itself in Tess once more at the dairy, manifesting itself most clearly and vividly in the love between Tess and Angel Clare. For Schopenhauer, love between the sexes is largely, or rather exclusively, a matter of sexual impulse; once the latter is satiated, the former dies. Now Hardy puts this view to the test. Alec's use and abuse of Tess would appear to confirm the validity of this position. But between Tess and Angel there is a good deal more than sexual impulse, though this is certainly in evidence. In the first place, Angel's love

of Tess is essentially romantic, an idealization of her actual manner and demeanour that is unable to incorporate the fact of her earlier, unfortunate experience. Angel shuns the traditional teachings of the Church, in matters of faith and doctrine, just as he rejects attempts at restoration, and he is looking about for a system of ethics not founded on dogma. But faced with the physical fact of Tess's 'impure' state, Angel falls back upon the old internalized morality and rejects his young bride. He cannot accept as mitigating the fact that she was only a child herself at the time of her liaison with Alec; it does not help that she was forced, by the man and by circumstances; it does not even help that he himself is guilty of the same indiscretion for which his young bride immediately and gladly forgives him.

In uttering the words of his rejection, "the woman I have been loving is not you, ...but another woman in your shape" (Tess, p. 192), Angel, with no true apprehension of what he is saying, clearly echoes Tess's own extraordinary insight into the vicissitudes of life, into Angel's character and the nature of his love for her. Hardy's narrator tells the reader with some sarcasm, "Nothing so pure, so sweet, so virginal as Tess had seemed possible all the long while that he had adored her, up to an hour ago; but 'The little less, and what worlds away!'" (Tess, p.

197). Angel's ideal, romantic love is nonetheless as real as Alec's physical lust, and with no less tragic consequences for Tess. His romantic idealism restricts his vision to the surface of things and his perception is thus faulty. The narrator suggests, with regard to Angel himself, that "some might risk the odd paradox that with more animalism he would have been the nobler man" (Tess, p. 205).

Hardy's description of Tess's love for Angel, on the other hand, suggests the possibility of still another kind of love between the sexes. As naturally sensual and physically responsive as Tess is to Angel, "There was hardly a touch of earth in her love for Clare" (Tess, p. 162). Tess's love is on a quite other plane, neither general and abstract nor simply tied to the immediate and particular, her love is pure, honest, unconditional, and absolute. Tess is characterized as an essentially innocent, compassionate individual, capable of the albeit limited and fleeting liberation that accompanies purely aesthetic experience. As a Hardyian heroine, however, Tess never embodies a Schopenhauerian self-consciousness; she never comes to know herself as will, as freedom. Instead, she often shares with Angel a dependence on old and traditional modes of knowledge which involve fear and superstition about family history and inherited traits,

curses, omens, and the tyranny of immediate, often mistaken, perception. Unable to appreciate the essentially virginal quality of Tess, forever old and forever new, her capacity for joyous and insightful living and loving, Angel leaves his home to travel to Brazil, thereby embarking upon his own doomed-from-the-start quest for redemption in the Hardyan world of phenomenality.

Tess takes up once more her own life's portion, mentally and emotionally stagnant, simply and automatically going through the motions of living and working. The life and the work become increasingly harsh and, in a passage that recalls Schopenhauer's reflections on life, Tess asks herself:

Was there another such a wretched being as she in the world? Thinking of her wasted life, she said 'All is vanity.' She repeated the words mechanically, till she reflected that this was a most inadequate thought for modern days. If all were only vanity, who would mind it? ...All was alas, worse than vanity--injustice, punishment, exaction, death. (*Tess*, p. 231, emphasis mine)

That life is more than vanity, that it is also a Schopenhauerian will-to-live with just those attributes Tess lists above, is thus not denied by Hardy. But Hardy insists that this picture is yet incomplete and does nothing to mend the matter. It is precisely the lack of justice in the world that Hardy and his Tess rail against. Tess, showing herself in harmony with nature as such, yet

knows intimately and well having experienced it for herself, that with the added and unnecessary cruelty of man, of out-moded traditions, and ethical codes and institutions which bear little relation to the actual lives of the individuals they must serve, natural fate and the circumstances of one's own personal character and historical identity become a burden impossible to bear.

What appears as a Schopenhauerian compassion, in fact a Darwinian "naturalism", is reflected in many of Tess's responses to the world and its inhabitants. At the same time, Hardy demonstrates the general absence of this quality in Tess's society. In her wanderings, Tess comes upon a flock of birds, raised for sport, many left still living but in abject misery by a recent shooting-party. Tess feels a natural affinity with the birds that allows her to relate directly to the suffering inflicted upon the helpless creatures by those less compassionate, who yet carry on, merely for tradition and sport, a hunt the real significance of which is hidden and forgotten beneath multiple layers of civilized life. Tess puts the birds out of their misery with her own hands.

'Poor darlings--to suppose myself the most miserable being on earth in the sight o' such misery as yours!' she exclaimed, her tears running down as she killed the birds tenderly. 'And not a twinge of bodily pain about me! I be not mangled, and I be not bleeding, and I have two hands to feed and clothe me.' She was

ashamed of herself for her gloom of the night, based on nothing more tangible than a sense of condemnation under an arbitrary law of society which had no foundation in Nature. (Tess, p. 233, emphasis mine)

We understand from the above, that society's condemnation of Tess is as careless and pitiless, as lacking in compassion and real civility or morality, as forgetful of the natural and historical processes, as society's purely traditional continuance of a hunting practice which no longer serves life in any practical way. It is just this kind of forgetfulness, this kind of unconscious repetition in the absence of real need and human compassion as this has evolved in the individual, a double 'sinning' of which Tess is least guilty, that raises her, of all the characters in the novel, to the status of heroine, and sustains her in that status in the face of all her life's experience to the very end.

In the midst of her and her family's want and suffering largely at the hands of a cruel and unjust society, Tess falters in her faith in Angel's ultimate return. Her letters to Angel, no less than her prayers, remain unanswered. With the death of Tess's father, according to the tradition of life-leasehold limited to several generations, and in the name of a morality which has lost sight of its basis in compassion, the Durbeyfield family is unceremoniously cast out of their home and driven

off the land. With Angel's return from Brazil, physically sick but also deeply remorseful, only to find Tess once more mistress of Alec, Tess is distraught with condemnation of Alec, of society's conduct as well as her own. When Alec taunts her and berates her husband, Tess fiercely defends Angel. She strikes Alec down with a vengeance reminiscent of the Schopenhauerian doctrine of eternal justice, rendered visible through Hardy's art. Tess's act is the fierce defence of Angel's life and indicative of the love she bears him; it is about the self-preservation and self-affirmation of the will-to-live in the face of a corrupt, modern society.

In Schopenhauer's philosophy, the world, indeed all life, is the outward expression of a mindless, ceaselessly striving will. The picture of life that emerges in Schopenhauer is that of endless suffering and misery as all life-forms prey upon each other in diabolical competition for continuance and well-being. The fundamental aspect of life, its constant round of willing/not willing, is egoism. In addition to earthly justice, limited and imperfect in its capacity to protect and defend individuals from one another, Schopenhauer speaks of an eternal justice, assured by the very fact that any obstructing of the will, any ill or injury sustained, no matter by which particular phenomenon, is suffered always and everywhere by the same

will as the inner nature of the world, as the thing-in-itself. An individual who has been severely wronged by another, or witnessed great wrong-doing, can strive to become the arm of this eternal justice by committing an act of murder against the perpetrator. In the following passage, Schopenhauer explains the inner significance of this phenomenon of revenge, or more properly, punishment.

