EAST—WEST FIRE

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SCHOPENHAUER'S OPTIMISM
and the
LANKAVATARA SUTRA

An Excursion Toward The Common Ground
between Oriental and Western Religion

BY

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CONTENTS

	Page
Prefatory Note	9
Foreword	13
Optimism and Pessimism	19
Schopenhauer, Buddhism, and the Lankavatara	20
Maya and the Two-fold Egolessness	23
The Oneness of the World Beheld and the World Felt	30
The Results of Self-concerned Willing	35
The Technique of Self-Transfiguration and the Fruits of the Redirection of the Human Will	40
What Lies Beyond	44
Appendix A. An Epitome	50
Appendix B. Note Concerning Optimism	51
Appendix C. Mahayana and Hinayana	53
Appendix D. On Nirvana	59
Bibliography	64

PREFATORY NOTE

Because of the analytical rather than simply descriptive or historical nature of the present theme, what is of prime importance in the discussion and references devolves upon the two basic works with which the exposition is concerned; viz. "Die Welt Als Wille Und Vorstellung" and the "Lankavatara Sutra" themselves. In the classified listing of the bibliography will also be found those works which either furnished a helpful clue or allusion, or which as a whole were useful in providing background material appropriate to the presentation of the central idea.

For the convenience of those who either possess other editions than herein given, or who may wish to relate any English quotations to their German originals, the expedient of referring to Schopenhauer's chef-d'oeuvre by section rather than page is employed. Thus, WWR, 7 would mean "The World As Will And Representation," (Haldane and Kemp translation) section 7. The only other titular abbreviation used is LSG, standing for "Lankavatara Sutra," Suzuki-Goddard edition, i.e. item II, 2 in the bibliography.

It is necessary to explain that, since *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* is Schopenhauer's original phrase, the word *representation* is a better translation of *Vorstellung* [lit. 'something held before oneself in consciousness'] than is the usual and unfortunately far too accepted translation, *idea*. Indeed, as Col. E. F. J. Payne, the Secretary of the British Schopenhauer Society, has written to us, the translation of *Vorstellung* by *idea* has caused not inconsiderable confusion, not only because the translation itself is not exact, but because Schopenhauer—as is of course known to his readers in the original—employs the word *Die Idee* specifically to refer to a concept of a different

order than *Vorstellung*, very closely identifiable with the Platonic *Idea* (*eidos*). *Vorstellung* and *Idee* are as far apart as sense-presentation (as represented in consciousness) and Platonic Idea, and hence should not be translated by the same English word, even if—as in Haldane and Kemp's translation—it is capitalized in the latter case and not in the former.

Col. Payne has recently completed the monumental and very valuable task of rendering all of Schopenhauer's works, major and minor, into a new and more literal translation that Haldane and Kemp, heretofore accepted as the standard. Col. Payne's translation is as yet unpublished, and thus we are all the more grateful for the opportunity of having been able to refer to it as well as to the ordinary translation and the original. Until the Payne translation is published, we felt that it would be most practicable for the general reader to confine our references largely to the well-known Haldane-Kemp translation.

We have preferred Col. Payne's *representation* to Messrs. Haldane and Kemp's *idea* as a translation of *Vorstellung* throughout.

Now, after sixteen years, this work, first written in 1938, re-written in 1943 from memory after accidental destruction of the copies and the original by fire in 1940, and done in final form in 1947, sees the light of day. The author's sincerest thanks are herewith extended to Col. E. F. J. Payne for his careful reading of the manuscript, for his valuable suggestions concerning the translating of Schopenhauer, and for his corrections pertaining several of the reference numbers to particular sections of Schopenhauer's works. Thanks are also due to Professor Horace L. Friess of the Department of Philosophy, Columbia University, who previously read through the manuscript and kindly commented upon it.

The breadth and profound health and insight of

Schopenhauer's contribution to Western and world thought has never been fully realized or accurately understood. It is long past time that it should be, and to that end these pages are dedicated.

C. M.
New York, 1954

FOREWORD

With complete unpretentiousness we may say that there is but one true meaning to all true statements of the nature of things. For there is but one set of 'things.' The multiplicity of formulation must converge upon the singleness of fact.

No one has never known a time when he could not experience the singleness and stability of the world in a vast and pervading sense: the permanence of cycles of phenomena and laws of change. Our empirical testimony is at one in this, and the facts underlying this experience are also unique and are happily not subject to the opinion of anyone. For these facts *are* the constitution of things, the very substratum of those normative effects and reaction—patterns made apparent in all our observations and experience as the context of the world's unchangeability.

Although one may not be able explicitly to defend his response at the time, one always tends to recognize the words of a true statement of the nature of things—insofar as that statement impinges upon one's own experience—with the cageness and satisfaction of a man who is at last hearing what he long knew but could not say or had not consciously expressed. Overlay it as we please with all the formal analyses of discriminating methodology, this felt process of intellectual liberation remains as it has ever been, whether admitted tacitly or openly—the final arbiter of personal thought. On far too many occasions has this sense of truth, as it were, lain yoked and stifled in human beings by fear of the unfruitful accusations and *petitio principii* of sterile quasi-intellectualisms to the tune of: "Unless you talk in our terms, you speak falsely."

Such types of allegation have been levelled usually from

those quarters where exclusive exercise of the habit-machinery of extracting conclusions from premises has at length occluded and atrophied all power of discerning the origination of premises—a power that lies in everyone and that affords the only convincing proof to anyone. For the basis of all such origins which are correct is the nature of things as they are; and the discernment of that nature is the basis of all veridical premises.

Avoiding by a basically sturdy sincerity the depths of those pitfalls we have indicated, Schopenhauer managed to state a good deal of what must be necessarily unique in meaning, no matter in what words that meaning is expressed, or who says, said or will say it—the statement of the nature of things. Although Schopenhauer was awry in some of his minor writings, his major efforts will be found quite sound in this fundamental respect. And we are justified in citing him as one of the most correct voices in the western world of the ever appropriate re-statement of the nature of things, a truth that is in meaning and content single-valued and unique: the authority of all things functioning according to their natures, above all the perplexities of speculation, which are born of ignorance.

Schopenhauer's signal contribution—often lost sight of or misunderstood—to the epistemological question lies in his introduction of the philosophy of the will, without which the entire world of sensory representation fades into a miasma of Humeian confusion. For the will lies at the core of the integrity of the perceiving subject, and is that subject in noumenal form, to use the Kantian term. Put another way, Schopenhauer never tires of telling us that there is and can be no object without subject, no perception without perceiver, nor any perceiving subject without perception. Thus the only realm of discourse susceptible of ordinary and general verifiability is that of perceptive experience. Dewey, though

writing with far more words and less matter than the master, has taken his entire cue from Schopenhauer despite having written his dissertation on Hegel.

Although in the first Book of his *World As Will and Representation* Schopenhauer must necessarily, in the interest of discursive exposition, stress the world as representation, it must never be lost sight of (as, for instance did Rudolf Steiner [*Die Philosophie der Freiheit*, ch. IV]) that for Schopenhauer there is a veritable bed-rock of external reality, rooted in the will. And the only Ding-an-sich which any man will know as such is—himself. Too many persons have been superficially content to read or skim through Schopenhauer's *World As Will and Representation*, without prefacing it by its imperative prerequisite: his *Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason*. And it is amusing, albeit regrettable nonsense to see Schopenhauer termed smugly 'second-rate' by fourth-rate hack-writers of introductions to cheap, abridged editions. It is long past time for that nonsense to stop and for this man to be recognized as the great contributor he was to Western thought and understanding.

"So shalt thou feed on death, that feeds on men,
And death once dead, there's no more dying then."

—Sonnet CXLVI, Shakespeare

If optimism and pessimism were the stuff of temperament only, they would have no place in the tenets of a noble philosophy. A philosophical system must be more than a hypostasis of wishful thinking, or a rationalized frustration. And the *argumentum ad hominem* applied as a serious charge against a philosophical doctrine would be amusingly irrelevant if it were not superlatively misleading. Refutations must be made of firmer stuff.

Thus that late nineteenth century critique of Schopenhauer[1] —an approach still unfortunately sometimes practised—that seeks to trace the source of his ideas to alleged strains of pathological melancholia and emotional obsession in himself and his ancestry, amounts in fine to a simple case of gossip-logic. The same school would be tempted to point to his Venetian amours as evidence of the love he yet bore to a world he verbally denied, whence, perhaps, the "Metaphysics of the Love of the Sexes" would be derived with a knowing critical smile of pseudo-sapience. But we shall not increase the importance of such presonations by attempting to disclaim or refute them. They supply their own refutation and their own untenability as serious method.

Now if we are not dealing with mere temperament, what is it that constitutes the deep-rooted connotations of 'cheer' or 'gloom' when we think of these terms as abiding rational attitudes. The difference is one of 'optimism' and 'pessimism,' as credos. We all of us share in the deep wish, that life or conscious experience be ultimately and lastingly satisfying. And if we are honest, we as deeply wish to know things as they are, no matter *how* they are. The assertion that this knowledge is possible without any contradiction to the

[1] Typified in the nineteenth century by passages like that on p. 77 of Sully's "Pessimism," and in the twentieth by a quantity of popularizing writings.

previous proposition is optimism. The denial of that assertion is pessimism. It is within the meaning of this definition that we shall consider Schopenhauer's thought. Thus we shall not be bound to contemplate in our consideration the crass and unsatisfying evasions of a shallow optimism,[2] or the equally unreal shadows of myopic pessimism.

But to discuss Schopenhauer with no word on Buddhism would be to an important extent unilluminating, wasted effort. To be sure, the Buddha anticipated Kant, too, by some twenty-three hundred years in the latter's proclamation of the nature of space and time as a direct outcome of the nature of consciousness. With Schopenhauer, however, the Asiatic similarity is more notable in that it is much more deeply extended, equivalent conclusions having been reached through differing paths of reflection separated by wide cultural dissimilarity and centuries of time.

Aside from the fact that he himself was his own first commentator to discover this correspondence and mention it, it is worthy of equal note that Schopenhauer was able to quote intelligently at all from eastern writings, since the conditions of oriental research at the time rendered the possibility of any clear comprehension of Buddhistic or Upanishadic thought well-nigh non-existent. To quote McGill:[3]

> In 1830 . . . Sanscrit and Pali scholarship had made only the most elementary beginnings. Schopenhauer had access to a garbled Latin translation of the Upanishads and a second-hand rendering of Buddhism.

T. W. Rhys Davids adds further confirmation:[4]

> The story of the discovery of Pali is not without its interest . . . George Turnour, of the Ceylon Civil Service . . . finally

[2] See also Appendix B.

