

# **Ideas and Intelligible Characters in Schopenhauer's Philosophy**

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## **Declaration**

I, Vicente José Rodríguez Rojas, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

## Abstract

This thesis attempts to provide a response to two critiques directed towards Schopenhauer's adoption of the doctrines of Ideas and Intelligible Characters, while offering a new reading of their role and relevance. On the one hand, I intend to address concerns that regard Ideas as "third ontological categories". On the other, I provide a response to the "problem of individuation of Intelligible Characters". This is done by means of analysing the parallelism of both doctrines and presenting their relevance to Schopenhauer's epistemology. This thesis is divided into four chapters. Chapter One is intended to serve as an introduction to Schopenhauer's philosophy and nomenclature. In Chapter Two, I discuss the problem of Ideas as "third categories", while presenting the means that lead us to address this problem. Chapter Three is dedicated to presenting the problem of individuation of Intelligible Characters. In this chapter I show that there is a close parallelism between this doctrine and that of Ideas, rendering the role of Intelligible Characters to be explanatory devices. In Chapter Four, I present a reading of Ideas and Intelligible Characters intended to address the incompleteness of a causal explanation of nature. They are presented as the philosophical counterpart of an understanding of the world through *efficient* and *final* causes.

## **Impact Statement**

This thesis presents a new reading on the relationship and integration of the doctrines of Ideas and Intelligible Characters in Schopenhauer. This work will contribute to the understanding and interpretation of the unity of Schopenhauer's system. It will be beneficial for academic purposes as it presents a reconstruction of Schopenhauer's thoughts on the philosophical role and necessity of the integration of both doctrines.

## **Acknowledgments**

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## Introduction

For anyone familiar with Arthur Schopenhauer's philosophy, it is not always easy to reconcile some apparently incompatible aspects of his system, particularly in the light of his Kantian background. This is the case for Schopenhauer's adoption of the originally Platonic doctrine of Ideas and of the Kantian doctrine of Intelligible Characters. The aim of this thesis is to present a double solution. First, I will address some criticisms of Schopenhauer's use of Ideas based on the apparent confusion that these correspond to a "third ontological category", unconvincing considering his purported original project. Second, I will provide an answer to the difficulty, posed originally by Christopher Janaway, of the possibility of the spatio-temporal individuation of Intelligible Characters in the light of an apparent contradiction entered into by Schopenhauer. This is to be done by presenting a reading of the coherence and necessity of both doctrines as a philosophical answer to the explanatory incompleteness of causality in two of its forms. Overall, through the exposition of these problems, my intention is to provide an answer to the following question: Do Ideas and Intelligible Characters constitute a "third ontological category" in Schopenhauer's philosophy? I argue that the critiques directed towards these doctrines arise from a misconception about the relevance they have for reaching a complete understanding of nature as a whole. As a result, one could expect that this reading coheres with Schopenhauer's, though not always consistent, use of the terminology related to these doctrines, thus according a better understanding of the unity and consistency of his entire system. Moreover,

this reading portrays the doctrine of Intelligible Characters as being more fundamental to Schopenhauer's epistemology than has thus far been regarded.

There are three claims I would like to defend. The first one is that Ideas, in spite of the confusing manner in which Schopenhauer presents them, are not to be treated as a "third ontological category". The reasons for this lie in Schopenhauer's repeated assertions of the unity of the world and his idea that Will<sup>1</sup> and representation are not two separate ontological categories. Rather, I argue that the Will-representation distinction is epistemological. As a consequence, the status of Ideas as objects of knowledge locates them at a representational level and they must be treated as such. The second claim I defend is that it is necessary for Schopenhauer to make use of the doctrine of Intelligible Characters, which leads us to a solution of the difficulty of its individuation. This originates in the explanatory incompleteness of human action, which parallels Schopenhauer's necessity to use the doctrine of Ideas, or at least a version of it. The reason for this is that, in a similar way that Ideas are intended to somehow "complete" the etiological explanation of nature, Characters constitute the last explanatory factor that completes our understanding of human action. Overall, this interpretation makes the doctrine of Characters a necessary feature, without which Schopenhauer's account of human action and agency are, to Schopenhauer's regret, philosophically incomplete. The

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this thesis, I make use of "Will" (capitalized) to refer to Schopenhauer's special use of the term. Of course, this special use does not express willingness as it ordinarily would. More about that will be explained in this thesis. Although Schopenhauer himself does not use the capital letter to distinguish this particular use, I believe it helps the reader to understand the meaning and context of its use in this thesis.



difficulty of the individuation of Intelligible Characters will be addressed by presenting its parallel with the doctrine of Ideas. As a consequence of the two previous points, I sustain a subsidiary claim about Ideas and Intelligible Characters: Ideas are meant to serve as an epistemological counterpart of a view of the world through *efficient causes*, while Intelligible Characters fill the incompleteness of an understanding of the world through *final causes*. This reading is reached through the analysis of Schopenhauer's own assertions on the matter and the explicit parallelism he draws between the two doctrines. I argue, that without this distinction regarding their purposes, the reasons for the use of *both* doctrines instead of a single one would remain unclear.

This thesis, is thus intended as an response to critiques that see the adoption of these doctrines as a contradiction on Schopenhauer's part. Schopenhauer's philosophy has been consistent throughout all his writings, however, these particular philosophical views are preeminent in some of his works more than others. For this reason, I make use of more than one source when discussing a particular aspect of his philosophy. Assuming and embracing such consistency, I expect that the unity and coherence of it will be clearer.

As often happens, it can be difficult to argue for a complete consistency of such a large philosophical system. As much as one would like to advocate for it, consistency in some areas is often offset by inconsistency in others. Due to the flexible character of Schopenhauer's terminology, I acknowledge the possibility of other readings, which may even better explain other aspects of his philosophy. Part of the motivation

for writing this thesis is the consideration that the doctrines of Ideas and Characters in Schopenhauer's writings are sustained by philosophically necessary foundations. Consequently, although I intend to make some aspects of the whole system more understandable and consistent, an absolute coherence of Schopenhauer's remarks will hardly be reached, particularly in the light of his scattered use of nomenclature. Particularly, I advocate for the consistency between the two doctrines of Ideas and Characters, which may have as a consequence the further difficulty of finding a coherent account of some of Schopenhauer's remarks. In this thesis I advocate for the unity of his system, even though in such unity contradictions might be found. As a consequence, I will not focus my attention on more isolated instances of inconsistency in his use of nomenclature. Rather, this is an attempt to put at ease some worrying problems that arise from Schopenhauer's exposition of both doctrines.

This thesis is divided into four chapters. Chapter One gives a general introduction to Schopenhauer's thought, familiarising the reader with some of his basic nomenclature and definitions. Chapter Two initiates the discussion by presenting the critiques on Ideas as "third categories" and presents a solution through a reading that highlights their explanatory role in nature. The "third category critique" arises from a neglect of the epistemological role assigned to Ideas in our understanding of nature as a whole and Schopenhauer's division of his purported ontology. Chapter Three addresses the problem of individuation of Intelligible Characters as a consequence of the misconception about the role and necessity of the doctrine of Ideas. In this chapter, I also present the parallelism drawn by

Schopenhauer between the two doctrines and use it as a basis for an answer to the discussion about individuation. In the final chapter I give the solution to the problem of individuation, thus arguing that plurality of Intelligible Characters and Ideas results from their dependence on a knowing subject. I also present a reading of the doctrine of Ideas and Intelligible Characters as Schopenhauer's philosophical answer to the incompleteness of causality. In addition, I present Edward Kleist's solution to the problem of individuation and argue for its inconsistency on the basis of his disregard for Schopenhauer's distinction between *efficient* and *final* causes as explanatory for *inorganic* and *organic* nature respectively.

Since I do not add a conclusion for every chapter, I conclude this exposition with an assessment of the content presented in this these and some final remarks to consider in the light of the interpretation just given.

## Chapter 1

### Schopenhauer's Philosophy

#### 1.1 Schopenhauer's Principle of Sufficient Reason

Schopenhauer's philosophy is commonly characterised as a unitary thought. Whoever reads his entire works will realise that, although they differ in their approach, each piece of his writings is part of an organic system that is meant to be read in its entirety. Schopenhauer's philosophy, borrowing David Cartwright's (2010) words, "does not proceed like the progress of history, in a straight line", but is meant to be understood as a unity, "so that repeated study of his work is required to understand the multiple connections between all the parts of his thought" (p. 294).

The most basic and most immediate conception of the world presented by Schopenhauer in the opening lines of his main work, *The World as Will and Representation*, is that "the world is my representation" (WW I p. 3), which can be understood as both the starting point and the ending point of his philosophy. Schopenhauer follows the Kantian distinction between the world as in-itself and as phenomenal, not without adapting and using part of this nomenclature to express his own thoughts. This first section focuses on the latter notion of this distinction, the world of phenomena. Following a Kantian agenda, Schopenhauer held that time, space, and causality (as a result of their union), do not belong to things as

they are in themselves, but to the knowing subject as forms found *a priori* in our understanding, giving origin to the world as representation. In Schopenhauer's words: "all causality, hence all matter, and consequently the whole of reality, is only for the understanding, through the understanding, in the understanding" (WW I p. 11). All of our representations, Schopenhauer says, "are objects for the subject, and all objects for the subject are our representations" (FR p. 30). All of these representations stand in relation to one another by a connection, viz. the *Principle of Sufficient Reason* (PSR from now on). Schopenhauer held that the PSR is the expression in the representation of the unity of all the forms of the object of which we are "*a priori conscious*" (space, time and causality), and thus "in it is expressed the whole of our *a priori* certain knowledge" (WW I p. 6). Schopenhauer defines this principle as follows: "Nothing is without a ground or reason why it is" (FR p. 10). The origins of this principle have their roots in that objects of representation "stand to one another in a connection that is governed by laws and of a form determinable *a priori*, by means of which connexion nothing existing of itself and independently, likewise nothing existing in isolation and apart, can be an object for us" (FR p. 30). Schopenhauer, in the *Fourfold Root*, describes that these relations among objects are of four classes, that in turn are governed by four forms of the PSR. These are the principle of sufficient reason of *becoming, knowing, being, and willing*. Although I will briefly present all of them, the first and the last forms are the ones that will occupy most of our attention throughout this thesis.