This punishment is carried out by the individual, not by the State; nor is it in fulfilment of a law; on the contrary, it always concerns a deed which the State would not or could not punish, and whose punishment it condemns. It seems to me that the wrath which drives such a man so far beyond the limits of all self-love, springs from the deepest consciousness that he himself is the whole will-to-live that appears in all creatures through all periods of time, and that therefore the most distant future, like the present, belongs to him in the same way, and cannot be a matter of indifference to him. Affirming this will, he nevertheless desires that in the drama that presents its inner nature no such monstrous outrage shall ever appear again; and he wishes to frighten every future evildoer by the example of a revenge against which there is no wall of defence, as the fear of death does not deter the avenger. The will-to-live, though it still affirms itself here, no longer depends on the individual phenomenon, on the individual person, but embraces the Idea of man. It desires to keep the phenomenon of this Idea pure from such a monstrous and revolting outrage. It is a rare, significant, and even sublime trait of character by which the individual sacrifices himself, in that he strives to make himself the arm of eternal justice, whose true inner nature he still fails to recognize. (WR, 1 iv, sec. 64, p. 359)

For Hardy, the man Tess brutally destroys is also the representative of a corrupt society recoiled upon itself.

Afterwards, Tess runs after her husband, confesses the murder, and they spend several days together, evading the law, loving when they are not remembering, mindful always of the brevity of the time left, the enormity of the time wasted.

With the hanging of Tess and the actual close of the novel, " 'Justice' was done, and the President of the Immortals ...had ended his sport with Tess" (Tess, p. 330), but the artist has already immortalized her spirit and his art on the altar at Stonehenge. What is most interesting about the pre-hanging, mythic interlude before the end of the novel, so full of poetry and art, is that its setting at Stonehenge clearly pre-dates the whole tradition of western civilization and yet it is not prior to human civilization and spirituality. In invoking this infinite past and placing Tess so peacefully upon the stone altar there, Hardy intimates that the actual end of the novel, the later hanging of Tess, is more a requirement of the artist, his form (realistic novel), than any actual necessity. While Tess resigns herself to that inevitable suffering and death which she shares with all the world and against which she is powerless, her miserable life and horrible death appear as much necessitated by a blind, uncaring force in the form of an imperfect mechanism of societal and evolutionary processes. It is no

Schopenhauerian 'renunciation' we witness at Stonehenge, but a living sacrifice, affirmative of life and the forces that ordain and sustain it. It is a sacrifice, of prayer and homage, to Art and Truth as Hardy understood these, and to Hardy's optimistic faith in creative evolution (a faith he shared with many of his contemporaries) and in the regenerative powers of individuals (and societies) involved in the evolutionary process.³⁵

Tess is a novel densely-packed with antithetical ideas, literary, biblical, and philosophical allusions. Hardy employs various literary styles and conventions (realism, poetry, myth, illusion and dream, romance and legend) and narrative shifts in perspective and vision. His characters reflect Schopenhauer's peculiar subjective idealism and illustrate certain elements of the philosopher's ethics combined with a naturalism and romanticism of a kind not to be associated with Schopenhauer. But the most significant aspect of Tess in

³⁵In 1888, the year in which Hardy begins to compose Tess, he replies to an enquiry by Rev. Dr. A. B. Grosart as to the possibility of reconciling "some of the horrors of human and animal life, particularly parasitic" and "the absolute goodness and non-limitation of God." Hardy responds in the following manner: "Mr. Hardy regrets that he is unable to suggest any hypothesis which would reconcile the existence of such evils as Dr. Grosart describes with the idea of omnipotent goodness. Perhaps Dr. Grosart might be helped to a provisional view of the universe by the recently published Life of Darwin, and the works of Herbert Spencer and other agnostics" (Tess, appendix, p. 358).

relation to Schopenhauer's philosophy is the complete absence of a truly Schopenhauerian self-consciousness, with its double-knowledge of the world as representation and as will, with its unique redemptive possibilities and that transcendental freedom which it is.

Instead, Hardy portrays the individual as a natural, but also historical and social organism, part of a larger and living evolutionary system (society) with processive and developmental attributes analogous to those of the individual. In Tess, Hardy pits natural virtue ("pure woman") against corrupted social values (of nobility, morality, etc.). That this presupposes faith in the "essential goodness" of the will-to-live, its capacity for harmony and hence happiness, provides a clear criterion in determining just how far Hardy's Tess already departs from Schopenhauer's philosophy of pessimism. In Tess, considered from the point of view of Schopenhauer's philosophy, there is a purely circumstantial pessimism combined with a characteristic optimism not to be found in Schopenhauer. It is this difference of vision and perspective, essentially rejecting the metaphysical and remaining in the phenomenal, the physical and empirical, that informs and determines the structure and content of Tess, and even more so of the next two of Hardy's works to be discussed.

4. HARDY: REDEMPTION AND IMMANENTISM

Neither Henchard nor Tess, the protagonists of Hardy's novels discussed above are granted either the relative (elective) freedom or the transcendental freedom so central to Schopenhauer's philosophy. In the Hardyan world, absolute determinism reigns and there is no escape for the suffering individual as such. The antagonist in The Mayor is Henchard's own character and personality, fixed and unalterable for all time. So far so good. But short of a clear and unobscured penetration of the Schopenhauerian 'veil of maya' and the self-renunciation and realization of transcendental freedom which can accompany such insight and clarity of vision, possibilities Hardy never affords his heroes and heroines, there is no real hope or salvation for Henchard. In Tess, Hardy does not assign the role of antagonist to the inexorability of character and the determinism (absolute in Hardy, modified or relative in Schopenhauer) that governs phenomenal existence, as in The Mayor. The role of antagonist is instead assigned, as we have seen above, to society, or to the human environment, whose 'characteristics' are only apparently, and indeed artificially and mistakenly, maintained as immutable. Thus, while the individual as such cannot change and is wholly determined by its character, the species as a whole can and ought to change and evolve, together with the

environment (the social or cultural realm) in which it dwells. In Tess, the natural will-to-live reasserts itself again and again, refusing to be denied or repressed within a mean and restrictive social order. This bias in Hardy's art, toward the affirmation of the will-to-live as an absolute and prime cause operating within an otherwise thoroughly determined universe, represents a marked departure from Schopenhauer's philosophy.

4.1. Species vs. Culture: Jude the Obscure

In Jude the Obscure,³⁶ Hardy represents the conflict within the self (the natural and the ideal) as the internalization of the outer conflict between nature and culture. Hardy depicts in this novel the urbane together with the rustic, the larger all-encompassing society as one huge "corporeal frame", surrounding the subjectively, historically, geographically located individual.

Unlike Tess in the earlier novel, and indeed Arabella here, Jude is consistently characterized as at odds both within himself and also with the natural and social environment. As a young boy, for example, Jude is directed to drive birds from the farm crops they would devour and he

³⁶Thomas Hardy, Jude the Obscure (New York: Harper & Row, 1966).

is severely reprimanded for the misguided compassion that leads him to disobey the farmer and feed the hungry birds.

Nature's logic was too horrid for him to care for. That mercy towards one set of creatures was cruelty towards another sickened his sense of harmony. As you got older, and felt yourself to be at the centre of your time, and not at a point in its circumference, as you had felt when you were little, you were seized with a sort of shuddering, he perceived. All around you there seemed to be something glaring, garish rattling, and the noises and glares hit upon the little cell called your life, and shook it, and warped it. (*Jude*, part 1, ch. 11, p. 62-63, emphasis mine).

In the first part of the above passage, Hardy remains somewhat faithful to a Schopenhauerian view of the world if one keeps in mind that underlying all phenomenal existence is the metaphysical will, inherently illogical. But in those lines emphasized above, the artist introduces an idea which is essentially empiricist and antithetical to the idealism of Schopenhauer's philosophy. That nature, human or otherwise is cruel and capricious is, according to Schopenhauer, a philosophical truth with a metaphysical foundation. But that there is something apart from and outside the individual, an absolute or uncaused cause which enters into a causal relation with the individual, betrays a latent empiricism and illegitimate extension of the principle of causality which Schopenhauer would summarily reject.