[3] "Schopenhauer—Pessimist and Pagan" p. 144. As we shall see, it is but a glib and specious platitude to call Schopenhauer's message either pessimistic or 'pagan.'

[4] "Buddhism, Its History and Literature," pp. 46, 47, 50.

brought out in 1837 a complete edition of the text of the *Maha Vansa* (or 'Great Chronicle' of Ceylon) with a translation into English. . . . But on the death of Turnour, no one was found to carry on his work. There was no dictionary of Pali, and no grammar worthy of the name . . . at last in 1855 Mr. Vincent Fausboell came forward with an *editio princeps* of another Pali text . . . up to the year 1870 only two Pali texts of any size or importance had appeared in editions accessible to scholars in the West.

These facts assume even greater significance for us when we recall that Schopenhauer's main works appeared in 1813 ("The Four-Fold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason") and 1818 ("The World As Will And Representation"). In addition, quite aside from the Pali or Southern texts, so far as Mahayana Buddhism is concerned, which is our principal interest here, the point is even simpler and more crystal-clear: Schopenhauer never read the *Lankavatara* or any other of the great Mahayana scriptures; for they, together with the entire Canon they represent, have enjoyed only a relative recency of authentic knowledge in the Western acquirement of learning.[5]

Of all the Buddhist source-workers, let alone the mass of commentaries, none contains a more concise and clear-cut account of Mahayana Buddhism[6] than the *Lankavatara Sutra*, now accessible to us through the painstaking translation of

[5] After Eugene Burnouf's pioneer translation of the *Saddharmapundarika Sutra*, published 1852, little attention was paid or progress made towards Occidental understanding of Mahayana doctrine, and none certainly before that date. Sanskrit Mahayana texts of truly representative importance did not appear in European translation until about 1900; *vide* "Buddhist Bible," Goddard, pp. 659 ff.

[6] The two principal divisions of Buddhism are the Hinayana or Southern System and the Mahayana Teachings, known respectively as the Lesser and the Greater Vehicle. (See Appendix C.) The former concerns itself mostly with moral regulations and ethical ordinances; while the latter to a greater degree embraces notions of the nature of things, and those broader, systematic aspects of the Buddha's teaching which we would call "philosophical." Herein we shall speak throughout of Mahayana Buddhism.

Professor Daisetz T. Suzuki. Despite its illuminating meaning, the condition of the text as it is set down would be difficult to work with, either for a reader or for a translator, thereby securing further merit for Professor Suzuki's labour. As he pointed out in a former work,[7] the *Lankavatara* is apparently the *memorabilia* of a Mahayanist teacher who set in written form the most important portions of the tradition as he knew or remembered it. Suzuki adds:[8]

> He apparently did not try to give them any order, and it is possible that the later redactors were not very careful in keeping faithfully whatever order there was in the beginning, thus giving the text a still more disorderly appearance . . . thoughts of deep signification are presented in a most unsystematic manner.

Goddard remarks, in confirmatory elucidation:

> This Sutra was written in Sanskrit, but nothing is known as to its author or time of writing[9]. . . . The present text has every appearance of being something in the way of a disciple's notebook in which he had written down extracts or outlines of his master's discourses on some of these (original) verses (i.e. of the Mahayana tradition). . . . Although other sutras have been more commonly read none have been more influential in fixing the general doctrines of Mahayana Buddhism. . . .[10]

It is to Dwight Goddard, too, that any student of the *Lankavatara* owes much for his admirable and faithful collation of the disarranged text, with the helpful omission of repetitious or irrelevant ritualistic passages accumulated through historical incrustation. Mr. Goddard himself writes:[11]

> With the encouragement of Dr. Suzuki, the present Editor undertook a rearrangement of it (i.e. the Suzuki translation),

7 "Studies in the Lankavatara Sutra."
8 "The Lankavatara Sutra," p. xi.
9 "Buddhist Bible," p. 667.
10 LSG, pp. 13, 14.
11 "Buddhist Bible," p. 667; LSG, p. 12.

> omitting the extensions, verse portions, and other parts, in the interests of easier reading. . . . I have been scrupulously careful not to do any more than was necessary to bring out the full meaning of the text.[12]

The results of his work can only evoke commendation when examined. Suzuki-Goddard proved to be a most valuable combination of scholar and editor.

The *Lankavatara Sutra* represents one of the purest traditions of Mayahana Buddhism, and has been chosen as the best means—both as regards logic, metaphysics and ethics—of completing Schopenhauer's thought, in place of the considerable number of other Mahayana (or even Hinayana) scriptures that might partially (or jointly) have performed the same service. In addition to these critical virtues and its cardinality in presenting the heart of prevailing Buddhist doctrine, the *Sutra*, along with many others of course, possesses the supplementary advantage of having been unknown by Schopenhauer, thus enhancing the independent equivalence of the two sets of thought.

Besides furnishing us with an enlightening comparison, the *Lankavatara Sutra* will also be found to provide us with a most useful means of interpreting Schopenhauer in his vaguer reaches by a fuller explanation of the meaning of his term "denial," and of that beyond-denial at which Schopenhauer only hints.

The core of the *Lankavatara* is its teaching of the "two-fold egolessness," which is the verity behind the veil of *maya*, the world-illusion. Let us digress at once to note that 'illusion' is by no means to be construed as non-existence *toto genere*, but as misinterpretation. The accurate meaning-context is not

[12] In each instance, the passages may be referred to their proper pages in Suzuki's recension by those who may be interested; as may be easily observed if a few of the congruences be noted: e.g. pp. 32–3 of Goddard with pp. 36–7 of Suzuki; p. 59, with p. 61; p. 105, with p. 39, etc. Herein we shall use Goddard's presentation of the Suzuki text for quotation from the *Lankavatara*.

ontological, but epistemological. Illusion is a mistaken notion, always associated with believing a certain state of affairs to exist where in fact another does.

As a point of rather technical interest, and to be very literally exact, an illusion is a perceptive aspect or appearance of some quite veridical fact or complex of facts which is involved in a mistaken notion or misconception on the part of the percipient. The belief in the validity of such a notion, which may be even carried to a conviction, is *delusion*.[13] To have believed so in the first place, or to act on such belief, is *error*; the final results of which, if unremedied, are failure—proved by circumstances, and frustration—felt in consciousness. If sufficient insight be present at this point,[14] the initial mistaken notion is perceived as such and the illusion is revealed for what it was, together with a means of having constructively avoided the consequent error. This is *disillusionment* in its purest meaning, which is nothing less than

[13] As a final note on the mechanism of the phenomenon of illusion: the illusory appearance of a (1) pencil half immersed in water suggests (2) the conception that it is bent (mistaken notion or misconception). The firm belief that (2) is valid is (3) delusion.

The steps are illusion, misconception, delusion. Thus an illusion is an appearance of perfectly factual presentations that easily give rise to a misconception or misinterpretation of themselves through the false assumptions plausibly suggested in them. To be convinced that such misinterpretations are correct is to be deluded; and such a conviction is a delusion.

[14] We may as well now define cynicism—not in the historical sense, but in its popular connotation as the general term for all types of the sophistication and studied simulation of indifference. Cynicism is one of the possible results if insight is *not* present upon failure. This lack furnishes us the clue to its definition: *Cynicism = frustration — insight + sour grapes.* (Those who would question the classical standing of our phrase "sour grapes," we refer to Aesop.)

The degree to which any of the right-hand ingredients is present determines the particular brand or flavour of cynicism in question. The third right-hand term is essential, for a cynicism worthy of the name must sneer in some way.

Other results are also possible upon failure without insight. If we omit the sour grapes altogether, and do not substitute hopefulness instead, we are left merely with that utter frustration, unrelieved by insight, which is termed *despair*. Even if direct insight be absent, however, with *hopefulness* present a non-mental insight emerges that with an unthinking logic of its own can transform the situation to constructive uses and effects.

illumination and enlightenment. This is the actual technique of learning from life.[15]

The particular importance of this very general psychic process will become apparent when we discuss the transfiguration of man, the *modus operandi* of the denouement of the world-illusion, and the meaning of an unconditioned optimism.

These simple though very necessary clarifications having been made, too often left to lie indistinct and unanalyzed, we may proceed. Returning to the *Lankavatara*, the teaching of the two-fold egolessness sets forth that nothing is either psychically or materially sufficient, and hence answerable, to itself alone. "The egolessness of persons" means that no conscious entity may be said to have a self-nature that can exist in meaning or in being apart from the self-natures of all conscious entities. Similarly, the truth of "the egolessness of things" states that no object or aggregate of objects has a self-nature which can function or even be correctly considered apart from the self-natures of other objects, all meanings and indeed all activities springing from the interrelations of things.[16]

Thus, all distinguished appearances arise through mutual comparison, made possible by common denominators pervading structure, process, and substance. Paradoxically perhaps, when put in linguistic form, the multiplicity of things depends just upon their very lack of separate self-natures. As our insight or, in general, as the values of

[15] In terminal comment, if nature—both physical and psychological—were not to remain in some way consonant with its own past principles of operation, we would have nothing stable with which to compare our misconceptions and misinterpretations, and hence could *never* learn. The fact that we can and do grow wiser in our values, experiments, and actions, being able to arrive in some measure at successful principles of practice—in this peculiar way proves again the stability, order, and singleness of the world in which we all live. This stable base provides for the fertility of experience; since without it experience would bear no fruit, and sterility would be the offspring of chaos.

[16] *Id est*, there are no absolute disconnections.

perceiving consciousness change, the aspect of this multiplicity also changes. As different groupings are discriminated, varying sets of elements and factors become differently significant and emergent. The spectacle of the objective world is thus said by the *Lankavatara* to be born of the mind. And the world before us is the justification of that penetrating conclusion.

We now can see as an inevitable fact what might before have seemed but a curious anomaly: the two-fold egolessness is at the root of maya, the vast illusion of a disparate and self-sufficient existence of objects and beings—the illusion of separated self-hood. This two-fold world-aspect, shadowing the two-fold egolessness, will later on be seen to have an immediate correspondence with Schopenhauer's world as representation and world as will.