The reach of the PSR of *becoming* concerns the connectedness of “all objects that present themselves in the totality of representations that constitute the complex of empirical reality” (FR p. 38). To this class of object I will refer throughout this thesis as *objects of perceptual experience* (because they correspond to the objects of *empirical reality*), and in Schopenhauer’s terminology are regarded as those of *intuitive representation*. These types of objects are characterised by their status as representation derived from the action of the understanding through its forms over the sensory data. Schopenhauer describes this form of the principle thus: “If a new state of one or more real objects appears, then there must be another, previous state from which the new one follows according to a rule, i.e. as often as the first exists, every time” (FR p. 38). In short, the first form of the PSR rules over objects of perceptual experience and determines their connectedness to one another. As a result, no object is to be understood individually for it is always the cause and effect of another. It both determines and is determined. Objects of perceptual experience are, for Schopenhauer, *intuitive, complete, and empirical* representations (FR p. 33). They are *intuitive*, as opposed to abstract objects, like thoughts or concepts. They also are *complete* insofar as they, in a rather Kantian vein, contain not only formal but also material properties. Finally, they are *empirical* for they “have their origin in excitation of sensation in our sensitive body” (FR p. 33) which, as mentioned earlier, makes them belong to the complex of empirical reality.

I would like now to centre our focus on the second of these characteristics. The formal properties of this kind of object are constituted

by their belonging in *time* and *space*, which makes them representations of inner and outer sense respectively. Schopenhauer considers this characteristic to be necessary for the existence of real objects as such. As Schopenhauer remarks, “empirical representations belonging to the law-governed complex of reality appear in both forms simultaneously, and the *intimate unity* of both is even the condition of reality” (FR p. 34, emphasis in original). Space allows for simultaneity, persistence and duration, whereas time allows for the possibility of change through succession. The important point lies in the conjunction of these two forms, which is made through understanding which, for Schopenhauer, is a brain function. This feature, Schopenhauer says, “combines those heterogeneous forms of sensibility so that from their mutual interpenetration (although just for the understanding itself) *empirical reality* arises as a totality of representations” (FR p. 34) at the time that it renders the subjective sensation (raw data) into object intuition when it applies “its single and only form, the *law of causality*” (FR p. 53).

The second class of objects determined by the second form of this principle are objects of *abstract representation*, as opposed to those of *intuitive representations*. For Schopenhauer, the main difference between these classes of objects lies in the faculties involved in their origins. While objects of intuitive representation are derived from the *a priori* forms of the understanding, abstract representations depend on the exclusively human faculty of *reason*, giving origin to *concepts*. These are derived as the “faculty of abstraction reduces complete and hence, intuitive representations [...] to their constituents in order to be able to think about these separately,

each in itself, as different properties or relations of things” (FR p. 94). Thus, this form of the principle governs the relation between concepts, as it also governs the principles of logical truth.

The third form of objects the principle governs are *space and time as pure intuitions*, thus not perceived as operating on *the matter*. Time and space as pure forms give origin to *inner* and *outer* sense for the subject. The rules that govern these pure forms give origin to arithmetic and geometry, the pure intuition of time and the pure intuition of space, respectively.

The last form of the principle has its origin in the identity between what Schopenhauer calls *the subject of knowledge* (or knowing subject) and the subject of *willing*. This third and final form has the latter as its object. Schopenhauer presents a progression in the subject’s knowledge about nature beginning with objects of perceptual experience. Every subject, including those of other animal species, possesses the capacity of perceiving the external world and, through the understanding, are able to represent causality. Nevertheless, in addition to outer experience, the *subject of knowledge* has its necessary correlate as an object in inner experience: the *subject of willing*. Since any cognition is necessarily constituted by something that cognises and something that is cognised, Schopenhauer asserts that the knowing subject is never able to cognise itself, i.e. to become the representation. because “as the necessary correlate of all representations, it is their condition” (FR, p. 133). In other words, in a way that could make us remember one of Wittgenstein’s (1961) passages, the subject of knowledge can never become part of the world of representation (p. 69). Nevertheless, through inner experience, the knowing subject



cognises the subject of *willing*. Therefore, Schopenhauer remarks, the knowing subject *qua* knowing subject can never be the object of knowledge. If this is so, Schopenhauer argues, in order to know the subject of cognition as an object, the subject of cognition itself must cease knowing and become just an object, which is by definition contradictory. What we *do* know about ourselves though is not the subject *qua* subject of knowledge but the subject *qua* subject of willing. This, Schopenhauer remarks, “is an object to the cognizing subject and indeed is given only to the inner sense; thus, it appears only in time, not in space [...]” (FR, p. 133). The subject of willing is presented by Schopenhauer as the object of *introspection*. The subject of cognition, knowing all of the representation that in one way or another is subject to the PSR, is the necessary unknowable counterpart of the objects of knowledge. It is, in other words, one of the necessary sides of the subject-object relation. While regarding ourselves as subjects that will, we also recognise the influence of motives in our actions both from the outside (like all other causes dependent on the PSR) and the inside. Therefore, the fourth form of the PSR appears as “causality seen from within” (FR p. 137), as the *principle of sufficient reason of acting*, also called *the law of motivation*.

The relevance I give to the first and the last forms of the PSR in this thesis, agrees with F. C. White’s (1999) thesis about the importance of the *Fourfold Root* as the foundation for Schopenhauer’s system. White (1999) briefly stated that the importance of this work “lies in its attempt to establish that the everyday world is representational, to establish that the principles of reasoning governing that world license no inference to a reality beyond it, and to refute the many claims of those who hold otherwise” (p. 64). I hope

the reader does not take this as a grounds for what I present, but rather as one of the conclusions of this thesis. Schopenhauer, in portraying the root of the PSR previous to any of its particular forms, hints at, what in his later works will translate into, his view about the sciences' incapacity of portraying a complete image of the world. My intention is to show, among other things, how this is so.

## 1.2 Ideas and Aesthetic Experience

In this introduction, I have mentioned that in inner experience a subject gets to know herself as a subject of *willing*. This portion of reality which the subject cognises in himself the Will is what constitutes for Schopenhauer the other half of the world; it is the closest knowledge we can get of the world as it is in itself. Schopenhauer held that the Will manifests itself in many different ways. One of these is through 'Ideas'.<sup>2</sup> In § 25 of the first volume of *The World as Will and Representation*, Schopenhauer gives us a short and quite puzzling definition of Ideas.<sup>3</sup> He says: "by *Idea*, I understand every definite and fixed *grade of the will's objectification*, in so far as it is thing-in-itself and is therefore foreign to plurality. These grades are certainly related to individual things as their eternal forms, or as their

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<sup>2</sup> From now on, I make the distinction between 'Ideas' and 'Platonic Ideas', the first making reference to Schopenhauer's use of the term and to a general account of the doctrine adopted by Schopenhauer. The latter (although more scarcely) will be used when referring to Plato's own account. As I have mentioned, Schopenhauer's use of the nomenclature is not always coherent throughout his writings. We can suspect, as I will show below, that the similarity between his and Plato's use of the doctrine might not be as sound as Schopenhauer himself may have thought. In subsequent quotes I will not assume that such distinction is made by the corresponding author.

<sup>3</sup> From now on, whenever I make reference to a particular section of *The World as Will and Representation*, it must be understood that I am making reference to the first volume. If this is not the case, it will be explicitly stated.

prototypes” (WW I p. 130). Although there are many interpretations about how Ideas fit in Schopenhauer’s system, and this is something I discuss in the next chapter, these can be broadly understood as the unalterable eternal forms which determine the essence of a species. For each individual instance of a tree, a cat, or gold, there is a corresponding Idea that relates to it.

Ideas play an essential role in Schopenhauer’s account of aesthetics. They are the object of aesthetic contemplation. Schopenhauer’s account of aesthetics stands for the possibility of a kind of experience free from the spatio-temporal relations between objects in representation. The main problem of aesthetics, Schopenhauer says, is “how satisfaction with and in an object are possible without any reference thereof to our willing” (PP II p. 415). In a different way from that in which we experience objects in an intuitive perceptual representation such as chairs, tables, cats and mats, aesthetic experience allows for a “disinterested” experience of objects. This consists of experiencing objects outside their causal relation to other objects, determined by the PSR, and even to the experiencing subject himself. Aesthetic experience, thus, gives us access to eternal forms free from spatio-temporal and causal constraints that stand as the unchanging forms of the objects of intuitive perceptual representation, i.e. it gives us access to Ideas. To regard an object independently of its causal relations means that the subject suspends, during the aesthetic experience, her volitional attitudes towards the regarded object. The object in question does not appear anymore to the subject in its quality of being an object within the PSR. It is “detached” from the subject of willing and it becomes an object of

knowledge for the *pure subject of knowledge*. The causal relations of objects become secondary; their essence is what matters now. To exemplify this, I borrow Luis Moreno's (2010) example on aesthetic experience:

In a garden, a man feels attracted to the unusual beauty of a rose. He gets close to it and touches it gently without breaking its stem. Such is the absorption that the man does not see any more a flower in the garden, not even the most beautiful. The image fills his entire attention, it fills his pupils and consciousness: the simply curious man becomes a pure admirer, someone whose sole activity is to contemplate. He becomes what Schopenhauer would call "reines Subjekt des Erkennens", a *pure subject of knowledge*. What he sees now is the Platonic Idea of the rose, which gathers the perfection of every rose in the garden, and in all the gardens in the world [...] (p. XI, translation mine)<sup>4</sup>

Schopenhauer's use of Ideas does not lack controversy. On the contrary, it represents one of the most discussed aspects of his philosophy. One of the main features of his doctrine that is put into question is the coherence and necessity of introducing Ideas. This point is to be discussed in the next chapter.

### **1.3 Empirical and Intelligible Characters**

One of the most detailed explanations of the doctrine of Intelligible Characters is presented in Schopenhauer's essay *On the basis of Morals*. In §10 of that work, Schopenhauer discusses the possibility of the coexistence between necessity and freedom in human action by presenting the Kantian

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<sup>4</sup> In this passage the distinction between Platonic Idea and Idea is not made. I ask the reader to be careful in understanding this example to the letter, for it may presuppose an overall thesis not shared here, viz. that Platonic Idea (in the strict Platonic sense) and Idea can be used interchangeably.

doctrine of Intelligible Characters.<sup>5</sup> Overall, the notion of Intelligible Characters<sup>6</sup> is adopted by Schopenhauer in his attempt, following the Kantian doctrine, to determine for the possibility of freedom of action while maintaining a rather deterministic view of the world as representation. The challenge that this doctrine intends to address lies in the compatibility of the necessity that takes place in representation (through the determinations of the PSR) and the apparent fact that “our actions are accompanied by a consciousness of self-determination and originality by virtue of which we recognise them as our work and everyone feels unmistakably certain that he is the actual doer of his deeds and morally *responsible* for them” (BM p. 184). In short, the difficulty lies in reconciling a deterministic view of the world as representation in which our actions unfold and the view that, from an intuition derived from common sense, we are the free doers of our deeds.