The temporal unfolding of Jude's character presents an image of a naive natural life seeking vainly to accommodate itself to cultivated society. We see Jude gaze upon the town of Christminster from his distant perch atop the hills of his own village, the town appearing to him as a beacon of light and hope. He struggles to learn Greek and Latin, imagining there to exist in the grammars of these ancient tongues simple rules and prescriptions which would enable him to transmute at will and with mathematical precision the speech of his native tongue into that of a foreign one (Jude, part 1, Ch. iv, p. 72-73). He soon discovers that the law of transmutation he seeks must lie elsewhere than in the grammarians' books and he sets about on a quest for the key that would open the door to health and happiness, the 'good' life, beginning with a course of 'private study' in Greek literature and philosophy. But he is doomed to failure in his quest to discover the law by which lived experience and living languages are to be faithfully translated into the written words and civil and ethical codes of society.

Jude finds no harmony between pre-Christian literature and the culture of the mediaeval colleges at Christminster, "that ecclesiastical romance in stone" (Jude, 1 iv, p. 77), and he marvels at his own inconsistency in aiming for the latter while submerged in the former. He recovers himself

and looks to the means of realizing his goal of becoming a scholar and ordained minister: "I can work hard. I have staying power in abundance, thank God! and it is that which tells. ...Yes, Christminster shall be my Alma Mater; and I'll be her beloved son, in whom she shall be well pleased" (*Jude*, 1 vi, p. 81). This tendency of human subjectivity to view itself as the center and sole support of the world is well described in Schopenhauer's philosophy. As in Schopenhauer, harsh reality, that is, the world considered from an objective point of view as opposed to a merely subjective one, soon impresses itself upon Jude, the impractical dreamer. However, the metaphor of the 'key' to transmutation at will remains a central and unifying metaphor throughout Jude's life as he attempts to discover, or construct, a world sympathetic to and supportive of his aims and desires.

Having identified himself with a spiritual ideal, imagining himself as a Christ-like figure no less, and seeing in the colleges and churches of Christminster the natural home of this ideal, Jude unfortunately meets Arabella. Hardy's description of their fateful meeting, when Jude's meditations are interrupted with a pig's dismembered penis thrown at him by "a complete and substantial female animal," Arabella, is full of humour and irony, serving to determine by contrast the characters of

both Jude and Arabella, only to then underscore a hidden and underlying commonality.

It had been no vestal who chose that missile for opening her attack on him. He saw this with his intellectual eye, just for a short fleeting while, as by the light of a falling lamp one might momentarily see an inscription on a wall before being enshrouded in darkness. And then this passing discriminative power was withdrawn, and Jude was lost to all conditions of things in the advent of a fresh and wild pleasure, that of having found a new channel for emotional interest hitherto unsuspected, though it had lain close beside him. (Jude 1 vi, p. 85)

The two become sexually intimate and Jude marries Arabella, as convention demands, under the misapprehension (deliberately fostered by Arabella) that she is pregnant by him. The sexual impulse of the species is a primordial and powerful natural urge in Hardy, as in Schopenhauer. Till now dormant in Jude, this urge is rudely but thoroughly awakened by Arabella and Jude's intellectual hopes and aspirations are quickly cast aside. In delineating the intellectual, as well as the natural or instinctual character of Jude, Hardy underlines the contradictions and inconsistencies in Jude's stated or imagined aims and desires and his actual behavior which is governed by the more prior, insistent and, as yet unconscious, demands and restrictions of his inherent character, innate abilities, and natural proclivities. Jude imagines himself as an intellectual, a scholar, naturally drawn to the scientific

and philosophical environs of the University at Christminster. But Jude finds himself physically outside Christminster, excluded from the world it represents by the accident of his birth, his social class, his lack of formal education, and not least, his own contrary, inconsistent, and essentially weak character. Here Hardy explores the inherent conflict between the naive or natural, and the ideal or cultivated self.

Once abandoned by Arabella, Jude goes to Christminster and falls in love with his cousin, Sue Brideshead, drawn by her apparent independence of and refusal to be in any way limited to or governed by such matters as the natural demands of species (sexuality and reproduction), the circumstances of her own birth and class, institutional law and societal and ethical codes and conventions. The reader learns, in the unfolding plot of Jude, that Sue, also, is a divided self. She is physically attracted to Jude, despite all her insistence to the contrary, in spite of her constant and strained efforts to repress her natural feelings in favour of a purely intellectual and spiritual relationship with him. Rejecting what she perceives to be the superstitions and absurdities of church dogma and medieval philosophy alike, Sue is at once instinctively drawn to the images of pagan deities and embarrassed and remorseful about her own responses to these images. She is

aware of her own contrariness which leads her first to want Jude then to repel his more amorous advances in favor of marriage to the less attractive and undemanding Master Phillotson, Jude's childhood friend and teacher. Jude would accept a relationship with Sue on almost any terms, if he could overcome the demands of his own body, but he cannot. When the threat of Arabella looms large in Sue's life, the jealousy aroused in Sue allows her to overcome her disdain of physical union and dependency. Divorced from Phillotson, Sue submits to Jude who happily accepts her submission while seeing himself as the seducer of ideal purity and desecrator of their ideal love. But the essential disparity between 'ideal' human nature and individual personality, as well as the antagonisms between individuals and society, as we have seen in Schopenhauer's philosophy, are not so easily overcome, much less remedied. It is precisely Hardy's emphasis on these conflicts, pressed to discover, with Jude, a key to reconciliation, harmony, integration, while yet remaining always at the level of species-being and culture, which differentiates Hardy's philosophical standpoint (empiricism, phenomenality) from that of Schopenhauer (idealism,

metaphysics).³⁷

Sue steadfastly refuses to marry Jude, as dictated by Church and Society, even though Sue and Jude are both divorced from their former spouses. The conflicts that characterize human love and sexuality are described in abstract terms by Schopenhauer. Hardy renders these visible in the following exchange between Sue and Jude.

'Apart from ourselves, and our unhappy peculiarities, it is foreign to a man's nature to go on loving a person when he is told that he must and shall be that person's lover. There would be a much likelier chance of his doing it if he were told not to love.'
... 'Yes; but admitting this, or something like it, to be true, you are not the only one in the world to see it, dear little Sue. People go on marrying because they can't resist natural forces, although many of them may know perfectly well that they are possibly buying a month's pleasure with a life's discomfort. ... But you, Sue, are such a phantasmal, bodiless creature, one who--if you'll allow me to say it--has so little animal passion in you, that you can act upon reason in the matter, when we poor unfortunate wretches of grosser substance can't.'
(Jude. V i, p. 300)

What Jude fails to realize here, of course, though he ultimately achieves some insight into the matter, is that

³⁷Ian Gregor, "An End and a Beginning: Jude the Obscure", Thomas Hardy's Jude the Obscure, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Chelsea House, 1987). Gregor states the matter thus: "From one point of view we feel Jude is the work of a man for whom the universe makes-or ought to make-rational sense; it is something "out there" to be interrogated, pondered over. And the interrogator, though he may be skeptical in his enquiry, frustrated and disappointed by his conclusions, is never in doubt about the validity or the importance of his undertaking" (p. 38).

Sue is essentially self-centered, egoistical, and absolutist in her craving to be loved. Her avowed independence of received traditions, and of sexuality, is rather a defense mechanism and repression since she fails to appreciate the positive value of either in relation to her own needs. For Hardy, the fact that all such contradictions are explained in Schopenhauer's metaphysics of the will, as of character, does nothing to remedy the actual lived and painful existence depicted here.