With his usual plain reason Schopenhauer points out that to divide object from subject is to deprive both of their meaning and validity.[17] And to derive either from the other, first having dissevered them, is nothing more than falsifying at solitaire, though it was a common philosophical game of his time.[18]

Object *means* object-for-subject, and subject means subject-perceiving, i.e. subject perceiving object. This clarity of insight at once exorcises the demon of subject-object-duality quibbles and also ends the materialist-nominalist *vs.* idealist-realist quarrels, needless because no true *versus* exists. Their force of persistence through centuries has sprung, strangely

[17] Divisive conception is at the root of most mental evil, or error. And the above is simple though profound illustration of how the "mortal discriminating mind" of the *Lankavatara* itself devises the source of those "universal" problems it laments. The thought is one with Schopenhauer's. Cf. *Lankavatara Sutra*, original Suzuki recension, v. 132: "The gate of the highest reality has nothing to do with the two forms of thought-construction [subject and object]."

[18] We have learned the Schopenhauerian lesson, taught sometimes under the guise of a purportedly original contribution of the present philosophies of experience.

enough, directly from that fact; namely, that each knew his side of the case *was* fact, which indeed it was. Object and subject are the two necessary halves of a logical and experiential union. The two are actually one verb: "to experience," and are not accurately two nouns; so deviously can language mislead us if we choose to think in words instead of meanings.

The world in this context of object-for-subject is what Schopenhauer calls the world-as-representation, [*Vorstellung*] which in its mayavic aspect is simply the world of space and time with all their ever-changing object-contents—the world-as-representation beheld under the principle of sufficient reason.[19] For space and time are the conditions of multiplicity —coexistence and succession. Together they constitute the *principium individuationis*, which supports the panoramic illusion of self-existent objects, and which in its observable aspect is defined by that maya. Moreover, since space and time as the possibilities of juxtaposition and sequence are essentially characteristic of the perceiving mind, we can state in words of the Lankavatara's asseveration that "it is because of the

[19] Schopenhauer taught that there was another aspect of the world-as-representation that was free, although only temporarily, from the principle of sufficient reason (see Note (21)). This aspect emerges in the states of contemplation and inspirational insight of genius, coming on occasion to all men, wherein there is but pure perception unmingled with any assertions of the will: That is, the pure object-subject relation of purely knowing subject, a relation that stands outside of space and time as they have nothing to do with its definition or significance. For such states of consciousness possess validity and significance everywhere and at all times. The contents of such perception as Schopenhauer thus defined it are seen to be very closely the Platonic Ideas, and Schopenhauer always referred to them as "Ideen" and not "Vorstellungen," indicating thereby their abstraction from the ever-whirling multiplicities. They are seen to include not only the synthetic insights of great art, but also the master or key-patterns of all natural forms and operations, those laws of formation and function which are near to the nature of things.

Yet this aspect of the world-as-representation, though entrancing, is but transitory—such states are not enduring aspects of personal consciousness. And later on it will be seen that they are but a foretaste of what Schopenhauer calls "the real world," to be reached only through a re-direction and transmutation of consciousness, which process, so far as any self-centred willing is concerned, most certainly amounts to obfuscation and to denial of all its former values.

activities of the discriminating mind that error rises and that an objective world evolves."[20] The activities referred to are the countless and unending discrimination of myriad illusory self-natures which are entertained as quite separate objects, attributed with self-sufficient reality and clothed in the colours of ever-changing desires by "false-imagination," a concomitant of the "mortal discriminating mind." Thus, "false-imagination perceives a variety of appearances which the discriminating mind proceeds to objectify and to name and become attached to, and memory and habit-energy perpetuate." (LSG, p. 42.)

This is the world-as-representation shifting constantly within the four forms of the principle of sufficient reason,[21] Schopenhauer's carefully formulated and valuably generalized usage for what is commonly denoted by the more ambiguous 'causality.' The masterly exposition of the *Lankavatara* is profitably examined in this connection of describing the manifestation of the world-as-representation:[22]

> The objective world, like a vision, is a manifestation of the mind itself. . . . False imagination teaches that such things as "light and shade, long and short, black and white, are different and are to be

[20] LSG, p. 70.

[21] Or, "Nothing is without its reason for being as it is, and not otherwise." This may take four principal forms: (1) Time and place: Sufficient reason for objective existence as a particular entity. (2) The concatenated determinants of causation, i.e. Forces: Sufficient reason for becoming. (3) The criteria and principles of valid implication: Sufficient ground or reason for concluding, or for logical knowledge. (4) The impulsion of motive: Sufficient reason or ground for actions. (This last, reflected in observable form as action, will be seen to be directly related to the world-as-will.)

In re the fourth root: As we descend to lower levels of life, this ground becomes drive, instinct, tropism, and bare stimulus in turn, until we are led back to sheer *forces*, bringing us again to the second form of the principle of sufficient reason. In the other direction, toward higher levels of response, above and beyond ordinary motive, and as the ground for actions by most as yet unknown, lie aspiration—the promises held in the songs of the morning stars in *Job*, and the possibility of that utter and illuminated mastery of living which is peculiar to man because he possesses insight into himself, into his will. Of this later, however.

[22] LSG, pp. 31, 45.

discriminated; but they are not independent of each other; they are different aspects of the same thing, they are terms of relation, not of reality. *Conditions of existence are not of a mutually exclusive character.*"[23]

But "as long as a world of relativity is asserted, there is an ever-recurring chain of causation which cannot be denied under any circumstances."[24] The *principium individuationis* must ever operate under the principle of sufficient reason. Yet all this is a smooth working, the mutual conditioning of events in an organic operation. And Schopenhauer realized that any analysis, fundamental though it be to a stage of understanding, was of inherent necessity piecemeal and heuristic; for he writes (italics his):

> The *intimate union* of time and space is the condition of empirical reality, which in a sense grows out of them as a product grows out of its factors.[25]

[23] Italics ours. A magnificent generalization of the entire principle of phenomenal relativity. And Schopenhauer, in strikingly similar language to that of this passage, writes: (WWR, 2) ". . . the whole existence of objects, in so far as they are objects (i.e. presentations for subject . . . is in fact merely relative." The relativity of all distinguished objects comprising the world-as representation-*idea* finds interesting modern voicing in the sound article on "The Meaning of Meaning" by Dr. Heinrich Gomperz (in *Philosophy of Science*, April, 1941, pp. 169–70): "An object is nothing definite by itself. It is man who singles it out and, as it were, picks it from the continuity and flux of things by affixing a name to it and it becomes a different kind of object according to the different names by which it is denoted. 'A hall full of people'; 'a crowd within a building'; 'an assembly engaged in debate'; 'The House of Representatives';—are all different ways of referring to the same state of affairs, but each of these names designates a different kind of object." This is one illustration of the doctrine of the *Lankavatara* that the world of objects is a constituted manifestation of the activities of separating, "discriminating," or "distinguishing" mind.

[24] LSG, p. 32.

[25] "The Four-Fold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason," par. 18. Prophetic words indeed for twentieth century physics, practically stating in words instead of algebra the Minkowskian concept that C = xyzt, where C is a portion of a continuum comprised of space (x, y, z) and time (t). Incidentally, one of the commonest and most prevalent reasons for misconstruing and not understanding Schopenhauer is the lack of careful study, let alone the neglect

Now besides the aspect of the world as sense presentation and perceptive representation, there is another. The world may also be considered in itself aside from any subject-object relations whatsoever.[26] This consideration means immediate awareness, awareness-in-itself, so to speak, *the only instance of which for anyone is he himself.* This fact is his doorway to the world-as-will. And Schopenhauer averred that the closest expression for what a man is directly aware of as his very self, apart from his knowing or being known—is 'will.' But since the very revelation of this experience occurs, nay must transpire, beyond the scope of the principle of sufficient reason and the conditions of multiplicity, we can comprehend how the content of we-in-ourselves cannot be intrinsically different from that of any entity in itself: the discriminating mind and its concomitant determinants of differentiation are here absent. Any creature in itself is precisely *will.*

The world as will, unlike the world as representation, is not a scheme of objects-for-subject, but it manifests as one

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of the theses of this work which is basic to "The World As Will and Representation." A second and even more applicable reason for such misunderstanding is the general unwillingness to accept any non-self-referential ethic, (such as that of Jesus, Krishna, the Buddha, Shankara, Laotse and Boehme), to which the epithet "pessimism" must be defensively applied by selfishness. Receiving the compliment of such condemnation, Schopenhauer stands in good company.

[26] In fact such a view is inherent in the healthy understanding. Schopenhauer develops an underlying thought here with masterful clarity: (italics his; WWR, 24).

"But if the objects appearing in these forms (i.e. the forms of understanding —time, space, and causality) are not to be empty phantoms, but are to have a meaning, they must refer to something, must be the expression of something which is not, like themselves, object, idea, a merely relative existence for a subject, but which exists without such dependence upon something which stands over against it as a condition of its being. . . . Consequently it may at least be asked: Are these ideas, these objects, something more than the fact that they are objects for the subject? And what would they be in this sense? What is the other side of them which is *toto genere* different from idea? *The will*, we have answered."

As we shall presently see, in WWR, 5, 19 and pp. 169, 171 of the "Four-Fold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason," Schopenhauer elaborates with even greater value this virtual truism of magnificent insight.

stream of willing, split by spatio-temporal manifestation in various subjects into urges, feelings, desires, wants, *et al.*, each of which can be referred to some discriminated object or object-complex in the world as representation. Yet the will itself, by nature outside the subject-object relation, is by the same token beyond the *principium individuationis* and the entire principle of sufficient reason; which means that anything-in-itself is, in these ultimate terms, of the same nature as any man in himself, partakes of this same will-life. Thus Schopenhauer presents to us in verifiable and very direct terms just what the Kantian *Ding-an-sich* is. For Man himself *is* 'ein Ding an sich.' Yet he can still be an object for himself. And in this peculiar combination may be found the key to the riddle of what things are in themselves. Let us stop to note the mechanism of this combination. Man is able to be conscious of that which he is in himself by the very fact that *that* is he. Here is the *Lankavatara's* truth of the egolessness of persons in terms of Schopenhauer's enunciation. For the will, as the very root of self-hood in any person, is, notwithstanding, also in all—is not distinctive of "the person" as such, since its realm is in itself, a surgent immediacy beyond the first foundations of multiplicity.

Insofar as we perceive or observe, we are in the world-as-representation, and under the *principium individuationis* we behold the world in its changing multiform manifestation. But insofar as a man *is*, independent of perceiving anything, he is will; and inasmuch as he wills he experiences the world-as-will—he is the willing subject, whose every act becomes observable as some complex of objects for subjects in the world-as-representation.

We are now in a position to see that the world-as-representation and the world-as-will are in no sense a Scylla-Charibdian dichotomy. They are one world in two fundamental contexts of experience. And their connection is not

logical, but ontological. Schopenhauer himself very clearly stated the relationship of the two basic contexts of the world with an unequivocal lucidity that precludes any suspicion of aspecious dualism:[27]

> It is not upon causality proper, but upon the identity of the knowing with the willing subject that the influence is based, which the will exercises over the intellect.
>
> Now the identity of the willing with the knowing subject, in virtue of which the word 'I' includes the designates both, is the core [*Weltknoten*] of the Universe. . . .