Most of the discussion on the doctrine of Intelligible Characters is derived from Schopenhauer’s attempts to describe the possibility for human agency and its freedom.<sup>7</sup> As it happens with the doctrine of Ideas, the notion of Intelligible Characters does not lack controversy. He describes characters thus:

With his unchangeable, innate character, all the manifestations of which are strictly determined by the law of causality, here called motivation as mediated through intellect, the individual is the only appearance. Lying at

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<sup>5</sup> For an account of Kant’s doctrine see Allison (1990) and Kant (1996, 1997).

<sup>6</sup> Throughout this thesis I refer to these as either Intelligible Characters or simply Characters, both being indicated with capital letters. As I hope will become clearer later in this thesis, this intends to agree with Schopenhauer’s own use of the nomenclature and render more understandable his remarks on the topic. In addition, I make use of the term ‘character’ when ambiguity is to be found in Schopenhauer’s work.

<sup>7</sup> An interesting parallelism with Sartre’s *fundamental project* is given in Engels (2014).

the base of this appearance, to be found outside space and time, free from all successions and plurality of acts, the *thing in itself* is one and unchangeable. Equally present in all the individual deeds, stamped in all of them like the signet in a thousand seals, presenting itself in time and a succession of acts, his nature *in itself* is the *intelligible character* which determines the *empirical character* of this appearance, which, in turn, in all its manifestations, called forth by motives, must show the constancy of a natural law, for which reason all its acts follow with strict necessity. (BM pp. 184-185)

Intelligible Characters are presented as the solution to the difficulty of freedom in human deeds. This is shown as the “nature in itself” of all individual deeds. While independent of the PSR, the Intelligible Character stands as the place that allows for freedom. In addition to this, Schopenhauer describes the Kantian doctrine of characters and the essence of freedom in the following words:

‘doing follows essence;’ [operari sequitur esse] i.e., everything in the world does according to what it is, according to its nature, in which all the manifestations are, therefore, already potentially [potentia] contained, but actually [actu] occur when external causes call them forth; whereby, then, this very nature appears. This is the *empirical character*; in contrast, its inner, ultimate ground, not accessible to experience, is the *intelligible character*, i.e., the essence *in itself* of the thing. In this the human being is no exception from the rest of nature: he, too, has his fixed nature, his unchangeable character, which is completely individual and differs with each person. (BM p. 185)

If there is to be any self-determination in the unfolding of human agency, this ought to be located, Schopenhauer says, outside the scope

determined by the rules of the PSR. This is why all action, governed by this principle, ought to occur with absolute necessity, in contrast to the freedom of what is not determined by it. In short, there is an absolute necessity of the *operari* [actions], and an absolute freedom of the *esse* [the essence, or being] which is not governed by this principle. In order to meet this challenge, the Intelligible Character is presented as the most fitting candidate. In *The World as Will and Representation*, Schopenhauer writes, “our character is to be regarded as the temporal unfolding of an extra-temporal, and so indivisible and unalterable, an act of will, or of an intelligible character” (WW I p. 301). Due to its independence from a temporal determination and therefore from the PSR, the intelligible character is presented as the, borrowing the expression from Christopher Janaway (2012), “locus of responsibility” (p. 454) in the light of the strict necessity that follows the world as representation. All human actions that unfold in representation follow the form whose ultimate ground is the Intelligible Character. Serving as a model they determine the individual actions that are called forth by motives, following them with necessity. But it is this very feature, the independence from time, that gives us a solution to the problem of freedom while giving rise to a, quite probably major, difficulty.

## Chapter 2

### Ideas

#### 2.1 Ideas as “Third Categories”

Schopenhauer’s adoption of the doctrine of Ideas has raised discussion among commentators about how well this doctrine fits into his system. Although the role he assigns to Ideas, in both the understanding of nature and aesthetic experience, appears to be straightforward, it has generated debate concerning its necessity.<sup>8</sup> Mainly, worries about Ideas emerge from concerns about the relationship they maintain with the two purported exhaustive categories of the ‘in itself’ and ‘perceptual phenomena’. I refer to Janaway’s concerns about the doctrine along with other commentators’ worries that seem to follow the same line.<sup>9</sup> In brief, they see Schopenhauer’s adoption of the doctrine of Ideas as an unconvincing move that does not fit his general system and that does not cohere with his original purpose of following the Kantian exhaustive distinction between the phenomenal and noumenal world. In this respect, Ideas are rendered as being practically disposable and unfitting for Schopenhauer’s system for they represent more problems than solutions. This view, I argue, originates in the confusion that results from regarding

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<sup>8</sup> I call this interpretation “standard” because the role of the doctrine of Ideas in relation to individual objects is commonplace among the commentators of his literature, while the issue about its necessity and ontological status is more open to debate. See Atwell (1995), Came (2011) Heide (1966), Janaway (1994), Neeley (2011), Vandenabeele (2008, 2011) and White (2011).

<sup>9</sup> See Hamlyn (1980), Magee (1983) and Heide (1966)



the world of the ‘in-itself’ and perceptual representation as two irreducible and exhaustive ontological categories. It identifies what Schopenhauer calls “representation” with what can be understood as intuitive perceptual representation. Presenting Janaway’s remarks is important for detecting a general worry about Ideas that extends to his criticisms of Schopenhauer’s doctrine of Intelligible Characters. This is the reason why, as an anticipation, I do not regard Janaway’s concerns over Ideas as isolated from the subsequent comments on the doctrine of Intelligible Characters. I extract Janaway’s view from such comments on more than one occasion. Hopefully, the whole extent of his critiques will be clear for the reader upon the exposition of both critiques.

Janaway presents his concerns about Ideas while discussing aesthetic experience and attitude. The difficulties presented by the doctrine of Ideas, Janaway (1989) says, arise mainly from the difficulty already present in understanding aesthetic experience in contrast with perceptual experience (p. 276). While discussing Schopenhauer’s account of the aesthetic experience, Janaway argues that the position Ideas have in Schopenhauer’s philosophy is unclear. His view on the coherence of Schopenhauer’s doctrine is permeated by the inconsistencies he sees in the notion of experiencing these eternal forms. His concerns arise mainly from the difficulties presented in Schopenhauer’s account of a will-less contemplation of Ideas, reached by perceptual contemplation (Janaway, 1989, p. 277). Consequently, Janaway finds it difficult to make real sense of the type of objects that are Ideas. Since aesthetic experience consists of

the subject getting access to Ideas, we are allowed to question their metaphysical status. Janaway says:

The Ideas have an uneasy position within Schopenhauer's metaphysics [...] Unlike Plato's Forms they are explicitly not the objects of pure thought or reasoning, but of perceptual contemplation [...] They are not the thing in itself, but they are the 'most adequate objectification' of the thing in itself in the world of phenomena [...] In Kantian terms, the Ideas are to repose somewhere between appearance and thing in itself, and it is deeply uncertain whether there is any such location for them to occupy. (Janaway, 1989, p. 277)

Janaway's remarks on this respect, I believe, are derived from Schopenhauer's confusing description of Ideas. In addition to the first definition of presented above, Schopenhauer describes Ideas in the following words:

the Platonic Idea is necessarily object, something known, a representation, and precisely, but only, in this respect is it different from the thing-in-itself. It has laid aside merely the subordinate forms of the phenomenon, all of which we include under the principle of sufficient reason; or rather it has not yet entered into them. But it has retained the first and most universal form, namely that of the representation in general, that of being object for a subject [...] it is even the whole thing-in-itself, only under the form of representation. Here lies the ground of the great agreement between Plato and Kant, although in strict accuracy that of which they both speak is not the same. (WW I p. 175)

As Janaway presents it, there is no clear position Ideas could consistently occupy within Schopenhauer's system, for allegedly they are

“to repose somewhere between appearances (representation) and the thing in itself” (Janaway, 1989, p. 27). As he points out somewhere else, “Ideas seem forced to serve as both thing in itself and representation, when these two categories were supposedly mutually exclusive at the outset” (Janaway, 1994, p. 61). This is so because Schopenhauer’s introduction of Ideas has to find a place within a philosophical system that owes most of its central elements to the Kantian and Platonic accounts. Janaway understands Ideas in Schopenhauer as a “compromise, between the quasi-Platonic notion of the ‘better consciousness’, the Kantian epistemological framework, and the doctrines of the primacy of the will [...]” (Janaway, 1989, p. 278).<sup>10</sup> Janaway explicitly expresses his scepticism by saying that “he [Schopenhauer] is still prepared to make the extremely dubious statement” (Janaway, 1994, p. 61), in §23 and §31, that asserts that, in the whole, the inner meaning of Kant’s and Plato’s doctrines are the same. By adopting Ideas, Janaway believes, Schopenhauer introduces a confusing element that does not cohere fully either with the Kantian elements of the doctrine nor the Platonic. The answer to his concerns has to meet both the requirements of clarifying how consistently those elements are brought together and of establishing whether there is any “place” for Ideas to occupy.

Janaway bases his concern on the main premise that Schopenhauer bluntly divides the world into two irreducible and exhaustive categories, viz. the noumenon, identified with the Will, and the objects of intuitive empirical representation. The main critique to be made about

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<sup>10</sup> Since the notion of “better consciousness” is traced back earlier than Schopenhauer’s main works, I do not include it as part of my account. Clarifying readings on the topic, see Janaway (2009) and Vandenabeele (2009 – 2011)

Schopenhauer's position in this respect is the difficulty of introducing an element that borrows its characteristics from both the Kantian thing in itself and the Platonic original notion of Idea. Janaway's main critique of the doctrine in its entirety is that Ideas are to "repose" somewhere between the Kantian notion of thing-in-itself and the "normal" kind of perceptual experience. It is true, as Schopenhauer presents them, that Ideas exhibit both Kantian and Platonic elements that make them difficult to comprehend. Nevertheless, I believe an answer to these worries must establish from the outset that Schopenhauer's view about the distinction between the 'in itself' and representation is rather un-Kantian.