A Schopenhauerian self-renunciation, the denial of that will-to-live which is at the heart of all existence, denial of the determination and insistence with which it asserts and re-asserts itself, is seen by Hardy, if not as a contradiction, then at the very least, as beyond the governance and control of ordinary human subjectivity. Nor, if it occurs at all, does it alleviate, on the part of all life, the actual suffering attendant on its continuance, and continue it does, if not on the part of the individual, then certainly in so far as life in general, species-being, is concerned. In a Hardyan world, individual freedom in the Schopenhauerian sense, whether the relative freedom of human understanding, the momentary freedom that accompanies aesthetic experience, or transcendental freedom as embodied by the ascetic, is

altogether non-existent.³⁸

For Hardy, every seeming accident, chance, coincidence, is really necessitated, wholly determined by conditions and laws, by the inherent character of the individual and the nature of the world in which he exists.

But that underlying the whole of the phenomenal world and the necessity of its laws is the metaphysical will, absolutely free, essentially aimless, indifferent, eternal, and immutable, is an aspect of Schopenhauer's philosophy that leads to an altogether too pessimistic view of existence holding out but a single hope, while making it virtually impossible for the ordinary man to even conceive of such a hope, much less to realise it. In Jude, Hardy attempts to re-define and characterize human existence in more optimistic ways which permit possibilities of salvation that Schopenhauer would have scorned, for example, the translation of natural laws into civil codes, harmonious integration of the opposing realms of nature and culture.

Sue marries, then divorces, Master Phillotson, she

³⁸It might be argued that Tess, in the earlier novel, experiences the Schopenhauerian fleeting and momentary freedom from the incessant demands of the will in her aesthetic experience of nature. Indeed, Kelly argues just that. However, I suggest that this Schopenhauerian doctrine has already undergone considerable revision in Hardy's Tess under the influence of Darwinian theories which Hardy in turn adapts to suit his artistic purposes.

rejects, then accepts, an intimate relationship with Jude, and "possibly she would go on inflicting such pains again and again, and grieving for the sufferer again and again, in all her colossal inconsistency" (Jude, III vii, p. 217). Jude, on the other hand, marries Arabella, although she twice deserts the impractical and tormented Jude, first for an exciting and unencumbered life in Australia, and finally simply for life itself and on any terms. The union of Sue and Jude which occurs between these two leave-takings on the part of Arabella is no simple matter, either for Jude and Sue, or for their more conventional society. The introduction into their union of several children of their own, along with Little Jude, the issue of Jude's earlier encounter with Arabella, serves only to exacerbate an already impossible situation. Hardy draws on the vast bodies of philosophy, art, literature, biblical writings, myth, superstition and legend to characterize at once the suitability, and unsuitability, of their unconventional and unsanctioned union in the face of the suffering and injustice which life, manifesting itself in the form of nature, on the one hand, and society on the other, heaps upon Jude and Sue.

Little Jude's role in the novel, at once a sensitive young child and a choric character of uncommon vision and insight, prefigures the artistic vision and accompanying

form of Hardy's later work The Dynasts.³⁹ It is this child, born of Jude's unfortunate marriage to Arabella, who turns on his half-siblings and on himself, committing both multiple murders and suicide. Little Jude, or Father Time as he is usually called, shares and witnesses the suffering of his family, reduced to wandering homeless and impoverished, and he takes seriously the gloomy observations of Sue, selfishly and carelessly uttered in the presence of the sensitive child whose scribbled note of explanation for his actions simply states, "Done because we are too menny" (Jude VI ii, p. 376). It is not unreasonable to understand Jude's words of comfort to Sue as at once a shifting of responsibility away from the individual, whose actions are wholly necessitated in Hardy, and also as reflecting Hardy's fundamental criticism of Schopenhauer's renunciatory philosophy, of idealism in general.

'It was in his nature to do it,' said Jude. 'The doctor says there are such boys springing up amongst us--boys of a sort unknown in the last generation--the outcome of new views of life. They seem to see all its terrors before they are old enough to have staying power to resist them. He says it is the beginning of the coming universal wish not to live. He's an advanced man, the doctor; but he can give no consolation... .' (Jude VI 11, p. 376)

³⁹Thomas Hardy, The Dynasts: An Epic Drama (London: Macmillan, 1978).

And it is precisely consolation, relief, remedies and prescriptions which Hardy, and Jude, seek. Following this catastrophic event, necessarily brought about by the coincidence of particular individuals, with particular and unalterable characters, in a particular place and time, Sue returns to Phillotson and a drunken Jude allows himself what remains for him the questionable and fleeting pleasures of Arabella's awaiting arms and the more questionable and lasting bond of renewed marriage vows. Jude locates the cause of his own suffering and that of his family in something outside themselves as such. He fails to recognize that his impractical nature, his idealism which remains wholly subjective, and the attempts to repress natural proclivities and to reject the support and direction of community and its conventions, provide the occasion for all the misery. In their nomadic existence, they suffer, says Jude:

Because of a cloud that has gathered over us; though "we have wronged no man, corrupted no man, defrauded no man!" Though perhaps we have "done that which was right in our own eyes." (Jude V vi, p. 349)

Hardy also places the cause of their harsh and gloomy fate beyond the governance and control of the individuals involved. Jude and Sue, as particular individuals, mirror within and between themselves, the conflict between nature (species-being) and culture (social order). From a

Schopenhauerian point of view, there can be no redemption here; yet, Hardy deliberately confines his enquiry to this sphere of the phenomenal. Hardy is aware of the nature and limitations of his own standpoint. This is evident in Sue's reply to Jude:

We said--do you remember? that we would make a virtue of joy. I said it was Nature's intention, Nature's law and raison d'être that we should be joyful in what instincts she afforded us--instincts which civilization had taken upon itself to thwart. What dreadful things I said! And now Fate has given us this stab in the back for being such fools as to take Nature at her word! (Jude VI ii, p. 378)

Neither Jude nor Sue discover the key to harmony between the ideal and the real, between inner and outer self, between nature and culture. In her grief and desire to appease the powers that be, nature, fate, modern society, none of which she is able to successfully control, oppose or manipulate to serve her own ends, Sue returns once again to Phillotson and commits herself to the penance and self-imposed limitations of a loveless and essentially sterile marriage, for her a form of living death, renouncing the natural inclinations of both body and spirit. Jude accepts Sue's withdrawal, failing to recognize in it a characteristic selfishness and repressiveness. He once more falls victim to the natural candour and cunning of the luscious and earthy Arabella whose appeal, in proper Schopenhauerian terms, is to sexual

impulse, the practicalities of progeny, physical health and well-being present in all living organisms and to the securing of one's own peculiar place within the society, and class, to which one is born. Jude remains, however, simply unable to bring into harmony his ideals and the reality of his life, his intellectual dreams and the demands of his body, his behavior and conduct and the rules and restrictions of society. Repentant of what he perceives as his seduction of Sue, Jude unites himself once more with Arabella. He adopts a degenerate way of life, despising Arabella even while he needs her to survive, but in the end even she cannot sustain that particular manifestation of life which rejects the limitations and conditions under which life must be borne.

Reflecting on this final painful turn, in the turn and turn about again pattern that has characterized their existence, Jude gives the following account of the fate he and Sue have shared and suggests a possible remedy to the difficulties and trials which were theirs to bear.

Sue was once a woman whose intellect was to mine like a star to a benzoline lamp: who saw all my superstitions as cobwebs that she could brush away with a word. Then bitter affliction came to us, and her intellect broke, and she veered round to darkness. ...And now the ultimate horror has come--her giving herself away like this to what she loathes, in her enslavement to forms!--she, so sensitive, so shrinking, that the very wind seemed to blow on her with a touch of deference. ...As for Sue and me when we were at our own

best, long ago--when our minds were clear, and our love of truth fearless--the time was not ripe for us! our ideas were fifty years too soon to be any good to us. And so the resistance they met with brought reaction in her, and recklessness and ruin on me! (Jude VI x, p. 441)

Though Jude appreciates here that he has been symbolically unmanned and spiritually ruined by Sue, who then herself commits a symbolic suicide, he never acquires a true insight into the nature of their mutual misery and failure, he fails to discover the long-sought-after key to the harmony of existence except that it is, perhaps, a matter of time and circumstance.