Let us pause a moment while on this pinnacle of thought, and see that there is no duality extant but that which the perceiving mind needs and evokes for its own comprehension, which must take place by contrast and comparison. Moreover, let us not forget that the knowing subject in-himself *is* the willing subject—a relation which evidences what Schopenhauer phrases as "the causal primacy of the will in self-consciousness." For as the will is, so the act becomes in time and space. The will fashions life, even though the intellect may perceive it.

To recollect for a moment now, we realize that multitudinous objects are discriminated in perception, together with their unceasing change—a succession so arising of the positions, forms, and qualities of things as experienced, the kaleidoscopic procession of time and space, dual conditions of multiplicity. In them consists the *principium individuationis*, the heart of which lies in the mind itself, through which seemingly self-sufficient objects exist as such. This is the maya of the world-as-representation, which we have before shown, and which we can now see in another way by the fact that space and time are by no means objects of perception, but are

[27] "The Four-Fold Root, etc.," pp. 171, 169.

rather the very forms of understanding,[28] the prime conditions of knowing for the perceiving subject.[29] Yet this mayavic world-as-representation has neither form nor existence apart from these primal conditioning factors, has no definition apart from the discriminating mind of the perceiver.

We not only behold, however. We act. And behind action stands will in one of its forms—a simple function and inter-function of forces according to respective characteristics, as drive, or appetite, as desire, as motive.[30] All these are but conceptual aspects of various levels of this same will in varying degrees of what Schopenhauer calls *objectification*, the term denoting "known-ness" or self-consciousness. For as the acting subject, the spatio-temporal manifestation of an unconditioned will, becomes more and more an object-for-himself, in him the will is thereby "objectified" in ascending degrees. The difference between these "grades of

[28] We recall that together they make up the first form of the principle of sufficient reason.

[29] The form of Schopenhauer's metaphysical statement stems of course directly from Kant, which Schopenhauer quite honestly and indeed proudly acknowledged in his respect for Kant's sound foundational thinking. In fact he fully felt that it must; that it was necessary for any sound metaphysic to derive from a Kantian groundwork. In this he comprehended as well as Kant himself how truly the latter had indeed written the "Prolegomena To Any Future Metaphysic."

No philosopher after Kant except Schopenhauer has been able to give as searching and realistic a disposal of the vital ontological and epistemological question, much less substantially improve upon Kant's analysis. Schopenhauer stands practically alone in being one thinker to have actually understood that Kant taught no dualism; and to have solved, through pointing to direct volitional experience, the problem which Kant had shown was *ipso facto* insoluble by merely reasoning *about* experience: the problem of the nature of things in themselves. For this question, though he had so accurately and tellingly delineated it, Kant had been able to offer no method of rigorously answering, only suggesting an alleviation of its practical urgencies through the operation of reasonable faith.

From some apparently inexcusable perversity modern philosophizing has confessed failure to solve the Humeian-Kantian problem, and has chosen to ignore Schopenhauer's very satisfactory and veridical solution of it, of which any later alleged attempt must be by the nature of the case at best a conceptual paraphrase.

[30] See footnote (21).

objectification" or types of the willing subject is hence one of the development of this objectivity, which in man culminates as the intellect, i.e. will in full consciousness self-directed upon itself in manifestation, with intent to know itself.

In what might be called a one-sentence book of ethics Schopenhauer says:[31] "Guilt does not lie in willing, but in willing with knowledge." Thus in man first rises the possibility of guilt and conscious error. Further, the "mortal" or "discriminating mind" of the *Lankavatara* is exactly what Schopenhauer terms intellect in the service of the self-assertive will.

With this possibility of guilt is bound at one and the same time the first possibility of freedom. For a conscious error in the bent of the will means the choice of doing otherwise. But this "otherwise" is an apparently bitter alternative, for it is the denial of the will, as shall appear. By way of summation, which will become presently more evident, the ethic of the world is very clear: it is derived from the world's metaphysical foundations—derivation too few of the philosophers have been able to consummate.[32]

Apropos of these thoughts, we come to a finely wrought decision as to what the oft-mooted "reality of the world" can only mean. Cutting through the cocoon of complexities that have been spun about this problem, Schopenhauer answers with amazing freshness:[33]

> Whether the objects known to the individual as presentations are, like his own body, manifestations of a will, is . . . the proper meaning of the question as to the reality of the external world.[34]

[31] WWI, 28.

[32] And in most cases even then only as an unconvincing tour-de-force of arbitrary definition, after the worst type of reification.

[33] WWR, 19, 5.

[34] Schopenhauer brilliantly continues: "To deny this is *theoretical egoism* (i.e. solipsism), which on that account regards all phenomena that are outside its own will as phantoms, just as in a practical reference exactly the same

> The true expression of that inmost meaning of the question is this: Is that of which I can be conscious only as presentation, exactly like my body, of which I am doubly conscious, in one aspect as *presentation*, in another aspect, as *will*.

As we may have dimly suspected, the reality of the world is a social truth, witnessed by a multiplex of manifest will.

Now resuming our main path of investigation, the development of objectivity in the will is fed by the experiential fuel of continued and inescapable contacts with the necessary contradictions involved in the assertions of will in space and time under the *principium individuationis*. These contradictions may not yet have even been perceived as such, but they are closely *felt* as loss, suffering and pain when they confront the willing subject. For as the will by its nature turns more and more outward to produce results, it becomes through this literal *ex-perience* removed enough from its effects for them to confront it as objective factors. And as the will with time becomes more discretely explicit, its conflicts increase, as do the seeds of conflicts yet unborn; since the grades of objectification are a hierarchy growing in perceptivity or the discrimination of objects of desire.

The nature of will is to assert, to act, to do, and, tinctured by intellect, to accomplish. But above all, to will is to want: to want is to lack. Thus pain is close to the heart of things. For we do not will what we have, but what we have not. The pleasure grows by anticipation, culminates in attainment, and decline ever succeeds culmination. Then ennui follows until a new desire or willing arises, with its own attendant pangs of non-possession, and its ensuing exultation or depression activating the mind as attainment advances toward or recedes from the willing subject. So Schopenhauer writes

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thing is done by practical egoism. For in it a man regards and treats himself alone as a person, and all other persons as mere phantoms." (Italics are Schopenhauer's.)

that "an error and delusion always lies at the bottom of immoderate joy or grief."[35] And in almost verbal confirmation the *Lankavatara* teaches that: "Pleasure and pain are the deceptive reactions of mortal mind as it grasps an imagined objective world."[36]

Pleasure is as bound to pain as merely wishful hope is to despair. The possibility of one means at once the presence of the other if the goal and object of the will be removed. The four spring from a single source: the attachment of will to its particular assertions, and make but one only wheel of desire, on which we have all played Ixion. See diagram, p. 63.

We are now prepared to perceive what a miscalled pessimism is this, that seeks to end not this or that sorrow only, but points the way to the abolishing of all suffering by the cutting out of its final root and very possibility, the self-seeking will. And let it not be imagined that ennui is apart from will, for to be most bored is to want intensely something to wish for. In this connection and as an adumbration of Schopenhauer's unconditional optimism, the place of suicide is also to be mentioned. No words of ours could be more pertinent here than his own, spoken with brilliant precision:[37]

> Just because the suicide cannot give up willing, he gives up living. The will asserts itself here even in putting an end to its own manifestation, because it can no longer assert itself otherwise.

[35] WWR, 57.
[36] LSG, p. 71.
[37] WWI, 69. De la Vallée Poussin, furnishing the Buddhist view on suicide ("The Way to Nirvana," p. 147), remarks: "Suicide is clearly an action commanded by desire or disgust: one commits suicide to be better elsewhere or to avoid pain." Though a third motive for committing suicide is here omitted, viz. in order to cause pain to someone else. That would stand condemned by the Buddhist ethic as even a worse motive of uncontrolled self-desire. Thus suicide, however analyzed, is, as in both Schopenhauer and Buddhism, an ultimate assertion of self-will.

It is interesting to note that Louis de la Vallée Poussin was referring mostly to Pali Buddhism in his discussion. Mahayana would be even more critical of the suicide in the light of his act depriving others of himself.

As, however, it was just the suffering which it so shuns that was able to bring it to the denial of itself, and hence to freedom.

As to the related fear of death, Schopenhauer declares in a concise and arresting passage:[38]

Therefore if a man fears death as his annihiliation, it is just as if he were to think that the sun cries out at evening, 'Woe is me!' for I go down into eternal night.'

The acting subject in himself, as will, and as "the unknown knower" of Upanishadic thought,[39] is by nature unconfined and not subject to appearance or disappearance at a particular time or place under the domination of causes: for the *principium individuationis* and the principle of sufficient reason are but the abstract statements of his own phenomenal constitution. And he wields them from within when he has gained freedom—from himself, the only one who has ever held him in bondage. Freedom in the manifestation is but the reflection of this freedom. We shall speak of both presently. But it is again necessary to speak of bondage.

The pains and sorrows involved in the desireful will are seen to be transient, its pleasures transient. There is nothing in it that is not transient, except the hunger of the striving will and its self-decreed unrest and anxiety ever to satisfy itself. How one wills is not how another wills. One's gain is not another's. And what blesses here may elsewhere crucify. The differing paths of self-will as they intercross each other are by the nature of will the paths of strife. Moreover, with direct impartiality nature has ceded to the selfish acts of all the same validity. Two contest the possession of one mutually desired object. In the first subject will asserts itself, demanding satisfaction—its imperative mandate upon all its objectifications. But through the second subject expresses also and

[38] WWR, 54.
[39] *Vide*, the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*.

equally the assertion of the will, doomed to self-defeat no matter who gains the personal victory. For in the will no man is specially sovereign, yet driven by that will, all strive for that special sovereignty which can never be. Not only among men, but through its every embodiment will therein asserts itself, and is in a continual dying pain, opposed by the collective and particular self-assertions of all other self-will, as this opposition manifests in impeding forces and living adversaries.