More concerns on Ideas have been raised apart from those of Janaway. Such comments, although originating from a slightly different position, portray a similar view of Ideas as "unfitting" in Schopenhauer's system, thus disregarding their necessity and consistency. These are the critiques raised by Bryan Magee in his thorough analysis of Schopenhauer's system. Although Magee clarifies many aspects of Schopenhauer's thought, I believe his concerns over the doctrine of Ideas errs in giving a clear account of their importance. Magee's (1997) scepticism arises from his worry about Ideas successfully achieving the role that Schopenhauer intended them to have in the explanation of nature (p. 239). From Schopenhauer's own characterization of Ideas, they are mainly presented as the explanation of the unity found in individual perceptual representations acting as their prototypes. They are also presented as the solution to the difficulties arising from the relation between the noumenal and intuitive representation. The main role of Ideas is to explain why some features are

shared by different individuals in perceptual representation, e.g. why every dog is like every other dog or every tree is like every other tree. Magee (1997) says:

And I am not convinced that the Platonic Ideas — adduced primarily to explain the existence of genera and species — are necessary to Schopenhauer's philosophy at all. A careful shave with Occam's razor could, I suspect, succeed in removing these without trace. (p. 239)

Magee's concerns over the role Ideas play in Schopenhauer's system, are derived from the uncertain role they have in explaining the old problem of "the one and the many". On these lines, Magee (1997) continues his remarks:

I cannot help suspecting that they were introduced *ad hoc* at this point and then got out of hand. I suspect that the reason for their introduction was that — without having at his disposal any of the conceptual apparatus since made available to us by Darwin and the subsequent development of biology — Schopenhauer could not see how else to explain the fact that everything is like something else: every sparrow is like every other sparrow, every blade of grass like every other blade of grass, every star like every other star, and so on, throughout the whole of the known universe, regardless of the evident unconnectedness of individual things with each other in time as well as in space. (p. 239)

The introduction of Ideas, Magee (1997) continues, has the unthought consequence,

of making Platonic Ideas an indispensable feed-pipe between the noumenon and the world of phenomena. As such they became the third

constituent of total reality [...] whereas Schopenhauer's philosophy makes so much of presenting itself to us as an account of reality in terms of two irreducible categories — the noumenon and phenomena — it actually makes use of three; what he shows us is not a two-decker reality consisting of will and representations but a three-decker reality consisting of will, Platonic Ideas and representations. (p. 239)

There are two main propositions that summarise Magee's critique. The first is that Magee understands Ideas, in their role as the explanatory element of the connectedness of individual things, as being on par with a scientific method of explanation in our understanding of nature. They are rendered unnecessary in the light of the development of evolutionary biology, or any other science that does not need to appeal to eternal and unchanging Ideas in order to explain nature at that level. Unity in nature, Magee would say, can easily find its explanation in a scientific understanding of the world through biology. The second proposition, that Magee shares with Janaway, is that he understands Schopenhauer's system as being constituted by 'two irreducible categories', viz. the thing in itself and the phenomena, understood as perceptual representation, rendering Ideas as a 'third constituent of reality'. I believe this assumption to be misleading for it sustains that the world, as Schopenhauer would understand it, is only constituted by these two 'types of things' and does not give space for any other. Therefore, Magee sees Ideas as a 'third constituent of total reality' introduced into Schopenhauer's system that does not cohere with his initial project of the world as being just Will and representation. There is a misunderstanding on Magee's part about Schopenhauer's intentions when

adopting Ideas. As I shall present in this chapter, I believe these propositions to err in the analysis of Schopenhauer's intentions when adopting the doctrine and in assessing the corresponding place for Ideas to occupy within his doctrine.

Janaway's and Magee's assumption that Ideas constitute a "third" element in Schopenhauer's philosophy makes it difficult to include them in an account that pretends to be clear about the demarcation of the boundaries between the thing in itself and phenomena. Moreover, such a view could be misleading if it assumes more pieces of ontology than intended by Schopenhauer and may change the outcome of the whole project. In sum, one could distinguish three interrelated claims in Magee's and Janaway's comments, which I will focus on and attempt to resolve in this chapter: 1) That there is an inconsistency between the Kantian and Platonic elements of Schopenhauer's account, which make of Ideas a strange element to introduce into the system, 2) That the thing in itself and phenomenal world understood as perceptual phenomena are two irreducible and exhaustive categories, and 3) That the second category, i.e. the one of phenomena, is restricted to objects of intuitive perceptual representation subject to the PSR.

By responding to these worries in the following discussions, I will turn my attention to the Kantian and Platonic elements of the doctrine, in order to clarify the first aforementioned concern. This is necessary as Schopenhauer's use of Ideas is restricted to his commitments to both these

doctrines. By considering the thing in itself and phenomena as exclusive, and identifying the latter with what one understands as perceptual representation, there seems to be no other place for Ideas to repose in than a “third realm” separated from the two already mentioned. I believe that a way to understand how Ideas “fit” within Schopenhauer’s system, is to clarify their explanatory role in our understanding of nature. Contrary to what Magee seems to imply, Ideas are not intended to complete the ontology of the world, but they are meant to complete *our understanding* of it.

## **2.2 Kantian and Platonic Elements in the Doctrine of Ideas**

Hilde S. Hein’s comments on Schopenhauer’s Ideas highlight their mixed meaning. She believes that, because Ideas are intended to have a Platonic meaning while they also take on some of the characteristics of the Kantian thing-in-itself, “we have grounds for suspicion that in fact, Schopenhauer used the Ideas in a very un-Platonic sense” (Hein, 1966, p. 124). While considering the Kantian aspects of the doctrine and the type of nomenclature that permeates the whole of his philosophy, Schopenhauer’s notion of Ideas departs moderately from the original metaphysical meaning found in Plato’s account. Although similar to Plato’s, the position Ideas occupy in Schopenhauer’s system is undeniably conditioned by Kantian premises. Ideas are introduced by Schopenhauer as a necessary element derived from the Kantian influence evinced in the whole of his account.

As Hein (1966) presents it, Schopenhauer’s use of the doctrine of Ideas intends to introduce them by giving them a rather Platonic meaning



(pp. 135-136). These act as forms or prototypes of the vast number of individual things found in representation. Moreover, Schopenhauer's own claims about the meaning and use of the notion, in addition to references to ancient commentators on Plato (such as Diogenes Laertius),<sup>11</sup> explicitly state the sort of interpretation he is trying to introduce into his system. He says that "the word [Idea] is always to be understood in its genuine and original meaning, given to it by Plato" (WW I p. 129). Nevertheless, this does not secure a complete and identical assimilation of the Platonic doctrine. Let us remember that Schopenhauer's system is erected from the Kantian idea that the world is the representation of a thing in itself. In Schopenhauer, the thing in itself is identified with the Will, and as such, it cannot be known by the subject as perceptual representations. His adoption of the doctrine of Ideas must find a place within a system built on and permeated by a Kantian doctrine and terminology, something that Schopenhauer himself is aware of. Schopenhauer warns against the Kantian misuse of the term and goes further for a characterization of Ideas, although in a Platonic manner, with Kantian notes.

The main premise shared by the Kantian and Platonic accounts, for Schopenhauer, is that the everyday world (the world of experience or perceptual representation) is an always-changing fleeting "illusion" that only stands as the counterpart of something eternal and "truly real". An example of this awareness is found in §31 where he explicitly states that the inner meaning of the Kantian and Platonic doctrines "is wholly the same; that both declare the visible world to be a phenomenon which in itself is

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<sup>11</sup> See (Dorandi (ed.) (2013)

void and empty, and which has meaning and borrowed reality only through the thing that expresses itself in it (the thing-in-itself in the one case, and the Idea in the other)” (WW I p.172). Moreover, Schopenhauer goes on to try to bring the terminology of both doctrines even closer by saying that space, time and causality, as arrangements of our intellect, bring about the apprehension of things where “the *one* being of each kind [or Ideas] that alone really exists, manifests itself to us as a plurality of homogeneous beings [...]” (WW I p. 173). Despite Janaway’s remarks on the issue, the similarities between both doctrines seem ideal for Schopenhauer in his attempt to merge them. Schopenhauer introduces Ideas in a way that attempts to agree with both the Platonic and the Kantian accounts, thus giving rise to an apparent tension. On the one hand, he has to make this doctrine compatible with the notion of an eternal thing-in-itself outside space, time and causality, and consequently unknowable by the subject; and, on the other, with a strictly Platonic notion of Ideas as the only true object of knowledge. Since in the Platonic and Kantian doctrines these two different features stand for what it is “truly real”, Schopenhauer is left with some constraints for introducing Ideas into his account.

Schopenhauer is already committed to the idea that the world is the representation, and that the thing in itself cannot be the object of knowledge. He expresses this explicitly in §22 by saying that the thing-in-itself “as such is never object, since all object is its mere appearance or phenomenon, and not in itself” (WW I p. 110). He is also committed to an apparent Platonic use of the term thus allowing Ideas to be objects of knowledge as “fixed grade of the will’s objectification” (WW I p. 130). While Schopenhauer

agrees with Kant in asserting that the world is just representation of the thing-in-itself, he also agrees with Plato in that Ideas are “more real” than individual things. He accepts that the thing-in-itself is unknowable and that Ideas are objects of knowledge, while both stand as the “more real” counterparts of individual perceptual objects. Ideas, then, are presented as somewhere between these two notions. The sense, though, in which Ideas can be known differs from the normal use of “knowledge” when referring to individual objects of empirical representation. By making use of Kantian terminology, Schopenhauer presents the Idea as “original unchanging forms and properties of all natural bodies” (WW I p. 169) that, as such, “remains unchanged and as one and the same, and the principle of sufficient reason has no meaning for it” (WW I p. 169). This means that, in a Kantian sense, Ideas are also presented as outside the categories of space and time, and therefore they cannot be known in the same way that objects of perceptual experience can. Ideas, then, are unknowable as long as we are concerned with the knowledge of individual things by means of the PSR, for they are outside of it. Nevertheless, Schopenhauer still allows them to be objects of knowledge, and “this can happen only by abolishing individuality of the knowing subject” (WW I p. 169), through aesthetic experience.

I believe we can rely on White’s (2011) interpretation of the doctrine when assuming that there are two main reasons, both shared by Schopenhauer and Plato, for introducing Ideas (p. 134). Moreover, they seem to arise from what Schopenhauer believes is fundamentally shared by the accounts of Kant and Plato. This would make the merging of their accounts much less doubtful. As we have seen, Schopenhauer’s use of Ideas

gets closer to that intended by Plato in its original sense, while assuming a Kantian background and nomenclature. White argues that the common elements in both Plato's and Schopenhauer's accounts give origin to the same requirements for the introduction of Ideas. On Schopenhauer's side, these reasons are constrained by the inherited Kantian elements he adopts in his philosophy. The first reason White presents is that Ideas solve the problem of universals. Ideas, once again, are "the unity that has fallen into plurality by virtue of the temporal and spatial forms of our intuitive apprehension" (WW I p. 234). They are introduced, White sustains, from the necessity to explain the unity individual things exhibit in perceptual representations. That role cannot be given to the thing-in-itself for it can never be the object of knowledge. Ideas are presented as an answer to the problem of "the one and the many" (White, 2011, p. 134). They stand as the eternal unity that is represented as plurality by the forms of the intellect. Ideas, White claims, are introduced based on the necessity to deal with the problem of "the one and the many" and are the unity *ante rem*, for they stand as the "more real" counterpart of representation, thus having, in Schopenhauer's words, "an objective real existence" (WW II p. 366). This interpretation, while it coheres with the definition of Ideas given at the beginning, also coheres with the Kantian and Platonic elements that constrain Schopenhauer's system.