Jude finally succumbs to a fatal condition, deliberately courted by his now all-consuming desire to be done with the misery that is his particular life. He dies in righteous indignation, bitter and angry, with the curses of Job on his lips and none but Arabella, already about the business of life and finding a substitute-husband, to answer his cry. In Hardy's novel, it is ironically fitting that in the absence of that redemption which is open to the individual in Schopenhauer's renunciatory philosophy, and the similar absence of the Incarnation and Resurrection as Christianity's answer to Job, it is Arabella, "the complete and substantial animal" who survives the multiple murders and suicides in Hardy's novel.

In Jude the Obscure, Hardy represents imperfect,

necessarily flawed, human nature, placing this within a no less defective environment, human society. He concentrates his artistic energies on rendering visible the conflicts and contradictions within the individual as such, and between the individual and society; the Schopenhauerian doctrine of the metaphysical will is conspicuously absent from view.⁴⁰ Hardy continues to illustrate much of Schopenhauer's epistemology and to affirm his doctrine of compassion-based ethics, though this ethics is without its metaphysical foundation and rather relies on the notions of 'natural sympathy' and 'shared humanity'.

It becomes increasingly evident in Jude, that the artist does not share Schopenhauer's intellectual pessimism, based on the latter's characterization of the absolute freedom of the will, viewed transcendently and understood as the necessary presupposition of morality. Nor does Hardy accept what he perceives as the dark and gloomy consequences of Schopenhauer's philosophy regarding the determinism which rules over all merely empirical and phenomenal existence. Hardy's pessimism stems rather from the conditions of life than the inherent nature of life, and it is upon the former that he focuses his artistic vision. Hardy's pessimism is in this sense deeper (since

⁴⁰In a novel restricted by the demands of realism, it is difficult to see how this could be otherwise.

it denies freedom and redemptive-consciousness) and at the same time incomplete; there is a residue of a need, a moral demand that innocence ought not be offended even while it inevitably is. Jude's innocence, for example, is already corrupted by his acquired desire to live up to an intellectual and moral ideal, even as the more subtle encroachment of conventional society bears down upon innocent nature.

Jude's failure as a man is a failure of character, of substance, of language, none of which is within his power to govern or control. His peculiar character (peculiar not in the sense of Schopenhauerian self-consciousness but in the Hardyian sense of an 'ideal natural individual') is simply and disastrously aligned with a peculiar social order, and it is a very poor fit indeed. This unsuitability, however, is not, as Jude imagines, because his needs and aspirations are out of sorts with his time, but because he (and society as a whole) is without the means to translate these into the practicalities of survival, happiness and well-being. Jude dies, not because he rejects or renounces life as such, but because he fails to resolve the conflicts of his own real and ideal nature, the internalized conflict between species-being and culture wherein the individual appears impotent and insignificant, able only to curse, and to rail, and finally, to die.

Behind Hardy's explicit social criticism, of the marriage laws, the universities, property rights, etc. lies a belief that the conventionality, the explicit grammars or rules governing the laws, institutions, social and ethical codes yet reflect a deeper, and for the main characters in Jude, as yet uncomprehended, still untranslated, language of life itself. Essentially a fatalist, deterministic and pessimistic, Hardy continues to seek out some ultimate aim, purpose, meaning and rational order in the universe.

4.2. The Immanent Will: The Dynasts

The context in which one might profitably understand Hardy's movement from the form of the novel and the constraints of literary realism to that of epic-drama, and the transition from the realistic representation of individuals and societies to the imaginative play or fable of The Dynasts, peopled by puppets and governed by Spirits of an imaginary Overworld, is alluded to in Ernest Brennecke's Thomas Hardy's Universe⁴¹. In quoting from William Archer's Real Conversations, Brennecke points to a certain antipathy between the practical and meliorist views and conclusions that emerge in Hardy's oeuvre and the

⁴¹Ernest Brennecke, Jr., Thomas Hardy's Universe: A Study of a Poet's Mind (London: Adelphi Terrace, 1924).

necessary consequences of the Schopenhauerian philosophy, this last an unmistakable element of Hardy's artistic output.

'The world often seems to me,' said Hardy to Mr. Archer, 'like a half-expressed, an ill-expressed idea. ...There may be a consciousness, infinitely afar off, at the other end of phenomena, always striving to express itself, and always baffled and blundering, just as the spirits seem to be... My pessimism, if pessimism it be, does not involve that the world is going to the dogs, and that Ahriman is winning all along the line. On the contrary, my practical philosophy is distinctly meliorist. What are my books but one plea against 'man's inhumanity to man,' to woman- and to the lower animals. ...Whatever may be the inherent good or evil of life, it is certain that men make it much worse than it need be. When we have got rid of a thousand remediable ills, it will be time enough to determine whether the ill that is irremediable outweighs the good.' (Thomas Hardy's Universe, p. 146, emphases mine)

Schopenhauer would certainly not have argued against the notion of a more compassionate society, which is precisely what Hardy calls for here. But the notion that the metaphysical will manifesting itself in all the forms and gradations of life is half-conscious, half-thinking, or that it is somehow a first cause in an infinite series of causes, are ideas Schopenhauer would surely reject.

Hardy's shift in interest and focus, away from the universal and metaphysical will considered from the point of view of individual subjectivity as the eternal and indivisible inner nature of all phenomena in Schopenhauer's

philosophy, toward forces and mechanisms at work in the phenomenal world, viewed from some privileged position above, beyond, outside, the spatio-temporal realm itself, serves to distinguish Hardy's vision from that of Schopenhauer's, clearly illuminating what is unique and original in both. Hardy now has in hand a vision less concerned with realistic presentation of the conditions of life than with an assurance that there is, after all, an ultimate plan, purpose, design, as yet incomplete and uncomprehended.

In keeping with much of late-nineteenth century thought, Hardy views the natural (physical /biological) and the socio/historical factors of the individual's life and of society, as an 'organic' process essentially interrelated and adaptive to individual and collective requirements. This notion of evolutionary change, development and renewal is antithetical to Schopenhauer's views and rather reflects a Darwinian influence. Schopenhauer would most assuredly reject any latent idealism in Darwinian evolutionary theories which assumes a progress toward rationality, perfectibility, etc. Such a message, representing a huge revision of his earlier views regarding the inscrutability of existence while at the same time holding some hope at least in the possibility of the individual as such achieving some sort of balance

and harmony within himself and between himself and society, necessitates also a complete revision of artistic form.

The Dynasts, as William R. Rutland states so eloquently in Thomas Hardy, is surely to be counted one of the great contributions to Western arts and letters.