Many war over the acquisition of things and powers to establish those comparisons that are the sustenance of envious pride and self-might—states actually so joyless that the subject no longer has an adequate standard by which to realize that he is in very misery, his awareness dulled by the insensitivity of his selfishness. And it may be fearlessly affirmed that no universe could be large enough or rich enough to prevent the contest between self-centred wills, each desiring it all. In all of them burns the will, which means the will to "live," i.e. first to preserve oneself and then, if possible, to accumulate possessions and to exalt oneself to control others; mere biological existence being but the bare subsistence-minimum for the will, to be overreached if possible. For will ever pushes on to more explicit experience of its satisfaction. The *Lankavatara* speaks succinctly here:

> But depending upon and attaching itself to the triple combination[40] which works in unison, there is the rising and continuation of the mind-system incessantly functioning, and because of it there is the deeply felt and continuous assertion of the will-to-live.

One beyond the very possibility of multiplicity, by nature uncaused and primal, the will stands in the presence of an

[40] LSG, p. 88. The whole complex rests upon this "triple combination," all three being forms of the will's distortion: "There are three attachments that are especially deep-seated in the minds of all: greed, anger and infatuation, which are based on lust, fear, and pride."—The *Lankavatara Sutra*, p. 88.

immediate justice simply by virtue of this unity, despite its objective appearance in multifarious subjects. To hurt is to be hurt, to harm is to suffer. These stand not even in causal relation but are spontaneously and organically united, made successive only in space and time ordered according to the concatenation of causes. This is the war of the will upon itself, suffering in a timeless and absolute justice of a constant cancellation of pains by hurts.[41] This is the will, confounded throughout the manifold realms of its conflicting objectifications in the vanity of its endless effort. Now Baudelaire's impassioned outburst becomes marvellously intelligible:

> I am the wound, and I the knife,
> I am the blow, I give and feel,
> The hangman and the strangled life,
> At once the tortured limb and wheel![42]

Yet the mighty hymn of pain sounded in the strife of the world must appear above all else sombrely insignificant, deeply futile. For behind the million masks of maya stands the world's fundamental and inexorable unity of will. To disregard that unity means hurt and destruction to others, defeat and opposition to the errant subject. And as in its process of objectification the will becomes more discretely explicit, there are nourished the seeds of conflicts yet unborn, to be aggravated by the increasing contradiction of antagonistic embodiments.[43] It is the broken body of Dionysius we

[41] *Cf. et vide*, WWR, 60.

[42] "Les Fleurs du Mal,"—"L'Hèautontimoroumènos," (L. P. Shanks, *tr.*)

[43] *Cf.* Boehme, "Signatura Rerum," p. 198: "All sins arise from self; for the self-hood forces itself with desire into its self-fulness; it makes itself covetousness and envy . . . so that sin is wrought with sin, vileness with vileness, and all run confusedly in and among one another, as a mere abomination before the eternal mother. In like manner also are we to consider of the regenerate will, which goes out of its selfishness or self-hood . . . the same becomes also an enemy to self-hood, as health is an enemy to sickness."

Boehme here anticipates the positive content of Schopenhauer's "denial." See pages now to follow.

now behold, Titanically dissevered, awaiting a healing power that shall restore him to his own. That power is forthcoming.

Before continuing, let it be carefully remembered that this restless consciousness constitutes life itself for the personalized will. This shedding and tasting of blood in opposition, destroying to grasp and by turns overridden, the pains and delights of personal desire, and the longed-for sensory union with the objects of the will—all this is how self-reference knows it is alive. And to desist from this without having the wish for, much less the realization of some larger and more satisfying life must inevitably result in needless blankness and a fruitless sense of decay. The fallacies of personalized willing, if the subject is unselfish enough to avoid cynicism and despair upon their discovery,[44] will themselves discover to him a quite different existence, still possible to him as a man among men.

But once those fallacies are perceived, where is the power that can lift a life from its hollow strife in unceasing dissatisfaction, and from the abiding misery of self-centredness? The question is a crucial one and the answer is at hand. There is a way for the life of self-caused fret and anguish to pass, for it is not decreed by any unalterable fate, but springs solely from the nature of self-assertive willing and its inherent consequences. The way out is to turn in—as a needle must retrace a wrong crossing-under to regain the pattern, must discontinue branching out into further and multiple errors. In fact, here is a search for the source of purpose, for the well-spring of the evolving values in men—a search that by the nature of the will must be carried out in experience and not merely in reflection, that must be lived to be realized. The solution is a dissolution—of falsely discriminated ends and self-seeking initiatives, all based in ignorance upon the assumption of self-sufficient and separated self-hood, and all driven by the will, as desire. In Schopenhauer's phrase, the will must deny itself.

[44] See note (14).

But this particular term has afforded drastically misleading connotations, deriving mostly from the force of the word "denial"; and the *Lankavatara* uses the clearer expressions of "emancipation from all habit-energies," "getting rid of the errors of discriminating mind," "the cessation of false imagination," "the 'turning about' at the deepest seat of consciousness," and "attaining to self-realization."[45] The denial of the will can emanate no quietist aura, bears no implication of stagnation or of repression. Denial is rather the most active assertion of the will that can be, eclipsing all selfish assertions with its power; *for it takes the will to deny the will*. This re-direction is the difficult solution of the very master-problem itself.

Somewhat incompletely detailed by him, this matter of the positive meaning of the denial of the will finds perhaps its clearest direct expression in section 71 of *The World As Will And Representation*, where Schopenhauer refers to "the conversion of the will," and speaks of "those who have overcome the world, in whom the will, having attained to perfect self-knowledge, found itself again in all, and then freely denied itself," consummating in an "inviolable confidence and serenity." The denial of the will is an intense willing, in which the whole force of will is pitched against itself by the power of a higher motive captured, perhaps, from the shores of some far-off sky, or learned in the heart of man.[46]

Only in man lies the ability of such self-direction, for in man alone can the will be sufficiently objectified to behold and interpret itself without that partiality which is but another form of ulterior motive or self-desire. Also for the first time there emerges in man the unique possibility of wholly free action in the manifestation, when at last the unconditioned nature of will can show itself forth unhampered

[45] Also see LSG, ch. XI, XIII.
[46] *Cf.* second paragraph, foot-note (21).

in the world of objects by any inner self-conflict, otherwise unavoidable. For now the very forces that determine the contents and operation of the *principium individuationis* and the principle of sufficient reason are being dealt with and directed by the subject, as though the volcanic powers of the earth would by an awful and unswerving guidance be calmed from seething lava into a glowing perfect diamond. In the voluntary decision of the will in anyone to deny its insatiable self-assertion and wholly to *affirm* such denial lies the meaning of "free will" and the key to the distinctive meaning of "humanity." So also Schopenhauer (italics his):

> The particular known phenomena no longer act as *motives* for willing, but the whole knowledge of the nature of the world, the mirror of the will, which has grown up through the comprehension of the *Ideas*, becomes a quieter of the will; and thus free, the will suppresses itself.

And

> The possibility of freedom which thus expresses itself is the greatest prerogative of man.[47]

In a climactic passion of perception Schopenhauer writes a piercing conclusion, distinguished with exaltation and serenity:[48] "All true and pure love, and even all free justice proceeds from the penetration of the *principium individuationis*, which [penetration], if it appears with its full power, results in perfect sanctification and salvation." We cannot forbear recalling the mood of the finale to *Tristan und Isolde*.

We now behold the tremendous importance and stature of Man in Schopenhauer's philosophy, as man alone can stem the outrushing tide of the world, and in the might of his regenerate will he is empowered to aid the whole embodied creature; for he has turned aside from merely himself and his

[47] WWR, 54, 70.
[48] WWR, 68.

own purposes. Just as the will filled with self-preoccupation must reverberate with parasitic impulses upon the life of all, so now his own will, reborn from its self-sworn death, and universal still, reaches all creatures from within their very being. "Neither gods nor men can prevent him, for he has become themselves."[49] Thenceforth his very glance, unstrained by fear or self-ful ends, is balm for all beings. He is to be called free even in this world, and has blessed the world by self-conquering. Yet the will is ever free, and no man must or need assume this path and its responsibility of awakened love and insight. Moreover, no man can bestow such humanity upon another, even though he may make easier the way to its attainment. For salvation, though it has universal results, has by necessity particular achievement.

Now we recognize with familiar gaze the shadowy figure of the Hero-Saviour, whose image echoes down the ages through the mighty myth-sages, from Krishna and the Finnish Wainamoinen to Rigden Jyepo of Tibetan lamaistic lore. And breathlessly we may discern with silent eyes the dim and age-hallowed lines of the ubiquitous Messianic prophecy, painting in the sacred verse of ancient and anonymous fragments the portrait of—Man, a prophecy yet to be fulfilled by men, though some great precursors have appeared.

The phenomena of the transfiguration of the human will were known of old. And though cultural traits, naturally differing and subject to change, have thus varied its external dress and nomenclature, the laws of this metamorphosis are fixed by the constitution of man; and the instructions for this transmutation will remain invariant. Schopenhauer's profound description is therefore quite general:[50]

> The wicked man, by the vehemence of his volition, suffers constant, consuming inward pain, and finally, if all objects of

[49] *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, Bk. I.
[50] WWI, 68.

volition are exhausted, quenches the fiery thirst of his self-will by the sight of the suffering of others. He, on the contrary, who has attained to the denial of the will to live, however poor, joyless, and full of privation his condition may appear when looked at externally, is yet filled with inward joy and the true peace of heaven. It is not the restless strain of life, the jubilant delight which has keen suffering as its preceding or succeeding condition; but it is a peace which cannot be shaken, a deep rest and inward serenity, a state which we cannot behold without the greatest longing when it is brought before our eyes or our imagination, because we at once recognize it as that which alone is right, infinitely surpassing everything else, upon which our better self cries the great *sapere aude*, Dare to do. Then we feel that every gratification of our wishes won from the world is merely like the alms which the beggar receives from life to-day that he may hunger again on the morrow.

This is a tremendous symphony of understanding.

At this point an insight into, and consequent definition of virtue arises:

> Let anyone make the attempt to say, 'This man is virtuous, but he has no compassion,' or, 'He is an unjust and wicked man, but yet he is full of compassion,' and the contradiction will at once become apparent.[51]

RESUMING our thought upon the regeneration of the will, and permitting ourselves the necessary repetition of a passage

[51] *Die beiden Grundprobleme der Ethik*, p. 236 (German edition). Schopenhauer in this passage continues: "Taste may differ somewhat; but I know of no more beautiful prayer than this one with which the ancient Indian plays concluded (just as in early times English plays ended with a prayer to the King). It is this, 'May all living beings be freed from pain.'" (N.B. Such a spirit is also the essence of the *Mahayana*.) In a closely related connection, Schopenhauer aptly and succinctly says: (WWR, 53, Payne tr.) "We would hence be just as foolish to expect that our moral systems and ethics would create virtuous, noble, and holy men, as that our aesthetics would produce poets, painters and musicians." Jacob Boehme adds illuminatingly: (*Signatura Rerum*, p. 219) ". . . not only in the mouth, but in divine desire in the will and new-birth: Knowledge apprehends it not, only the earnest desire." Kant had indeed well said: (*Theory of Ethics*, 1, 2) "Nothing can possibly be conceived in the world, or even out of it, which can be called good without qualification, except a Good Will."

previously only partially given:[52] In "those who have overcome the world, in whom the will, having attained to perfect self-knowledge, found itself again in all, and then freely denied itself . . . we shall see that peace which is above all reason, that perfect calm of spirit, that deep rest, that inviolable confidence and serenity, the mere reflection of which in the countenance . . . is an entire and certain gospel."