White (2011) believes that the second reason for introducing the doctrine of Ideas in Schopenhauer's and Plato's systems is that they are needed as objects of knowledge (pp. 134-135). This arises from Schopenhauer's claims on what constitutes the objects of "real knowledge",

in contraposition with objects of “normal” perceptual experience. In §31 of the first volume, he states, in Plato’s own words, that since the world of experiences is never truly real because it changes and is subject to the PSR, the only real knowledge to be acquired is one of the Ideas. About this, Schopenhauer says that “thus only of them [Ideas] can there be a knowledge in the proper sense, for the object of such a knowledge can be only that which always and in every respect (and hence in-itself) is” (WW I p. 171). Again, being committed to the Kantian doctrine that the world of perceptual experience is representation of an unknowable thing-in-itself, White (2011) says, Schopenhauer needs to present an object of knowledge that represents a “more real” alternative from the fleeting and illusory world of appearances (p. 135). Ideas maintain their status as the “more real” counterpart of objects of perceptual experience while they stand as objects of real knowledge. This is the reason why Schopenhauer adds a high value to art; the subject of artistic contemplation knows objects in a “deeper way”.

It is important to consider two main propositions that summarise succinctly Schopenhauer’s constraints when adopting the doctrine. The first is that Ideas are not to be identified with the Kantian notion of the thing-in-itself. Since Schopenhauer allows them to be objects of knowledge, reached through aesthetic experience, Ideas cannot play the same role of the thing-in-itself within the system. Due to his Kantian commitments, Schopenhauer could have never equated Ideas and the thing-in-itself; thus they must be presented as separated elements. If there is to be a blunt distinction between the world of the thing in itself and representation, Ideas still are to be considered as part of the latter, i.e. as part of the phenomenal world, though

different from perceptual experience. Schopenhauer addresses this by saying that “Idea and thing-in-itself are not for us absolutely one and the same. [...] for us the Idea is only the immediate, and therefore adequate, objectivity of the thing-in-itself, which itself, however, is the *will*-the will in so far as it is not yet objectified, has not yet become representation” (WW I p. 174). The thing in itself, being free from all forms of knowledge, including the most universal of all, “that of being-object-for-a-subject”, is not representation (see Section 1.1).

The second proposition is that, regardless of the first proposition, and vaguely following the original meaning of the term, Ideas still stand as a more real counterpart of individual objects of perceptual experience, acting as their eternal unchanging forms. This follows from both Kantian and Platonic accounts. In order to understand the role assigned to Ideas, one must be aware of the type of relationship these have with the thing-in-itself and with individual objects of perceptual experience. More importantly, one should be able to understand why Ideas could appear as the necessary link between the apparently otherwise unrelated thing-in-itself and individual objects. At this point, some major confusions arise. As was presented in Magee’s and Janaway’s critiques, it is easy to assume that there is no place for Ideas to occupy in Schopenhauer’s philosophy. They certainly are not to be identified with the thing-in-itself (or the noumenon), nor are individual objects of perceptual experience, although they stand as their eternal forms. If one assumes that Schopenhauer bluntly categorises that everything there is in the world is either noumenon or intuitive appearance, then there is certainly no space for Ideas to occupy. From this,

two non-contradictory assumptions can arise, which is also where we can find both concerns presented above. The first assumption is that, while Schopenhauer intends to demarcate all that there is as being either thing in itself or intuitive phenomenon, there is no space for Ideas to occupy for they are not described as either. The second assumption is that when including Kantian and Platonic elements into his philosophy, Schopenhauer understands the world as being constituted by at least two “types” of things. The thing in itself and intuitive phenomena would represent two different things in Schopenhauer’s ontology. By including Ideas, he would be also including a third type into his ontology. If this is the case, the world would not be just constituted by the thing in itself and intuitive phenomena, but also by Ideas. I believe that the first of these two assumptions is the easiest to clarify. In what follows, I expect to clarify a distinction that is necessary to refute these assumptions: the epistemological and ontological distinction. I believe that Schopenhauer’s description of Ideas has enough ground for establishing that they are emphasised more as having an epistemological mark rather than an ontological one. The role Ideas have is pivotal for Schopenhauer’s construction of his idealistic traits.<sup>12</sup> Without Ideas, I intend to show, it does not result that nature is incomplete, but rather that our knowledge of it is.

### **2.3 The role of Ideas in Nature**

As shown in the previous section, Ideas are not to be identified with the thing in itself nor with representation as objects of perceptual

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<sup>12</sup> See Gardner (2012) for a further discussion of Schopenhauer’s place in German Idealism.

experience. Nevertheless, they are strictly related to the latter and their introduction intends to explain individual objects of perceptual representation at a certain level. In this section, I intend to present how this is so. Paraphrasing John E. Atwell's words on the issue, a succinct characterisation of the role Ideas have in nature could be as follows: Ideas are presented by Schopenhauer for a philosophical level explanation of changes in nature, thus serving as "third factors" that allow us to reach an understanding of nature at a level impossible through science (Atwell, 1995 p. 130). I agree with Atwell's accurate analysis of Schopenhauer's necessity for the inclusion of Ideas into his system. This interpretation, as seen from Magee's comments, is not commonplace among commentators. Following this, my intention is to demonstrate how Ideas represent a different explanatory level of nature not reached by science. Another aim of this section is to address Janaway's and Magee's worries, particularly 2) and 3), on the restrictiveness of the distinction between thing in itself and phenomena. I proceed in two stages. The first is to clarify Schopenhauer's position on scientific explanation and why Ideas do not belong to it. This implies acknowledging the type of relation that exists between philosophical and scientific explanation. The second stage consists of presenting what kind of explanation Ideas actually give regarding our understanding of natural perceptual phenomena. Ideas are introduced as a *qualitates occultae* that establish, *ante rem*, intuitive perceptual representation.

In order to understand Schopenhauer's thoughts on science, there are two aspects of his philosophy to bear in mind. The first one is Schopenhauer's commitment to an analytical method of enquiry "which



proceeds from either facts of external experience or facts of consciousness” (BM p. 127) and, following Vojislav Bozickovic (2011), its importance in a non-conceptual knowledge of causal relations and objects (p. 15). Consequently, philosophy’s task is to follow this procedure of enquiry. The analytical method “goes from the facts, the particular, to the propositions, the universal, or from consequents to grounds” (WW II p. 122) and, as Bozickovic (2011, p. 12) points out, it uses as a basis the possibility of a non-conceptual knowledge of objects through the faculty of understanding. As Bozickovic (2011) rightly notes, Schopenhauer is committed to the claim that in addition to a conceptual knowledge of objects “there is also a non-conceptual knowledge of them” (p. 13). This has its foundation in Schopenhauer’s comments on the faculty of understanding, shared by humans and animals, “which by means of its unique form of causality and by means of what underlies this, pure sensibility (that is, time and space), the understanding first creates and produces this objective external world from raw stuff of a few sensations in the sense organs” (FR p. 52). Following, the way in which the philosophical task is carried out must start from the objects of perceptual experience in order to reach, at a later stage, the universal.

Schopenhauer’s opinion on science is based on the importance of understanding the world starting from perceptual experience. Nevertheless, one should be reminded of Schopenhauer’s strong idealism when considering his comments on the faculty of understanding. In order to understand the relation between science and philosophy, one must be aware that although Schopenhauer allows for a non-conceptual knowledge of

objects, the external world is still the product of our intellect, and as such it is still the object for a subject. One should not believe, Schopenhauer says, that the world “is completely objective-real and would be able to exist without our having anything to do with it” (FR p. 53). The world of perceptual experience comes to exist “only when the *understanding* [...] becomes active and applies its single and only form, the law of causality [...]” (FR p. 53). Schopenhauer’s philosophical investigation uses this truth as a starting point as much as a conclusion, as do his views on scientific explanation. Although different, the scientific and philosophical explanations of the world start from the basis that whatever there is to make sense of constitutes the world as representation. They focus, in other words, on the world as the object of knowledge for a conscious subject; they focus on representation.

The second element to consider is that, as Julian Young (2005) rightly observes, Schopenhauer sees a “non-hostile, collaborative relationship between science and philosophy” (p. 55). This is based on Schopenhauer’s remarks that “what sciences presuppose and lay down as the basis and limit of their explanation is precisely the real problem of philosophy, which consequently begins where the sciences leave off” (WW I pp. 81-82). This, Young (2005) thinks, suggests a view of philosophy where one of its main tasks is the “completion of the scientific image of reality” (p. 56). But, what kind of explanation does science provide? By making use of a rather Kantian nomenclature, Schopenhauer refers to science as the “systematic knowledge under the guidance of the principle of sufficient reason” that “tells us nothing more than the relation of one

representation to another” (WW I p. 28). This principle, as it was presented in the introductory chapter, determines at least a large part of the objects of representation and is considered by Schopenhauer as the “basis of all science”, for it is the one that connects all the members of the scientific system (FR p. 9). Science, concerned with the kinds of relations given in empirical representation and having as a basis the PSR in its first form, aims to explain the connectedness of experiential phenomena under causal laws. Nevertheless, the scope of explanation reached by science is not universal as it leaves the ultimate aspect of nature unexplained.