The Dynasts is to-day the greatest imaginative representation of the Napoleonic epoch in the literature of Western Europe. As far as English is concerned, it is likely to remain without successors, as it was without forerunners. No major English poet before Hardy had cared to dedicate himself to that theme; and after Hardy none will either dare or desire to sing again the lay he sang once for all. (Thomas Hardy, p. 271)

But it is in the work's philosophical underpinnings that our present interests lie rather than in its artistic merit, its literary and revisionist interpretation and presentation of historical events, or in details of plot. In The Dynasts, there is indeed a metaphysical foundation to be discerned, but it is far removed from a Schopenhauerian metaphysics and it is more prescriptive than descriptive. There can be no doubt that the seed of the Hardyan metaphysic of The Dynasts is to be found in Schopenhauer's doctrine of the metaphysical will. But Hardy has so revised that doctrine under the influence of other philosophies and theories, as well as his own evolving artistic vision, that the nature of the world and the will as articulated and demonstrated by the German metaphysician is barely discernible. That the inner nature

of existence is without order, design, or meaning in the sense of ultimate aim or purpose is intellectually conceivable, but for Hardy such a view is impractical and is not borne out in the scientific assumptions and hypotheses of his day. In empiricism, in positivism,⁴² and in Darwinian theories of evolution, Hardy discerns the possibility of harmony and happiness in the perfectibility of species and mutual adaptation between individual organisms and their environment. Applying a scientific model to human beings (rational and social animals) and their natural environment (society, history, culture, etc.), the choric spirits of The Dynasts, describe, lament, and finally diagnose and prescribe for the inherent problem of human suffering in the world which appears as the consequence of an incompleteness in the realization of a universal Unconscious will in the conscious, finite sufferings and actions of individuals.

⁴²W. R. Rutland. Thomas Hardy: A Study of his Writings and their Background (New York: Chelsea House, 1987) pp. 83ff. Rutland discusses Hardy's reading of Auguste Comte in the 1870's. Rutland argues that Comte's philosophy of positivism and his "attempt to devise an immanentist religion in which a transcendent God was displaced by Humanity, conceived as a single entity and advancing towards perfection" would not have been congenial to Hardy's thought (p. 84). Still, Rutland gives the following extract from Hardy's diary for 1880: "If Comte had introduced Christ among the worthies in his calendar, it would have made Positivism tolerable to thousands who, from position, family connection or early education, now decry what in their heart of hearts they hold to contain the germs of a true system."

Hardy's epic-drama presents the advance of Napoleon and his armies through Europe with a good deal of faithfulness to the historical personages and events, but it represents the General, the later self-declared Emperor, the soldiery and the inhabitants of Europe, as altogether mere puppets that move and act out their little parts in accordance with the inter-woven designs of the Immanent Will's activity. The Spirit of the Earth asks, "What of the Immanent Will and Its designs?" and the Spirit of the Years responds:

It works unconsciously, as heretofore,/Eternal
artistry in Circumstance,/ Whose patterns,
wrought by rapt aesthetic rote,/ Seem in
themselves Its single listless aim,/ And not
their consequence. (Dynasts pt. 1, act 1, sc. 1)

Thus, underlying the seeming whims and fancies of Napoleon, with their inevitable consequences, the dictates of war, and the inevitability of fate and human history, is the great Unconscious, "unweeting why or whence" its own pulsations. As the chorus of the Spirits observe and reflect upon the passing images of human history, in all its misery and savagery, blood and lust, heroism and betrayal, lofty ideals and harsh realities, they note that Napoleon's time is far removed, in spirit, as well as place and time, from Christianity whose rites and rituals are yet practiced and observed in Napoleon's Europe. The Church, in its hypocritical embrace of Bonaparte, as Emperor rather

than Liberator, shuns convention and right and sides with revolution and might, merely honouring and upholding that which might best serve its own material wealth and well-being. But the Spirit of the Years points out that it is the Unconscious which is the Cause of things and Napoleon's "acts do but outshape Its governing" (Part 1, I vi, p. 65), as indeed do the deeds of all involved in the human drama Hardy displays here.

Hardy's evolving vision of the universe in The Dynast's is described in extracts from Hardy's personal notebooks quoted by Rutland:

Consider a grand drama, based on the wars with Napoleon, or some one campaign. ...Mode for a historical Drama. Action mostly automatic; reflex movement, etc. Not the result of what is called motive, though always ostensibly so, even to the actors' own consciousness. ...Write a history of human automatism or impulsion--namely an account of human action in spite of human knowledge, showing how very far conduct lags behind the knowledge that should really guide it. ...The human race to be shown as one great network or tissue which quivers in every part when one point is shaken, like a spider's web if touched. Abstract realisms of Spirits, Spectral Figures, etc. (Thomas Hardy, p. 276)

It is this conception which faithfully materializes in Hardy's epic-drama. In the stage-direction of the Forescene, Hardy establishes the Spirit Chorus in the Overworld and describes the terrestrial world as the anatomy of the Immanent Will. The Spirits look down upon Europe, "a prone and emaciated figure, ...where the

peoples, distressed by events which they did not cause, are seen writhing, crawling, heaving, and vibrating in their various cities and nationalities. In his stage direction, Hardy says, "a new and penetrating light descends on the spectacle, enduing men and things with a seeming transparency, and exhibiting as one organism the anatomy of life and movement in all humanity and vitalized matter included in the display" (Forescene, emphasis mine). Not even the Spirits are able to fully comprehend and justify the cause of the misery and upheavals, of individuals, of peoples, of dynasties which they witness during the era of the Napoleonic Wars. Hardy elaborates the tale of Europe, particularly of England and France, during the era in question, in a manner unparalleled in English letters, but it is the debate between the Spirits in the Forescene and the later Afterscene which concerns us for the most part in relation to Schopenhauer's philosophy.

This debate, like the tale of war which is its occasion, with its conclusions already drawn, begins in the Forescene as the Spirit of the Pities observes:

Amid this scene of bodies substantive /Strange
waves I sight like winds grown visible, Which
bear men's forms on their innumerable coils,
/Twining and serpentine round and through,
/Also retracting threads like gossamers-- /Except
in being irresistible-- /Which complicate with
some, and balance all.

And the Spirit of the Years interjects:

These are the Prime Volitions,--fibrils, veins,
/Will-tissues, nerves, and pulses of the Cause,
/That heave throughout the Earth's compositure.
/Their sum is like the lobule of a Brain
/Evolving always that it wots not of; /A Brain
whose whole connotes the Everywhere, /And whose
procedure may but be discerned /By phantom eyes
like ours; the while unguessed / Of those it
stirs, who (even as ye do) dream /Their motions
free, their orderings supreme; /Each life apart
from each, with power to mete /Its own day's
measures; balanced, self-complete; /Though they
subsist but atoms of the One /Labouring through
all, divisible from none. ...

And finally, the General Chorus of Intelligences concludes
the opening speeches:

We'll close up Time, as a bird its van, /We'll
traverse Space, as spirits can, /Link pulses
severed by leagues and years, / Bring cradles
into touch with biers; /So that the far-off
Consequence appears /Prompt at the heel of
foregone Cause. The Prime, that willed ere
wareness was, /Whose Brain perchance is Space,
whose Thought its laws, /Which we as threads and
streams discern, /We may muse on, never learn.

Now there are several key philosophical ideas presented in
the above exchange which illuminate the question of the
relation between Hardy's art and Schopenhauer's philosophy.
According to Schopenhauer, one never can stand outside
history, as Hardy's Spirits do, with all its apparent
movements, changes, upheavals, and somehow discern from
some superior and autonomous position, a meaningful and
purposive pattern in the whole. Schopenhauer rejects such
"historical philosophising", and he maintains from the
point of view of subjectivity, always rooted in the world,

that 'purpose' is ever and only relative to phenomenal contexts and therefore also illusory because such 'purpose' belongs only to the manifest world - while that which so manifests itself, the will as such, is utterly free and in no sense purposive. While individuals are relatively free and, barring any obstacle, can only do what they will in accordance with what they are, for Schopenhauer there is also transcendental freedom. That is, in so far as individuals become conscious of the inner nature of the empirical world and of their essential unity with the metaphysical will, they are truly free and can truly will what they will. No such freedom exists in the Hardyan universe.

For Schopenhauer, the phenomenal world is wholly determined by and subject to the principle of sufficient reason. One form in which this principle finds expression is the law of motivation, itself a form of the principle of causality. But those motives which determine the individual to action are intimately related to the intelligible, fixed and unalterable character of the individual as this unfolds itself through time and which is rendered visible in the deeds and acts of the individual over time. Furthermore, the moral character with sufficient insight into his own peculiar nature and into that of the world at large as essentially the manifestation

of the metaphysical will-to-live, and apprehending the misery and futility of all willing, may take hold of that transcendental freedom which he thus beholds, and which he is essentially, and find salvation in a complete abnegation of the will-to-live.