The *Lankavatara* lends its confirmation with clarifying detail:[53]

> But with the Bodhisattva's[54] attainment of the eighth stage[55] there comes the 'turning about' within his deepest consciousness from self-centred egoism to universal compassion for all beings.
>
> After experiencing the 'turning about' in the deepest seat of consciousness, he will be able to enter the realm of consciousness that lies beyond that of the mind-system.
>
> (See note (40).)
>
> Before they (i.e. Bodhisattvas) had attained self-realization of noble wisdom, they had been influenced by the self-interests of egoism. But after they attain self-realization they will find themselves reacting spontaneously to the impulses of a great and compassionate heart, endowed with skilful and boundless means and sincerely and wholly devoted to the emancipation of all beings.
>
> His wishes will no longer be self-centered, nor tainted by discrimination and attachment, for this transcendental personality is not his old body, but it is the embodiment of his original vows of

[52] WWR, 71.

[53] LSG, pp. 126, 105–6, 112, 31.

[54] A key-word in Mahayana Buddhism (found also in Pali texts as *bodhisatta*). The etymology has been somewhat vexed, but Har Dayal (*The Bodhisattva Doctrine*, p. 9) with authority recommends *Bodhisattva* to mean "Heroic being, spiritual warrior." Dayal (p. 5) quotes Csoma de Körös' definition as "Purified, mighty soul." The Tibetan equivalent title, *byan-chub sems-dpah*, or "Illumined Heart and Valiant One," is likewise revealing. The same noble concept and attributes, we have seen, emerge in Schopenhauer's doctrine. *Cf.* above section on the Technique of Self-Transfiguration.

[55] For a description, in technical Buddhist terminology, of the psychological minutiae of these phenomena of the transformation of consciousness, the reader is referred to the *Lankavatara* itself.

> self-yielding in order to bring all beings to maturity. . . . The Bodhisattva becomes master of himself and of all things by virtue of a life of spontaneous and radiant effortlessness.

It must by now be fully apparent that Schopenhauer does not belong to the category of merely speculative philosophers, which is one reason why he has been found difficult to classify, and hence been misunderstood. Schopenhauer is seen in correct historical analysis to be of kindred spirit to the tradition of Boehme, Tauler, and Angleus Silesius; and his significance lies in the direction of a religious teacher. Do not let it be assumed, however, that he was unaware of his own limitations as to this regard. With characteristic realism he avers,[56] "I have taught what sainthood is, but I myself am no saint."

But about the course of experience that lies beyond the consummation of denial Schopenhauer has little to say; and it is here that we may take illuminating and rewarding recourse to the *Lankavatara Sutra*, after we have examined Schopenhauer's final words:[57]

> We must banish the dark impression of that nothingness which we discern behind all virtue and holiness as their final goal, and which we fear as children fear the dark. . . . Rather do we freely acknowledge that what remains after the entire abolition of will is for all those who are still full of will certainly nothing; but conversely, to those in whom the will has turned and denied itself, this our world, which is so real, with all its suns and milky ways—is nothing.

> We lack conceptions for that which the will now is; indeed all data for such conceptions are wanting. We can only describe it as that which is free to be will-to-live or not. Buddhism denotes the

[56] Quoted in McGill, p. 149.

[57] WWR, 71; and "The Metaphysics of the Love of the Sexes," penultimate paragraph.
Also see Appendix D.

latter case by the word Nirvana. It is the point which remains forever unattainable to all human knowledge, just as such.

However, there have been men whose lives *are* those data. And the *Lankavatara* is prepared to speak of such conceptions in definite and significant terms. This excellent Sutra is carefully emphatic in its delineation of the term, Nirvana, which has so often been misinterpreted[58] through ignorance and inexperience:[59]

Some philosophers conceive Nirvana to be found where the mind-system no longer operates owing to the cessation of the elements that make up personality and its world; or is found where there is utter indifference to the objective world and its impermanency. . . . That is not Nirvana.

The Bodhisattva's Nirvana is perfect tranquillization, but it is not extinction or inertness.

Nirvana does not consist in simple annihilation and vacuity.

With all the exaltation of its theme, the *Lankavatara* is soundly practical, judging with much acumen:

He who has attained only some of the fruits of self-realization . . . still thinks and discourses upon the fruits. He pridefully says: 'There are fetters, but I am disengaged from them.' His is a double fault: he both denounces the vices of the ego, and clings to its fetters.

We begin to understand why the *Lankavatara*, with such eloquent wisdom, calls Nirvana—"maturity."
And finally:

Nirvana is where the Bodhisattva stages are passed through one after another, is where compassion for others transcends all thoughts of self. . . . It is where the manifestation of noble wisdom that is Buddhahood expresses itself in perfect love for all;

[58] See Appendix D.
[59] LSG, pp. 119–120.

> is where the manifestation of perfect love that is Tathagatahood expresses itself in noble wisdom for the enlightenment of all—there indeed is Nirvana!

When we try to view Nirvana we see the limitations of our sight. There is a blankness to our eyes of a radiant vibration far above their range of frequency and vision. Or, it is like the colour of blackness, which is looking at light from behind as it leaves our ken. So it is with "Nirvana," and "the Kingdom of Heaven," or the Celtic "Land of Tir nan'Oge," the Central Asiatic "Shambhala," or "the Eternal Light World" of Jacob Boehme—no matter what the words or phrases that have been used to describe an experience of the world fuller and far more abundant than ours; just as, with even a vaster degree of difference, human experience would mean unbounded liberation for a tropistic animalcule.

Far from any pessimistic world-view, Schopenhauer's teaching, with a deeply absolute optimism, furnishes a description of the way to unconditioned awareness and peace. He certainly did affirm that to continued selfishness the world must inevitably become a very unsatisfying place—an affirmation which to the rationalizing cunning of the mind's desire can mean a pessimism of very dire and drastic variety. For self-centredness is the core of pessimism itself.

But to the subject careless of self, that affirmation is the corner stone of joy and assurance, for it means simply the non-futility of the sufferings of men. That suffering results from the therapy inherent in the nature of things that constantly reminds the self-separating will that it is in a symphony of wills, wherein its pain is but the experience of self-appointed discord and self-imposed rebuff. Without such an awakening mechanism of opposition and socializing stimulus for those that call it forth, the deep-seated tendency in the world to selfishness would long since have led to the obdurate

preoccupations and distorted self-references of insanity. But the plan seen in the nature of things is other than this, leading on the contrary to wisdom and to permanent happiness. We will suffer when we try to controvert our natures through attempting to undermine our heritage of creative harmony by a selfishly directed will.

At the close of his memorable counsel to Arjuna in the last book of the *Bhagavad Gita*,[60] Krishna speaks of happiness to Arjuna in final and restrained wisdom, poignant with the poetry of profound feeling:

> The happiness which springs from the union of the senses with the objects of desire, in the beginning like nectar, but in the outcome like poison, that is declared to be the happiness of Force. . . . But that which at the beginning is as poison, but in the outcome is like nectar, that is the happiness of substance, springing from clear vision of the Soul.

It is our open and ever-offered choice. We may taste that nectar whereof the sweetness turns to poison after every draught, or we may take that first bitter gall, which when once quaffed to the dregs turns to nectar forever. It can be said to be the Mystery of the Grail, and it leads to Avalon and beyond the westward journey of the hero Wainamoinen, travelled in unfallen tears. Schopenhauer's teaching points the way to that "happiness of substance," won through many trials, and declares the gateway to that lasting bliss that rises phoenix-like from the ashes of the final illusion.

[60] Book XVIII, verses 38, 37.

APPENDIX A

An Epitome

By way of summating statement and as a perhaps useful post-perusal guide to the reader, the main points set forth in these pages are:

First, that is a grave and prejudicial error to call Schopenhauer's philosophy pessimism.

Second, that Schopenhauer, in his profound excursion into the meaning of life, left, as it were, a truncated instead of a fully pointed pyramid.

Third, that the *Lankavatara Sutra*, embodying the finest thought and highest teaching of Mahayana Buddhism, sets the capstone upon this pyramid with perfect fit.

Fourth, that many writings of the same universal import as the *Lankavatara* might have been chosen as partial aids towards this purpose of interpretative completion: the *Diamond Sutra*, the *Surangama Sutra*, the *Sermon on the Mount*, the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Vivekachudamani* of Shankara, the *Tao Teh King of Lao-tse*, the *Upanishads*, and the great *Signatura Rerum* of Boehme, to name but some of them. But that, among all these, the *Lankavatara* is for our present purpose most conventionally explicit, provides the most felicitous transition from Schopenhauer, and thus affords to the reader the most organic, fluent understanding of the unity of thought involved.

APPENDIX B

(Referred from foot-note 2)

SCHOPENHAUER'S philosophy upholds no pscudo-optimisms

founded on special pleading, particularly those based in hedonism or that more modern term "expediency," when it is used as a rationalization in the same sense. On the contrary, Schopenhauer steadily turned aside from the self-deceptions or consequent hypocrisies involved in a merely fallacious optimism, and his thought is happily unadulterated with the usual dishonesties of those positions. Schopenhauer is not only an optimist: he is a realist. And in the last analysis only the latter can ever truly be the former, which is the point of the foregoing definitions in the text (pp. 19–20).

Besides the evasively untenable types of misleading "optimism," there exists another which, although less false or objectionable, is nevertheless still patently unsatisfactory as optimism in any complete sense. This type we may term a skeletal or insufficient optimism.

In this connection, during the course of some final research subsequent to the formulation of the present analysis, two studies came to the attention of the writer, and mention of them is included here for the sake of completeness, as well as for their illustrating the sort of inadequacy of conception referred to above. Both of them define optimism in such barren and meagre terms as to defeat in effect their own arguments.