Following Young’s (2005) comments, we could rely on a reading where Schopenhauer seems to be committed to the idea that science explains particular phenomena by subsuming them under causal laws (p. 56). Nevertheless, Young (2005) continues, although science gives us certain knowledge about *what* it is that connects different phenomena, regularities are not regarded as law unless there is an “inner conditioning”, on which it is grounded (p. 56). This “inner conditioning” Young refers to, is mentioned by Schopenhauer when he states that, although we get knowledge of the laws that regulate interaction from aetiological explanation, “we do not obtain the slightest information about the inner nature of any of these phenomena” (WW I p. 97). This, which is also called *natural force*, constitutes a basis from which aetiology “calls the unalterable constancy with which the manifestation of such a force whenever its known conditions are present, a *law of nature*” (WW I p. 97). This is as far as aetiology can go, because “the force itself that is manifested, the inner nature of the phenomena that appear in accordance with those laws, remain

for it an eternal secret” (WW I p. 97). In other words, science, or the aetiological explanation of the causes of individual objects of experiential representation, cannot explain the natural forces that operate in laws of nature. It is bound to explain and give a sense of the changes that occur under the PSR, i.e. under space, time and causality, while it establishes the regularities found in their connectedness (laws). What this lacks, and what would be left for philosophy to explain, is the “inner nature” of these connections and of the objects of experiential representation. These natural forces that determine, outside the limits of the PSR, how these connections take place in the forms of natural laws are excluded from the scientific explanation of nature. In Schopenhauer’s own words, sciences are able to explain how laws operate in perceptual representation. They show “the law, the rule, observed by these forces in regard to their entry into space and time in each case. But whatever we may do, the forces themselves remain *qualitates occulta*” (WW I p. 122, emphasis in original).

I believe one can sum up the explanatory role of science and where it falls short in explaining nature by considering Schopenhauer’s words on aetiology. Since sciences give us an aetiological explanation of the world, one can summarise Schopenhauer’s thoughts by looking into a key passage on the topic. On aetiology, he says it:

teaches us that according to the law of cause and effect, this definite condition of matter produces that other condition, and with this it has explained it [...] it, therefore, determines for them their position in time and space according to a law whose definite content has been taught by experience, yet whose universal form and necessity are known to us

independently of experience [...] this is called *natural force* and lies outside the province of etiological [sic] explanation [...]. (WW I p. 97)

Science cannot provide an explanation of the natural forces, the universal forms, or *qualitates occultae*, that operate at a level prior to our knowledge of the laws that take place in time and space in individual objects of experience. The philosophical task, then, lies in identifying these forms, and the aptitude for philosophy that “consists precisely in what Plato put it in, namely knowing the one in the many and the many in the one” (WW I p. 82), in other words, knowing universals. Schopenhauer’s view on the relation between science and philosophy is clear: Philosophy is concerned with an explanation of nature that is not provided by a scientific explanation of the world. This means to focus on the universal forms, natural forces, or *qualitates occultae*, that constitute the inner nature (outside the PSR) of phenomena. The philosophical task consists in knowing and presenting the universal forms that, not being subject to the PSR, differ from objects of perceptual experience.

The importance of this fact might help us determine the restrictiveness of the distinction between the thing in itself and its phenomena, at the same time that it clarifies the possible status of Ideas. Schopenhauer’s explicit statement that the Idea is “necessarily object” or “a representation” (See section 2.1), should give us the first clue for assessing the real meaning and scope of the world as representation. I believe the first step in giving this explanation must begin by looking at Schopenhauer’s strong naturalistic conception of the world, derived from his conception that there is no ontological gap between the Will as thing-in-itself and

representation. The world of perceptual experiences, as understood by Schopenhauer, is the spatio-temporal representation of a timeless thing-in-itself, which “is free from all forms of knowledge, even the most universal, namely that of being the object for a subject; in other words, it is something entirely different from representation” (WW I p. 128). Any investigation of the world of representation must find its starting point in the acknowledgement of this truth, viz. the truth that what distinguishes representation from the thing in itself, is that representation appears as an object for a knowing subject. Moreover, it is only for representation that plurality and the forms of intellect apply, for the thing-in-itself must be understood as “something to which the condition of the possibility of plurality, that is, the *principium individuationis*, is foreign” (WW I p. 130). Nevertheless, the fact that plurality can only be applied to representation does not imply that the latter consists solely of objects that present such form. For the thing in itself, spatio-temporal forms do not apply, nor do any of the forms that have the object-subject relation as their basis. Nor does this imply that, once the thing in itself appears as an object (in any possible form) for a subject, Schopenhauer is adding another category to the inventory of substances in the world. If the thing in itself is not even an object, there is no ontological category for it to occupy. From the very beginning, the possibility of it being the object of knowledge is excluded, and all reference to it must start with it being objectified. Referring to this, Schopenhauer says: “the objective world, the world as representation is not the only side of the world, but merely its external side, so to speak, and that the world has an entirely different side which is its innermost being, its

kernel, the thing-in-itself [...] calling it “will” after the most immediate of its objectifications” (WW I pp. 30-31).

The world of representation is the thing-in-itself, i.e. the Will made an object for a subject. This condition for representation is not limited to the objects found in perceptual experience, but includes anything that constitutes any of the representational forms derived from the subject-object relation. Everything that is representation is equally *Will* (as thing-in-itself), without exception. As Schopenhauer puts it, “the will reveals itself just as completely and just as much in *one* oak as in millions” (WW I p. 128). I believe one can make the first distinction between the thing in itself and phenomena (or representation) in the following terms: The thing in itself is free from all forms imposed by any knowing subject and, as such, it is (intuitively) unknowable. Opposed to the phenomenon, it is not and can not be the object of knowledge. A phenomenon, on the other hand, is subject to the forms derived from the most basic representational relation of all, viz. to be object-for-a-subject.

As Schopenhauer puts it, the thing in itself can be presented to a subject in a multiplicity of forms, i.e. a multitude of ways in which it can be an object for a knowing subject. The Will manifests itself in varying degrees at different levels of its objectification. These “degrees of visibility” (WW I p. 128) vary depending on the level in which the thing-in-itself is presented as an object for a subject. Schopenhauer says:

There is a higher degree of this objectification in the plant than in the stone, a higher degree in the animal than in the plant; indeed the will’s passage into visibility, its objectification, has gradations as endless as those

between the feeblest twilight and the brightest sunlight, the loudest tone and the softest echo. (WW I p. 128)

Ideas are these “fixed grade of the will’s objectification” (WW I, p. 130). and they find their relation to objects of experience in the way that the latter constitute an exemplification or instantiation of the first. An individual tree exemplifies the Idea of a tree. It exemplifies, or is just one instantiation of a certain grade, of the Will’s objectification. The primordial and most immediate relation between objects of perceptual experience and Ideas lies in that the latter “exist as the unattained patterns of these [objects], or as the eternal forms of things” (WW I p. 129). For now, a parallelism could be drawn in saying that the most immediate function Ideas play in our understanding of nature (or more specifically, of perceptual representation), as pointed out by Atwell (1995), is their role as a sort of *natural species* (p. 131).

Ideas are thus introduced in Schopenhauer’s philosophy firstly as the universal and eternal forms whose knowledge is unreachable by science, and whose uniformity is seen in perceptual representation as a law. On this, Schopenhauer says that “every universal, original force of nature is, in its inner essence, nothing but the objectification of the Will at a low grade, and we call every such grade an eternal *Idea* in Plato’s sense. But the *law of nature* is the relation of the Idea to the form of its phenomenon” (WW I p. 134). An Idea, or fixed grade of objectivity of the Will, then, “lies entirely outside the chain of causes [...] in aetiology, however, in this case physics, it is seen as an original force, i.e. a *qualitas occulta*” (WW I p. 131) that rules over matter presented in perceptual experience. These rules,



Schopenhauer says, “can never be called either effect or cause, but are the prior and presupposed conditions of all causes and effects through which their own inner being is unfolded and revealed” (WW I p. 130) and, as such, they lie completely outside the causal chain of relations. In the case of the most basic and fundamental *forces of nature*, they “exhibit themselves as the lowest grade of the will’s objectification” (WW I p. 130). Therefore, in order to make sense of, for example, an apple falling from a tree, one must make reference to different grades of objectification of the Will. One can exhaust the explanation through causes until these original forces are reached, an explanatory point which ultimately makes reference to a universal form for which the causal explanation is not available. In this case, the most primordial force in place is that of gravity, which, although presented as representation in time and space, has an inner nature that is timeless and outside of the chain of causality for it is constitutive of those changes in material bodies. When the apple falls, it is the Idea of gravity that is operating in that particular spatio-temporal instance. In the same way, it is the Idea of the apple tree that is operating in the particular instance of the tree that gave origin to the apple. If Ideas are to be seen through science as natural forces, as I believe Schopenhauer presents them, gravity, as an example of these eternal unchangeable forms, is just the representation in time and space of the thing-in-itself in a similar way that the apple itself is. To the question: Are Ideas real? I believe one could answer, they are as real as any object of representation is. As with any object of representation, their existence depends on the existence of a subject, of the *pure subject of knowledge* (see Section 1.1). Ideas are reached through the knowledge of

objects of perceptual experience and are not, as many misinterpret, mystical ontological entities.

Ideas are the fixed, eternal forms of the various grades of objectification of the thing-in-itself, thus shaping perceptual representation. Their explanatory role as natural forces cannot be subjected to the principle of sufficient reason. The notion of natural force, or Idea, used by Schopenhauer, therefore, must go beyond the causal explanation of changes in perceptual nature. The role of Ideas lies in their capacity to stand as the *qualitates occultae* from which experiential representation is shaped, while they still remain part of the world as a representation while being objects of knowledge. The scope and reach of the difference between the thing in itself and the world of representation include these eternal forms outside space and time, and therefore they can be seen as “third factors” that complement the scientific image of the world.

This view does not contradict the role Schopenhauer gives Ideas as the objects of aesthetic contemplation. Ironically, Schopenhauer assigns the ultimate knowledge of reality not to the scientist, but to the artist. This, I believe, agrees with Young’s (1987) comments on the matter when he remarks that the universality of Ideas has to do “with the selectiveness of attention” (pp. 92-93) paid to objects of experience. Science would focus this attention only in terms of the object’s relation to other objects, never on its own essential characteristics. Nevertheless, I do not believe there is enough evidence to go further to state, as Young (1987) does, that Ideas “must be identified with ordinary natural objects for those are the only kind of objects there are in the phenomenal world” (p. 93). As I have made clear,

there is an ontological and epistemological difference to discern. That knowledge of Ideas is *reached* through objects of perceptual experience does not mean that they *are* objects of perceptual experience. The identity of Ideas and objects of perceptual experience represents another discussion, as could also be (as an analogy, for Ideas are *not* concepts) the identity between concepts and the objects of experience from which the subject reaches them.