In The Dynasts, there is for man no relative freedom, in the sense of a freedom qualitatively as well as quantitatively greater than that of merely instinctual, perceptive animals. Nor is there a transcendental freedom as in Schopenhauer's philosophy. Man and animal alike are crawling, writhing, automatons, responding by reflex within the great web-like tapestry woven by the Unconscious and Immanent Will. In the Hardy world, as opposed to that of Schopenhauer, man is not his own fate, character is not its own destiny, individuals in their particularity are not one with the metaphysical will only viewed from the outside. In The Dynasts, the individual is neither free nor responsible and there is nothing to distinguish the moron from the genius, the egoistic and malicious from the compassionate and courageous, however Hardy might account for the many acts of heroism and human compassion he permits and so powerfully displays amidst the cruelty and stupidity of war.

In Hardy's epic drama, man, as all else in the essentially man-centered universe, is the puppet of the

will, his fate and destiny caused, predetermined once for all, by the Prime Will. It is man's terrible misfortune to be born at all, and it is a chance and frightful accident befalling him that he should come to full awareness of this misfortune. On the one hand, the Spirit of the Years informs the reader:

The cognizance ye mourn, life's doom to feel, /If
I report it meetly, came unmeant, /Emerging with
blind gropes from impercipience / By listless
sequence--luckless tragic chance, / In your more
human tongue. (Pt. I, Act v, Sc. iv.)

But as Schopenhauerian as this at first appears, Hardy is anything but consistent in his presentation of the nature of the Immanent Will. Throughout The Dynasts, all is rigidly predetermined:

Ere systemed suns were globed and lit /The
slaughters of the race were writ, /And wasting
wars by land and sea / fixed, like all else,
immutably. (Pt. I, Act ii, Sc. v.)

O innocents, can ye forget /That things to be
were shaped and set /Ere mortals and this planet
met? (Pt. I, Act vi, Sc. iii)

Thus everything in the Hardyan universe is predetermined on the one hand, and caused by the unconscious, tentative, gropings of the will on the other hand. Rutland, in pointing to the inconsistencies of the above passages, seeing these as irreconcilable even given that the Schopenhauerian Will is not subject to the forms of time, space and causality, views Hardy's epic-drama as

essentially flawed in terms of its own internal logic.⁴³ Such determinism as there is in Hardy's epic-drama may very well presuppose causation, but it is surely irreconcilable with the view of an absolutely free, all-powerful, all-moving, yet unconscious, unknowing, will. Causation entails temporality, predetermination presupposes intelligence and subjection to time. If events are prefixed from all eternity, then the will cannot be free; if all is indeed predetermined, then the will cannot be completely lacking reason in its designs.

For Schopenhauer, all meaning, order, truth, and rationale belong to the world which is wholly phenomenal and subject to the laws of time, space, causality, variously expressed by the principle of sufficient reason. Viewed metaphysically, the Schopenhauerian world is anything but man-centered or law-abiding. Hardy remains, however, always at the level of phenomenality and historicity. In Hardy, perception is irremediably

⁴³Ibid., (p. 349ff) Rutland expresses his dissatisfaction in the following manner: "Hardy professed to be indifferent to inconsistencies in the philosophy of the Dynasts, on the ground that he did not advance the work as a system of thought, but as a poem. And yet in the fifth paragraph of his Preface he not only shows a desire for the intellectual acceptance of his work; he also goes out of his way to tell believers in a personal Deity that they are intellectually out of date. It would have been well for one who so summarily rated all believers in God out of the order of thinkers, after the manner of the once Reverend Leslie Stephen, to look a little more carefully into his own logic."

illusory, reason, where it appears at all, often errs, memory is obscured by distance and time-passage; all is chaos and travail. In the Overworld of the Afterscene, the artist, however, reiterates once more the notions of evolutionary process and change already appearing though not explicitly developed or demonstrated in the novels Tess and Jude. Here in The Dynasts the evolutionary process is visualized in relation to the Unconscious Will and Prime Cause on the one hand, and the conscious and deliberately motivated acts and deeds of man on the other hand, in that hybrid genre (epic-drama) Hardy deems most appropriate for his material and his message. Here Hardy offers the only hope of salvation from the tragi-comedy, the dumb show, of the existence he depicts.

Men gained cognition with the flux of time, /And
wherefore not the Force informing them, /When
far-ranged aions past all fathoming /Shall have
swung by, and stand as backward years?

This notion of the Unconscious will evolving into a will informed by consciousness, and reacting against the plight of its own creations such that "it fashion all things fair" in future, is admittedly put forward in compassion by the Spirit of the Pities. Yet it is perfectly consistent with the evolution of Hardy's artistic vision, his revision of Schopenhauer's doctrines under the influence of Darwinian theories, and his own creation of a

strange and novel art-form to present the world and life, not as we generally experience and think about them, but as they really ought to be. It is only in so far as one appreciates Hardy's artistic and ruthless employment of the philosophical, scientific, religious, and historical, materials in the creation of a work that would reflect his own peculiar and original vision of an organic reality, that one discerns the underlying consistency of his art. The evolutionary doctrine or mechanism, which overcomes the apparent contradictions of the work, renders the logic of the world of The Dynasts self-consistent while antithetical, diametrically opposed, to Schopenhauer's metaphysics. It is clear that the most apparent source of such a doctrine is rather to be looked for in Darwinian theories of evolution and laws of transmutation, in empiricist philosophies and in the philosophy of positivism.⁴⁴ Hardy's message is one of hope and salvation, but unlike Schopenhauer's philosophy, that hope and salvation lies, while not external to the world as such, nonetheless beyond the access, governance, and control of any individual subjectivity which remains, like a puppet, wholly in the grip of the heretofore Unconscious,

⁴⁴Wright, p. 38. Here, Hardy is quoted expressing a greater indebtedness in the development of his own thought to Darwin, Hume, and Comte than to Schopenhauer.

yet to become Conscious, Prime Will.

5. CONCLUSION

It is not difficult to appreciate that, if one studies Hardy's writings either by too small a sampling of his quite substantial oeuvre or from too narrow a perspective of the whole of his output, much of the overall development of Hardy's artistic vision could not emerge within the limited parameters of one's study. Hardy offers his reader an originality of thought and artistic presentation not to be found in a purely Schopenhauerian, Darwinian, Positivist, etc., reading of his work. Nor does the whole of Hardy's vision come to light in any single piece of his literary writings.

In considering his art rather as a single organic whole, that is, from Hardy's point of view, art-as-process, the work undergoes a philosophical development and achieves a certain coherence and unity of thought, not to mention originality, which escapes the more restricted reading.⁴⁵ Of greater consequence to this present thesis, however, is that this latter treatment of Hardy's writings in relation to Schopenhauer's philosophy serves to illuminate more

⁴⁵It is interesting to recall, by way of contrast, that Schopenhauer's philosophical writings are in the philosopher's own words, "the elaboration of a single thought" which undergoes no fundamental change throughout the entire course of his philosophical career.

clearly the meaning and consequences of particular Schopenhauerian doctrines, by setting these beside other, and often antithetical, views and theories, since this is precisely the nature of Hardy's own methodology.