The first, "L'Optimisme de Schopenhauer," by Stanislas Rzewuski (Paris, 1908), attempts the line of reasoning that Schopenhauer advocated optimism in meeting the "tragedy of life" with unswervingness and fixed dignity. This is not

optimism, but rather at best, Sophoclean tragedy. Schopenhauer does not admonish any such sorrowing states of mind, whether nobly carried or otherwise. In fact, he calls the maintenance of such an attitude without a real change in the will, whereby the very seeds of sorrow are destroyed, a mere "watery sentimentality" (WWR, 68).

The second volume, "Schopenhauer—Philosoph des Optimismus," by Raphael Bazardjian (Leipzig, 1909), though criticizing Rzewuski on most counts, fares little better itself. An attempt is made to define optimism as springing from the belief in the warrantable desirability of an ethic, and then to conclude that Schopenhauer was optimistic on the grounds of his making ethics so central in his system. Bazardjian's point is certainly more subtle and also better taken than Rzewuski's—but his premise is not enough to ensure correctness or even persuasion in his conclusion. The admission of some kind of credible validity for an ethic is surely a necessary condition for optimism, but not a sufficient one. To complete even the minimal requirements for optimism, there must also be the factor of at least an ultimate, if not also an immanent or immediate, *ontological* justification of ethical conduct over and above unethical. We shall come to see how both these phases of justification tangibly appear in Schopenhauer.

But quite aside from this oversight, Bazardjian is really a somewhat naïve positivist who is busily trying to convict Schopenhauer of being a positivist also. This ulterior motive vitiates the quality of his treatise, which tends to become more artificial as he proceeds.

Both of the above attempts remain trivial within the context of demonstrating the direction in which Schopenhauer's overwhelmingly discerning optimism actually lies, though they do represent surmises and feelings along the right road on the part of their authors.

APPENDIX C

Mahayana and Hinayana

McGill (quoted on p. 20) was referring to the obscure and inadequate rendition of the Upanishads from a Persian translation of them into Latin, published 1801–02 at Paris by Anquetil du Parron, who thus first introduced the famous Sanskrit scriptures into Europe. As we have seen (pp. 20–21), Buddhism was faring little better, if not worse, in the early nineteenth century in the matter of translation and reliable exposition. Indeed, practically nothing was known[61] of the system of Mahayana thought in any exact or truly representative form until the advent of the twentieth century, chiefly because of the only recently outgrown view that the Hinayanist doctrines were in general more authoritative or authentic. The ignorance regarding Mahayana was so profound even in 1907 that the principle object of his book, "Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism," (p. *v*) was listed by Dr. Suzuki as:

> to refute the many wrong opinions which are entertained by Western critics concerning the fundamental teachings of Mahayana Buddhism.

In the same vein Dr. Wilhelm H. Solf comments:

> European scholars as early as the forties of the last century had their attention turned toward it (i.e. Mahayana). . . . Soon, however, the centre of interest was diverted to the southern form, the Hinayana. The Buddhist texts handed down in the Pali language were then considered the principal sources for the doctrine of Buddha. . . . Only quite recently have European and American

[61] I.e. in the West.

scholars again begun to give due consideration to Mahayana Buddhism. In comparison with the number of Western scholars who have occupied themselves with Hinayana Buddhism the band of those who preferred the study of Mahayana is extraordinarily small. With the exception of these few, Mahayana Buddhism is even now in the main *terra incognita* to the Western world of learning (p. 6, "Mahayana, the Spiritual Tie of the Far East," W. H. Solf, 1926).

Unfortunately, western scholarship first contacted Buddhism in forms that represented a polytheistically corrupted phase of Mahayanist development found in India, China and Tibet. Thus was formed an entirely erroneous impression of Mahayana, or "Northern," Buddhism. After this period, traditional Hinayanist Pali texts of Southern Buddhism came to the attention of European scholars, as described on page 21. The unhappy effect of this infelicitous sequence delayed for almost a century the rewarding research and study of the original Mahayana doctrines, in Sanskrit. Chinese Mahayana texts—of necessity more garbled and corrputed because more second-hand than the Sanskrit literature—began to appear in Europe in accessible translation around the time of Samuel Beal's "Catena of Buddhist Scriptures from the Chinese," in 1871. There are isolated instances of actual study of the Mahayana by the middle of the nineteenth century (see note 5). Thus, the great French orientalist, Burnouf, mentioned the commendable acumen of the analysis of the notion of Nirvana to be found in the Sanskrit *Lankavatara* (*Cf.* Sogen Yamakami's "Systems of Buddhistic Thought," pp. 40 ff.). Burnouf must have remained to a large extent innocent of the implications of the *Lankavatara's* point, however; for, being unduly influenced by the questionable third Pitaka of the Pali Canon, he averred withal that Buddhism was basically a teaching of annihilation, although his comments on the *Tripiṭaka* leave the impression of some indecision, and almost

inconsistency. (See also Max Müller, "Lectures On The Science Of Religion," p. 179.)

Thus, at bottom it was the original unfortunate and prejudicial sequence of discovery for Western scholarship that set the pace for the Hinayanistic prejudice, to name one example, of the influential Pali Text Society animated by T. W. Rhys Davids. As we have already cursorily mentioned (p. 21), and as will later be more particularly illustrated (see Appendix D), the Mahayanist philosophy does not contradict the purest tradition of the Pali Canon, but rather develops the inherent conceptions of that tradition to their fullest expression. Most interestingly, this mutuality of ideas is balanced by an equivalence of actual historico-temporal extent. Quoting a modern study by Sailendranath Mitra of the University of Calcutta (p. 471, "Sir Asutosh Mookerjee Silver Jubilee Volumes," vol. 3, 1925):

> It may be shown by instances in the *Suttanipāta* that Pali expressions were modelled on originals in Mixed Sanskrit. The same can be noticed in the case of the *Dhammapada* verses.
>
> At a certain point we are confronted with a divergence in ideas, theories, expressions and so forth among the Buddhists, and this, as traditions unanimously support, coincides with the first schism dividing the Buddhist brotherhood into two strong rival parties, viz. the *Theravādin* or the Orthodox and the *Mahā sanghika* or the Democrats.

The latter party (later to be called *Mahayana*) also formed recensions of the texts, in a manner similar to the development of the Pali Canon, and both were finally fixed in writing. The existence of the Northern tradition's early textual history has only relatively recently come to light with discoveries like that of early non-Pali Buddhist books at Khotan and Turfan.

It is most important and relevant to note that the writings of the beginning *Mahā sanghika* traditions passed through a

similar history as the *Theravādin* Canon, and culminated in their turn in the pure Sanskrit texts of the Mahayana tradition. Thus Mitra (*op. cit.* p. 470):

> . . . the fact stands out that a Mixed Sanskrit, deviating at a certain point from the Pali, passed through different stages and culminated in classical or pure Sanskrit in the latest recensions . . . (It may be of value to recall at this point that Pali was a literary, ecclesiastical language, compounded out of the existing mixture of Sanskrit dialects, principally from the *Māgadhī*, a northern dialect, or one very close to it.) Thus, the earliest Buddhist texts, now lost in their original form, furnished the starting points for *both* the Pali and the Sanskrit literature at present extant, each tradition retaining and preserving and amplifying what it considered most important of those first scriptures which accrued and were collected soon after the lifetime of the Buddha. Hence it is, for example, by no means anomalous to suppose that the Sanskrit *Lankavatara* represents as a historical fact the extended developmental point of an entirely pure line of autonymous Buddhist thought from original sources as much so as do, say, the Pali *Suttas*. Neither the temporal nor the doctrinal precedence of the present Pali versions of Buddhism over the Sanskrit is by any means any longer assured. Indeed, as we shall soon more fully see, there is not even a great fundamental disagreement.

Volumes in themselves could easily be written in the attempt to render fully the historical and ideological definitions of Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhism—so rich is the available material and so extensive the nexus of notions and distinctions involved. But it is an interesting fact that at the present time, after most of the nineteenth century argumentative smoke has disappeared, we can discern a basic continuity between these two main divisions in Buddhism.

As we have had occasion to notice, the fairly recent filling

in of early Buddhist records from before and at the time of the schism following the third Great Council in India, has helped considerably to piece together a long and consistent growth of these two branches from one trunk. However, the Sanskrit texts often voice more clearly and bring to fruition, more so than the Pali, some of the fundamental tendencies of the original teaching of the Buddha.[62] Grünwedel perceived this fact, although by reason of his time he was perforce unaware of the historical authenticity and continuity of the Mahayana; thus he remarks that the Northern Canon is either more far-reaching or better preserved in many respects:

> . . . es ist nicht zu leugnen, dass der Pali-Kanon . . . in vielen Dingen einfach abbricht, wo im Norden die Tradition weitergeht oder sogar besser erhalten ist (p. 17, "Mythologie des Buddhismus in Tibet und der Mongolei.")

In addition, there is no doubt as to the greater explicit philosophical richness of the Mahayana. So Dasgupta ("History of Indian Philosophy," vol. I, p. 126):

> The ultimate good of an adherent of the Hinayana is to attain his own salvation . . . the ultimate goal of those who professed the Mahayana creed was . . . to seek the salvation of all beings . . . in consequence of that, the instructions that Hinayanist followers received, the attempts they undertook, and the results they achieved were narrower than that of the Mahayana adherents.

And McGovern ("An Introduction to Mahayana Buddhism," pp. 1–3):

> Of recent years, owing to the labours of such scholars as Spence Hardy, Gogerly, Prof. and Mrs. Rhys Davids, etc., Hinayana has become more or less known to the Western world, but Mahayana still awaits adequate treatment. . . . Mahayana is the outcome of centuries of speculative development. . . . Hinayana has remained far more narrow and confined in its philosophical evolution.

[62] As, for instance, in the development of the Bodhisattvic ideal.

Dr. Daisetz Suzuki, however, seems to sum up the relationship between the interpretationist and the conservative Buddhist traditions most accurately and with the finest insight:

> The spirit that animated the innermost heart of Buddha is perceptible in Southern as well as in Northern Buddhism. The difference between them is not radical or qualitative as imagined by some. It is due, on the one hand (i.e. Mahayana), to a general unfolding of the religious consciousness and a constant broadening of the intellectual horizon, and, on the other hand (i.e. Hinayana), to the conservative efforts to preserve literally the monastic rules and traditions. ("Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism," p. 4.)

This entire question of Pali, Southern, Hinayana, and Theravadin Buddhism *vs.* Sanskrit, Northern, Mahayana, and Mahasanghikan Buddhism has been discussed principally for its usefulness in delineating the historical context both of the *Lankavatara Sutra* and of Buddhist scholarship in Europe at the time of Schopenhauer; as well as for its value in furnishing the more recent resolutions of the basic problems and apparent dilemmas involved. Nevertheless, we must pause to observe that a final settlement of the issues between Mahayana and Hinayana adherence is aside from our present purpose, which has been in part simply to disclose the deep-seated complementary relationship that the *Lankavatara Sutra* —the principal analytical exposition of Mahayanist philosophy —bears to Schopenhauer's thought.