From what has been presented thus far, and with the aim of clarifying 2) and 3) from above, one can make the following distinctions.<sup>13</sup> For Schopenhauer, the world is mainly divided into the thing-in-itself and its representation. As it has been presented, this distinction is based on the sole possibility of its knowledge. The thing in itself, by definition freed from all the representational forms, cannot be an object for a subject and hence it cannot be an object of knowledge. It lies outside any representational form and, as such, should stand as an eternal mystery. On the other hand, the world as representation is presented as anything that stands as an object in relation to a knowing subject and can take many shapes. On this basis, we could make the further distinction between two different objects of representation, viz. objects of perceptual experience and Ideas as their eternal forms. Objects of perceptual experience, like tables and chairs, stand to one another in a causal relation that is one of the forms of the PSR. Depending on the forms of the understanding, these are to be found in time and space and their connectedness is bound to these conditions. Ideas, on the other hand, stand as the eternal forms of individual

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<sup>13</sup> Claim 2) states that the thing in itself and phenomenal world understood as perceptual phenomena are two irreducible and exhaustive categories, and claim 3) states that the second category, i.e. the one of phenomena, is restricted to objects of intuitive perceptual representation subject to the PSR.

objects of representation and their role in the explanation of nature complements the scientific image of the world. They also stand as the most immediate objectification of the thing in itself and hence they constitute part of the world as representation. Atwell (1995) observes rightly that without the doctrine of Ideas, changes in nature would have remained obscure due to science's incapacity for explaining them. One way to understand what kind of explanation they are intended to give is the following: They represent the universal forms that, empty of material content, *shape perceptual representation* and the interaction among its objects. One could exemplify this by mentioning the previous example. If we are to ask why did an apple fall from a tree, reference to an original force has to be made. In this case, forces of gravitation are to be explained causally through mention of physical terms like space-time curvature and mass. Nevertheless, the further question of why this is so remains unexplained and the origins of this force remain and will remain a mystery, for the only access to its origin has as its basis the individual cases in an experience that are brought together by a unity understood as natural laws. Ideas are intended to "give the rule" to the interactions between objects of perceptual representations.

There is certainly no basis for identifying objects of representation exclusively with objects of perceptual experience. There is no "place" for Ideas to occupy between the thing in itself and representation, for they actually are representation themselves. We see Ideas as the necessary object of knowledge that gives sense to the unity in perceptual experience. The misunderstanding that arises from the doctrine of Ideas extends to include worries about the doctrine of intelligible characters. By understanding the

role of these two doctrines, a final answer to the concerns raised by Janaway can be presented.

## Chapter 3

### Intelligible Characters

#### 3.1 The Problem of Individuation of Intelligible Characters

In a similar way that he does with the doctrine of Ideas, Janaway draws our attention to a difficulty that arises from the description of Intelligible Character, viz. the difficulty of plurality and individuation. He does this in two articles in his discussion on the Intelligible Character., . Both articles, “Will and Nature” and “Necessity, Responsibility, and Character”, share the same line of criticisms and deep concerns about the problem. On Intelligible Characters, Janaway (1999) states:

But this account of the intelligible character is troubling because it seems to fly in the face of Schopenhauer’s repeated assertion that the world at the level of the in itself is beyond individuation [...] for Schopenhauer, if space and time are the principle of individuation, that is, that which makes it possible for there to be distinct individuals at all, and if the world in itself is expressly not in space and time [...] then it follows that there are no spatio-temporal individuals in the world as it is in itself: at that level we can speak only of ‘what there is’ or ‘the world’ in a quite undifferentiated sense.” (p. 150)

The problem with intelligible characters lies in the apparent contradiction between their independence from spatio-temporal determinations and the fact that they are to be individually related to each person, and therefore plural. This contradiction, Janaway (1999) correctly observes, arises from the fact that a consistent tenet of Schopenhauer’s

philosophy is that “the world in itself does not split up into separate individuals, that individuality is phenomenal only” (p. 150) and thus the possibility of the plurality of Intelligible characters should be excluded from the outset.

Janaway presents some doubts concerning Schopenhauer’s solution to the difficulties on freedom of agency and responsibility by saying that,

even if we grant Schopenhauer the step that if there is responsibility then there must be freedom somewhere in the system, and grant him the further consequence that whatever this freedom is must be something intelligible or non-empirical, there remains the serious problem of how this non-empirical something can coherently be *individual*.” (Janaway 2012 p. 454)

By presenting Intelligible Characters as the “in itself essence of the thing”, Janaway believes, Schopenhauer is presumably opening the door for an utter contradiction, i.e. for the possibility of individuation outside representation independent of the spatio-temporal determinations. Individuation, Janaway (2012) says, “should not be obtained at the level of the ‘in itself, where the intelligible character is supposedly located” (p. 454).

Overall, Janaway’s concerns are based on the description of intelligible characters as independent of the spatio-temporal constraints that would allow their plurality and individuation. Not being objects of perceptual experience nor being identified with the Will as the thing in itself, but simply “located” at that level, Intelligible Characters would not only be difficult to place within Schopenhauer’s system, but their very

possibility ought to be dismissed. The difficulty raised by Janaway, as he puts it, is making sense of these spatio-temporally independent characters of which, nevertheless, each is related to a different individual subject while being part of the 'in itself'.

In a more positive light, Janaway makes mention of a passage in the *Parerga and Paralipomena* where Schopenhauer, in a rather obscure way, opens the door for a possible solution to the problem just posed. There, Schopenhauer says:

*individuality* does not rest solely on the *principium individuationis* and so is not through and through mere *phenomenon*, but ... it is rooted in the thing-in-itself, the will of the individual; for the character itself is individual. But how far its roots here go, is one of those questions which I do not undertake to answer. (PP II p. 227)

However, this type of individuation is, it certainly must find its roots in a different principle than one that applies for objects of perceptual experience. It must, in other words, find a different source than the spatio-temporal determinations that give origin to the PSR and hence to the necessary relation between objects of representation. In the light of Schopenhauer's negative to further determine how this plurality is to be achieved, the rest of his system remains a possible source of enlightenment.

The whole problem of characters as individual while also independent of the PSR is reminiscent of Schopenhauer's doctrine of Ideas, something that Janaway is aware of. On this, Janaway (2012) says that,



one recourse available to Schopenhauer lies in his notion of Ideas, which are plural and distinct from one another while also being non-spatio-temporal. In his theory of artistic portraiture, Schopenhauer holds that each human individual's character expresses a unique Idea. But in the context of freedom he does not address this question of non-empirical individuation [...] (p. 454).

Nevertheless, what Janaway does not mention here is that the same type of question, i.e. the same problem about individuation and plurality outside the PSR, can also be attributed to the doctrine of Ideas. More than a possible solution, any parallel drawn between the two doctrines has to deal with the challenge of explaining how this “non-empirical individuation” takes place. In a similar vein to the question of Ideas constituting a “third category”, there is a challenge to be faced regarding Intelligible Characters and their status. The coherence of Intelligible Characters, Janaway says, remains open to the challenge of establishing whether the individual ought to be empirical and whether the empirical must be necessitated. Otherwise, there is the risk that human agency and responsibility, apart from being non-empirical, would also be non-individual. In such a case, most of Schopenhauer's argument runs the risk of falling down (see Janaway, 2012). Leaving the challenge open, Janaway refers to the difficulty of establishing the level in which Intelligible Characters are part of the ‘in itself’. He says that “there is enough elasticity in Schopenhauer's account” (Janaway, 1999, p. 151) that may help us determine what we are in ourselves and hopefully make the individuation of characters an integral part of his metaphysics of

the Will. Janaway's last words on Schopenhauer's adoption of the doctrine of Intelligible Characters explicitly acknowledge the issue at hand:

As a result, there is a serious unclarity, at worst total contradiction, in the very idea that the free, non-necessitated inner essence that unfolds itself in my actions should be anything individual at all, that it should be an essence pertaining uniquely to *me*, this human being. (Janaway, 2012, p. 454)

My intention is to show that this "unclarity" or "contradiction" Janaway is arguing for is not necessarily so. By resolving the difficulties emerging from Schopenhauer's adoption of the doctrine of Intelligible Characters, one could also expect to find an answer to the additional problem about the organic coherence of the elements in his system. As mentioned previously, I believe these difficulties originate in a further misunderstanding that was also applied to Schopenhauer's adoption of the doctrine of Ideas. Janaway mentions the doctrine of Ideas as a possible resource in resolving the problem of Intelligible Characters. But, for this to work, the possibility of their plurality outside the determinations of space and time still needs clarification. In spite of Janaway's words on the openness and elasticity of Schopenhauer's system to provide an answer to the problem of individuation in the doctrine of Intelligible Characters, we are still left with the further difficulty of solving the very same problem regarding the doctrine of Ideas. I believe this has its roots in the objection presented in Chapter Two regarding Ideas as "third categories". In what follows I intend to show how this is so.

Janaway's concerns about the problem of plurality and individuation, it seems to me, are based on the main premise that Intelligible

Characters are to be found at the level of the ‘in itself’ (Janaway, 1999, p. 151). As Janaway puts it, there is a challenge to be met by Schopenhauer in explaining how plurality and individuation are possible at this level. As he well points out, Schopenhauer, throughout his whole work, is adamant that plurality and individuation are the product of spatio-temporal determinations and do not exert their influence on the thing in itself. One example of this is found in §23 of *The World as Will and Representation*, where Schopenhauer says:

it is only by means of time and space that something which is one and the same according to its nature and the concept appears as different, as a plurality of coexistent and successive things. Consequently, time and space are the *principium individuationis* [principle of individuation] [...]” (WW I p. 113).

Immediately following, Schopenhauer adds that “the will as thing-in-itself lies outside the province of the principle of sufficient reason in all its forms [...] although each of its phenomena is entirely subject to this principle [...]” (WW I p. 113). The thing in itself, then, “is free from all *plurality*, although its phenomena in time and space are innumerable. It is itself one, yet not as an object is one, for the unity of an object is known only in contrast to possible plurality” (WW I p.113). This has the consequence that the spatio-temporal forms that determine the principle of individuation are only applicable to the phenomena of the thing in itself, i.e. to the world as representation as for its objectification. With these passages in mind, Schopenhauer’s description of Intelligible Characters rightly becomes problematic. As Janaway correctly points out, the world at the

level of the 'in itself' can only be referred to as being an undifferentiated unity. Moreover, the world at the level of the 'in itself' is not to be regarded as an object. For this to be the case, it is necessary that it be determined by the forms that allow for individuation.