The view of the world Hardy develops and presents, under the influence of many and varied schools of thought and his own response to these, bears little relation in the final analysis to a Schopenhauerian view of the world, either intellectually or aesthetically. In spite of the often-cited similarity of terminology, the meaning and significance of various terms drawn from Schopenhauer's philosophy undergo radical revision under the pen of Thomas Hardy. As Hardy's own vision evolves, the dignity and integrity of character and individual subjectivity, so central in Schopenhauer's philosophy, is increasingly undermined and diminished in the Hardyan universe of absolute necessity. There is present to Hardy's heroes and heroines no mode of knowledge which is fundamentally liberating for the individual. Rather, in falling back upon traditional ways of knowing, faulty perception, useless generalizations, tradition, myth, superstition, legend and curse, omen, fortune-telling, etc., the individual character is relieved of responsibility and all is 'fate'.

In Schopenhauer, there are two paths toward that

knowledge and salvation which is redemptive of the human being and of the world.⁴⁶ The one way is voluntarily taken, the other is taken in response to great suffering. The direction of the journey is inward; that is, these paths are open to, and accessible by, human subjectivity alone. The higher knowledge which is the occasion of that freedom and change which Schopenhauer characterizes as 'transcendental', and which brings with it the sole possibility of salvation through denial of the will-to-live, is not deliberative, reasoned, or abstract knowledge which affords only a relative freedom within the phenomenal world. Nor is it purely aesthetic, though it is in aesthetic experience that Schopenhauer discovers the necessary clue as to the nature, and possibility, of such knowledge as is required here.⁴⁷ It is an existential awareness of the wholly illusory nature of all knowledge

⁴⁶Schopenhauer, WR, p. 397. "The difference, that we have described as two paths, is whether that knowledge is called forth by suffering which is merely and simply known and freely appropriated by our seeing through the principium individuationis, or by suffering immediately felt by ourselves."

⁴⁷In Schopenhauer, (p. 270), Peter Gardiner says that "Kierkegaard once remarked of Schopenhauer that he 'made ethics into genius'." Fair enough. But Hardy essentially denies genius and turns ethics into spontaneous, automatic reflex. In The Dynasts, for example, Napoleon's fatalistic comments to the Queen of Prussia: "Know you, my Fair, /That I...--in this deserve your pity.--/Some force within me, baffling mine intent, --Harries me onward, whether I will or no. /My star, my star is what's to blame--not I. /It is unswervable (Pt. 1, act i, sc. vii)."

belonging to the subjective/objective pole of human consciousness. This insight that the world is wholly phenomenal is a double-insight carrying with it the knowledge that the world is something in addition to representation. This second insight is that the world is also will. Now Schopenhauer goes to great lengths to separate the spheres of thought (judgment and reason) and intellect (perception and understanding) from that of will, that is, the realm of existence from that of being. All necessity belongs to the outer sphere of existence and empirical knowledge, all freedom belongs to the inner sphere of being and the metaphysical will. But the real, existential subject straddles both spheres at once.

For the empirical character, like the whole man, is a mere appearance as an object of experience, and hence bound to the forms of all appearance--time, space, and causality--and subject to their laws. On the other hand, the condition and the basis of this whole appearance--which as a thing-in-itself is independent of these forms and therefore not subject to time distinctions but is persistent and unchangeable--is his intelligible character, i.e., his will as thing-in-itself. It is to the will in this capacity that freedom, and to be sure even absolute freedom, that is, independence of the law of causality (as a mere form of appearances), properly belongs. This freedom, however, is transcendental, i.e., it does not occur in appearance. ...As can easily be seen, this road leads to the view that we must no longer seek the work of freedom in our individual actions, ...but in the whole being and essence (existentia et essentia) of the man himself. This must be thought of as his free act, which only presents itself to the cognitive faculty as linked to time, space, and causality

in a multiplicity and variety of actions. (FW,
V, p. 97-98)

It is just these crucial doctrines of Schopenhauer, on the relation between freedom and necessity, and on peculiar modes of knowledge, which Hardy revises beyond any possibility of his art being mistaken as illustrative of a Schopenhauerian philosophy. In Hardy, the problem of human suffering is essentially one of limited and finite knowledge. Henchard suffers because he lacks self-knowledge; Tess suffers because society in general remains ignorant and forgetful of its natural origins and purposes. In Jude the problem is less a lack of knowledge on the part of individual and/or society, although this is in fact true of both, than it is a failure of the compatibility of such reason and knowledge as each does have, and the failure of mutual adaptation necessary for the health and well-being of both. Finally in The Dynasts, the finite, limited nature of conscious human knowledge is set beside the total lack of knowledge on the part of the Unconscious, Immanent Will, freely groping, weaving, writhing, with neither knowledge nor care regarding the consequences entailed in its own impulsive designs. Here, the individual is devoid of all freedom and ultimately bears no responsibility for his acts; the only meaning in life is its repetitiveness-as-pattern 'caused' by the compulsive weaving of the

Immanent Will and which constitutes man's 'fate'.⁴⁸ Yet for Hardy, man is superior to that which wholly determines both his acts and their consequences, in his evolved capacity for compassion and in his albeit finite and limited knowledge of truth and consequence. For Hardy, only in so far as the Unconscious becomes like man, both conscious and compassionate, is the continuation of life a blessing, and salvation from the present conditions under which it must be borne a real possibility.

For Schopenhauer, of course, this is all absurd and results from a confusion between the empirical and the real. All forces, however elemental, whether conscious or unconscious, are merely the outward manifestation of the metaphysical will which knows no such distinctions, no plurality, no multiplicity. The attributes of conscious and unconscious are irrelevant with regard to the inner reality of the world which simply exists, which simply is that which it is. Notions of predetermination, causation, design, etc., which both explicitly and implicitly appear as attributes of the Immanent Will in the Hardyan world, are utterly foreign to Schopenhauer's conception of the will as thing-in-itself. Any attempt to describe the will

⁴⁸Cf. J. Hillis Miller, "Tess of the D'Urbervilles: Repetition as Immanent Design" in Thomas Hardy's Tess of the D'Urbervilles (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1987). p. 61-87.

in such terms is surely to be judged, from the point of view of Schopenhauer's philosophy of pessimism, as anthropomorphic and endemic to man- and reason-centered views of the universe and thus entirely antithetical to Schopenhauer's philosophy. It is precisely through individual human consciousness, more specifically self-consciousness, that man achieves insight as to his true condition, phenomenally in but essentially not of, the world, at once everywhere and nowhere. In Schopenhauer's philosophy, man's path to his own salvation remains an intensely personal matter; the path is always there, both with, and within, man himself. In evolution, considered from a Schopenhaurian perspective, man can look for no really essential change, either for the better or for the worse. Fundamentally, everything remains eternally and immutably the same: "a ceaseless, inevitable, wretched replay of forces and counterforces of the self-destructive will to live."⁴⁹ In Hardy's more realistic and deeper yet incomplete pessimism, on the other hand, man's salvation lies in something always external to the individual as such, and is something only to be hoped for, possibly never to be realized, at some infinitely distant moment of

⁴⁹Arthur Hubscher. The Philosophy of Schopenhauer in its Intellectual Context, trans. Joachim T. Baer and David E. Cartwright (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1989), p. 318.

coincidence in the historical and evolutionary future of the human species and its natural environment.

While Schopenhauer admired much in the philosophy of Descartes and his successors down to Kant, he saw in this tradition, with the peculiar role there assigned to a self-subsistent reason, a certain lack of truly earnest skepticism. Indeed, this characteristic remains in Kant's own ethics, despite his repudiation of the rational and theological dogmas of Scholasticism. No doubt, Schopenhauer would have made a similar charge against the nature and role of the Hardyan Unconscious made conscious.

Schopenhauer expresses his view regarding such fettered thought in the following verse he borrows from Goethe as being very applicable to free and independent thinkers such as Descartes, and I suggest also to Kant, at least in his ethics, no less than to Hardy in his agnosticism:

Saving thy gracious presence, he to me
A long-legged grasshopper appears to be,
That springing flies, and flying springs,
And in the grass the same old ditty sings.

(WR, Appx., p. 423)

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