As a matter of fact, we feel much the same as Suzuki in regarding the opposition of Mahayana to Hinayana in the light of an unfruitful dichotomy, even as far as understanding Buddhist thought within its own context is concerned. Illustrations will be presently afforded (Appendix D) of how the Pali Canon agrees with the Sanskrit in spirit and practically in expression upon the mooted subject of Nirvana.

APPENDIX D

On Nirvana

We have tried to make explicit how Schopenhauer, as well as the *Lankavatara Sutra*, and hence the Mahayana Buddhism it represents, are abundantly and richly optimistic. From the point of view of our analysis, if the Lankavataran philosophy even separately is seen to be unconditionally optimistic, then Schopenhauer's must surely, *ipso facto*, also be; for the two doctrines are so closely contingent. In fact, it is precisely the implications of this optimistic context that are so deeply shared by both Schopenhauer and the *Lankavatara*, as we have already witnessed.

However, even the Buddhism of the Pali Canon, over the disputed pessimism of which a scholarly debate of the nineteenth century raged, was finally adjudged by three great orientalists—Max Müller, Mrs. C. A. F. Rhys Davids, and Hermann Oldenberg—to have been optimistic in its original and undistorted interpretation, and even in most of its developed texts. To some extent, Burnouf and later de la Vallée Poussin at least deny the Theravada's pessimism if not affirming specifically its optimism.

The *Lankavatara's* definition and exposition of *nirvana* has previously been rendered in full enough measure (*supra*, pp. 47–8) so that its positive and constructive, non-nihilistic meaning is easily apparent. But as to the Hinayanist notion of *nirvana* there has been considerable disputation, some thinkers and scholars asserting a nihilistic import and others denying it.

Yet as a matter of fact, although there may have existed an early nihilistic theological sect (e.g. as illustrated in certain

parts of the third *Piṭaka*), Pali Buddhism as a whole will be found to be clearly and explicitly in agreement with the *nirvana* of the *Lankavatara*. We subtend here a few passages in the interests of lending more specificity to the description of this relationship. First, Mrs. C. A. F. Rhys Davids declares (*in re* Hinayana):

> It is only to be expected, while the ancient literature of Buddhist philosophy is inaccessible to the general critics, and still to some extent by the Indianist, that many hasty generalizations and one-sided conclusions . . . should continue to prevail. . . . There is, for instance, much that is misleading, or downright false, in labelling Gotama's doctrine as Pessimism, Pantheism, Atheism, Nihilism, Quietism, or Apatheia.[63]

And Hermann Oldenberg well says (parentheses ours):

> It was my conviction that there is in the ancient Buddhist literature no passage which directly decides the alternative whether the Nirvana is eternal felicity or annihilation. So much the greater, therefore, was my surprise, when in the course of these researches I lit not upon one passage, but upon very numerous passages, which speak as expressly as possible upon the point regarding which the controversy is waged, and determine it with a clearness that leaves nothing to be desired. (That is, passages in the Pali Canon, which was the subject of Oldenberg's researches.)
>
> . . . (The Nirvana is) no being in the ordinary sense, but still assuredly not a non-being; a sublime positive, of which thought has no idea, for which language has no expression, which beams out to meet the cravings of the thirsty for immortality in that same splendour of which the apostle says: 'Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him! . . . What is to be extinguished has been extinguished, the fire of lust, hatred, bewilderment. In unsubstantial distance lie hope and fear; the will, the

[63] "On The Will In Buddhism"; *Jour. Roy. As. Soc.*, 1898, p. 47.

hugging of the hallucination of egoity, is subdued, as a man throws aside the foolish wishes of childhood. (Quoted from Oldenberg's "Buddha" in Clarke's "Ten Great Religions," Part II, pp. 377–79.)

Oldenberg also had stated:

> If one describes Buddhism as a religion of annihilation . . . he has, in fact, succeeded in wholly missing the main drift of Buddha and his ancient order of disciples.
>
> Max Müller has above all others maintained with warm eloquence the notion of Nirvana as completion[64] but not as an extinction of being. ("Buddha: His Life, His Doctrine, His Order," pp. 266, 267.)

Müller had maintained and demonstrated that "sayings of the Buddha occur in the first and second parts of the canon, which are in open contradiction to this metaphysical Nihilism" (p. 141, "Lectures On The Science Of Religion.") While de la Vallée Poussin points out with salutary clarity: "Selfishness wrongly understood would lead to the wrong view that there is no survival." ("The Way To Nirvana," p. 137.)

An interesting Pali text concerning this matter of *nirvana* is the "Questions of King Milinda" (*Sacred Books of the East*, vol. 36, pp. 188 ff.), to which we turn:

> As space, O King, neither is born nor grows old, neither dies nor passes away nor has a future life to spring into . . . rests on nothing . . . so is Nirvana.
>
> As food, O King, is the support of life of all beings, so is Nirvana —for it puts an end to old age and death.

Other parts of the "Questions of Milinda" amply show that the annihilationist view of *nirvana* was not even orthodoxly Hinayanist. The passage quoted above is mentioned in Oldenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 274, and is more completely analyzed

[64] Yet even "completion" is in this context too final a word in the ossified sense, and Nirvana is more akin to consummation.

in Sogen Yamakami's "Systems of Buddhistic Thought," pp. 33 ff. Yamakami (pp. 40–41) also gives the elegantly technical and formal statement of Nāgārjuna:

> That which under the influences of causes and conditions is Samsara, is, when exempt from the influence of causes and conditions, to be taken as Nirvana.

Beal (*op. cit.*, p. 174), in a relevantly similar passage, quotes the Buddha of the *Parinirvana Sutra* as saying:

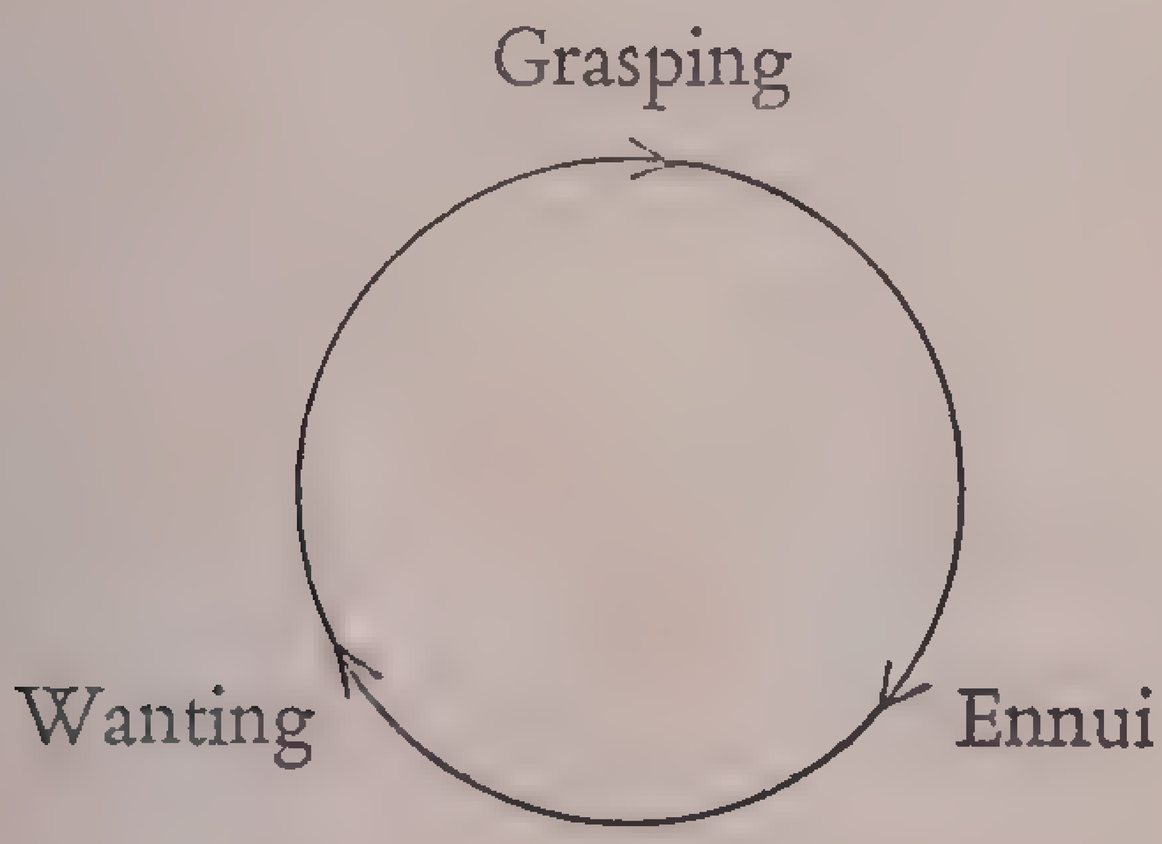
> Nirvana may be compared to the nothingness defined as the absence of something different from itself. . . . Nirvana is just so. In the midst of sorrow there is no Nirvana, and in Nirvana there is no sorrow.

Of course, the last two quotations have a Mahayana derivation, but they were cited to illustrate the real congruence between the views on *nirvana* of the Mahayanist and the Pali canons. This agreement is further enhanced by the *Anguttara Nikāya*, an orthodox Pali work:

> For actions which are done out of greed, anger and delusion, which have sprung from them, which have their source and origin there—such actions are, through the absence of greed, anger and delusion, abandoned, rooted out, like a palm tree torn out of the soil, destroyed, and not liable to spring up again. . . . In this respect one may rightly say of me, that I teach annihilation, that I propound my doctrine for the purpose of annihilation, and that I herein train my disciples. For, certainly, I teach annihilation—the annihilation namely of greed, anger and delusion, as well as of the manifold evil and demeritorious things. (*Buddhist Bible*, pp. 41–2.)

These delineations of Nirvana, *via* authority and source, go far toward emphasizing the modern view, supported by the work of scholars like Teitaro Suzuki and S. Mitra (*q.v.*), that the Mahayana is not a contradiction to, but rather—to borrow

Aristotle for Asia—a "final cause" of Hinayanist Buddhism; and that in each, Nirvana is the very antithesis of negation, as has been so ill-understood by so many commentators and encyclopedists in the West, thus tending to inhibit the right understanding of a fundamental religious truth, and one that is particularly central in Buddhism.



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East-West fire

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