In spite of Schopenhauer's remarks, to locate Intelligible Characters at the level of the 'in itself' is, to say the least, confusing. We are left with a rather obscure account of what it means for Intelligible Characters to be part of the world of the 'in itself'. Nevertheless, in the light of the obvious contradiction which Schopenhauer incurs by saying this, such assertions ought to be revised. In order to answer the question posed by Janaway on plurality and individuation, the premise of Intelligible Characters as being part of the 'in itself' must be challenged and clarified. This is to determine the type of question we are trying to pose. It seems to be, after all, the confusing status of Intelligible Characters that prompts the whole problem. Nevertheless, this clarification regarding Intelligible Characters is a necessary step in understanding what the origins of such status might be.

To recapitulate briefly, I believe the difficulty of the individuation and plurality of Intelligible Characters, as Janaway presents it, is straightforward: due to his constant and repetitive assertions on the necessary conditions for plurality, Schopenhauer seems to enter into contradiction when he describes Intelligible Characters as being different and unique for each individual, and as being the 'essence in itself of the thing'. The contradiction arises from the fact that the world, at the level of the 'in itself' cannot be individuated due to its independence from time and space, and hence from the PSR. Intelligible Characters, then, being free

from these determinations, and supposedly belonging to the world of the 'in itself', could not be individual nor plural.

In spite of how the problem has been posed by Janaway, I believe there is a further distinction to be made from the outset. While Intelligible Characters' independence from the PSR would impede them from being plural and individual, their belonging to the world at the level of the 'in itself' makes the previous difficulty even more difficult. As Janaway describes, the world at that level can only be referred to as 'what there is' in an undifferentiated way. In order to provide a solution to the problem of individuation it is important to clarify how we understand that Intelligible Characters are the 'essence in itself of the thing' (BM p. 185). Depending on how this is interpreted, when addressing the problem of individuation we could find ourselves with a double challenge: explaining how plurality and individuation are possible independently of the spatio-temporal constraints; and explaining how plurality is possible at the level of the 'in itself'. I believe there is a dual basis, extracted from Janaway's concerns on the problem of individuation and plurality, that opens the possibility for this distinction. The first is Janaway's mention of the *Parerga* passage where Schopenhauer opens the door for the possibility of non-empirical individuation, which is different from the plurality of the 'in itself'. There, Schopenhauer is amenable to individuality not being strictly dependent on the PSR, but 'rooted' in the thing in itself. Nevertheless, we still require an explanation of what this really means. That individuality is "rooted" in the thing in itself, does not necessarily mean that Schopenhauer is opening the door for non-empirical plurality, but just that any sort of principle that may

allow this is found in the Will; such is the case with all representation. The second basis is Janaway's remarks on the openness of Schopenhauer's answer to the problem on individuation through the doctrine of Ideas, which, as Schopenhauer explicitly states, belong to the world of representation. If this is the case, it strikes me as odd to see in Schopenhauer's adoption of the doctrine of Ideas a possible route to resolving the problem of individuation. Although it is true that the difficulty of plurality and individuation could be also assigned to Ideas if Intelligible Characters belong to the realm of the 'in itself', there is no parallel to be drawn between the two doctrines. Schopenhauer, as presented in the previous chapter, explicitly states that Ideas belong to representation. On the other hand, if the problem is derived from the Intelligible Characters' independence from the determinations that allow individuality, then there could in fact be enough material in the rest of his system that could help us deal with it.

The fact that Janaway does not make this distinction when posing the problem of individuation blurs the scope of the difficulty. Once this distinction is made it could render further implications in *how* to solve the problem. As mentioned earlier, an example of these implications relates to Janaway's own awareness of the elasticity of Schopenhauer's philosophy in providing an answer to the problem through Ideas. As presented in the previous chapter, Ideas do not belong to the world of the 'in itself' but they are still plural and individual, independent of the spatio-temporal constraints. If an interpretation of the Intelligible Characters' belonging to the world of the 'in itself' locates them within the world as representation,

but describes them as free from the constraints that allow for individuation, then the challenge of explaining their individuation could be analogous to the explanation of plurality of Ideas. In such a case, individuation would not be explained at the level of the ‘in itself’, but rather at a non-empirical one. This would make Schopenhauer’s adoption of the doctrine of Intelligible Characters analogous to the way Schopenhauer understands Ideas. As I intend to show such is the case, the possibility for the plurality and individuation of one *and* the other could possibly be found on a similar, if not on the same, basis. On these grounds, it is important to differentiate Intelligible Characters’ independence from the spatio-temporal constraints, which would not allow for their individuation nor their belonging to the world of the ‘in itself’ for they determine the approach taken to solve the problem. In order to make this clear, I believe the doors should be left open for the possibility that Schopenhauer’s use of some terminology is at times inconsistent with some previous uses that he himself presented.

If the set of difficulties for the doctrine of Intelligible Characters has only to address the challenge of explaining non-empirical individuation, as I believe is mainly what Janaway hinted at when presenting the problem, then we come back to the same difficulty that I presented in Chapter Two. As occurred with Ideas, Intelligible Characters are seen as third categories that do not fit Schopenhauer’s general system and as an element that does not add much in explanation. As I intend to show, the overall problem with Intelligible Characters lies in their status as plural and individual while not being causally determined, rather than their belonging to the thing in itself. This renders the problem of their inclusion a categorical one in a rather

similar way to that of the doctrine of Ideas. Janaway's concerns on Ideas and their difficult status translates to his further concerns about the doctrine of characters and the incoherence of its adoption and fit into the general system.

In a similar way to the "third category objection", I believe there are three main possible readings which could make sense of how Intelligible Characters take part of the world of the 'in itself': The first is that Intelligible Characters take part in the 'in itself', with ontological implications, by being located at a different category than objects of representation. If Schopenhauer makes a blunt distinction between the world as Will (the thing in itself) and representation, as Janaway and Magee in their critique to the doctrine of Ideas suggest, Intelligible Characters would take part of the world of the "in itself" while not being identified with the Will as the thing in itself. As Schopenhauer describes it, the thing in itself, not being subject to the spatio-temporal determinations and not holding the most basic representational form, i.e. being an object for a subject, is completely unknowable. In which case, Intelligible Character's inclusion into the realm of the 'in itself' would represent a further difficulty for Schopenhauer. Assuming that both categories, the one of the 'in itself' and representation, are jointly exhaustive, that Intelligible Characters are part of the former would mean that they are not part of the world as representation, nor are they to be identified with the thing in itself. This means that, as a consequence, they would take part of a 'third realm' in which not only are they unable to be plural and individuated but also they cannot be represented as an object of knowledge. Following similar lines, another



possible reading of the issue could sustain that Intelligible Characters *do* belong to the world as representation but not in the same way that objects of perceptual experience do. Intelligible Characters would represent another piece of ontology in Schopenhauer's system different from Ideas, objects of perceptual experience, and the 'in itself'. A possibility for this reading originates from Schopenhauer's own awareness on the double contradiction he would incur into by introducing Intelligible Characters as part of the 'in itself'. I call this type of reading, in its two variations, an *ontological reading*.

The second way I believe one can understand this is that Intelligible Characters represent an epistemological category and, as such, should be located at the level of the 'in itself' due to their independence from the necessary constraints for individuation, but that they would not constitute another piece of ontology in Schopenhauer's account. For this to work, it is necessary to sustain how Intelligible Characters take part in the 'in itself', without them constituting an object of knowledge. Despite this, there is a variation of this reading, in which Intelligible Characters would represent another epistemological category different from representation, narrowly understood as objects of perceptual experience, and different from the thing in itself. Both these interpretations I call the *epistemological reading*. In the latter approach, that Intelligible Characters are part of the world 'in itself' could mean, that although they take part of the world as representation, due to their independence from the PSR, they differ from the kind of representation exemplified by objects of perceptual experience. The grounds for arguing for this type of reading are based on the difficulty that would

signify Schopenhauer's contradiction on the independence of determinations of the thing in itself. As I showed in the previous chapter, Schopenhauer seems to establish a difference between the 'thing in itself' and representation based on the possibility of their knowledge. In this interpretation, Intelligible Characters would be part of the world as representation while differentiating themselves from objects of perceptual experience due to their independence from the PSR. They would be part of the 'in itself' as long as they do not take part in the set of objects of perceptual experiences. For this interpretation of the question to have any validity, the difficulty remains to show that Intelligible Characters take part in the most basic representational relation, viz. being an object for a subject.

The last possibility I believe that exists for interpreting Intelligible Character's belonging into the 'in itself' is the assertion that they represent both ontological and epistemological categories. I present this alternative as a concurrence of the first two, and its sustainability depends entirely on how strong the arguments are for one or the other. The way in which Janaway posed the problem of individuation leads me to believe that he opted for an ontological reading of the Intelligible Character's belonging to the 'in itself'.

Since Intelligible Characters' belonging to the 'in itself' is still open to different interpretations, the solution I intend to present to the problem of plurality and individuation will meet either a single or double challenge. The first step to answering the question lies in narrowing the scope of the problem. Independent of the fact that Janaway might not have been aware of this possible double difficulty, I believe his intuitions on the doctrine of

Ideas as a possible means for answering the problem could lead us to the right path. In the next section, I intend to analyse the possible interpretations of the difficulty regarding Intelligible Characters. I present the arguments, based on Schopenhauer's description of Intelligible Characters, for the impossibility of sustaining an ontological approach to their inclusion into the world of the 'in itself'. I argue for a reading of Schopenhauer's remarks on Intelligible Characters in which he assigns a similar role to the whole doctrine as the one he assigns to Ideas. One aim of the challenge that I address in the next section is the rejection of an interpretation in which Schopenhauer includes Intelligible Characters as an additional piece of ontology. I also argue for a reading where the problem of individuation posed by Janaway has to face the same problems as the doctrine of Ideas, for they have their roots in the difficulty of allocating causally-independent representational notions. The possibility of including Intelligible Characters as an extra piece of ontology has its parallel in the difficulties presented with the doctrine of Ideas. Hopefully, by the end of this chapter, the way in which I intend to answer both difficulties will be clearer.

### **3.2 Intelligible Characters and the 'In Itself'**

The meaning of Schopenhauer's assertion that Intelligible Characters belong to the 'in itself', it seems to me, ought to be revised. I believe Janaway's assertions must be put to revision in the light of the distinction between the challenge of arguing for an account of, in Schopenhauer's own terms, "transcendental diversity" (MR I p. 287) ,or, as

Janaway calls it, non-empirical individuation, and diversity at the level of the ‘in itself’. In order to give a proper answer to the problem, I dedicate this section to clarifying the issues at hand and determining whether one or two challenges have to be addressed.

As mentioned in the previous section there are two non-exclusive readings regarding the Intelligible Characters’ inclusion in the world of the ‘in itself’. In the same vein as with the “third category objection” I believe there are strong reasons to reject an ontological reading of the doctrine of Intelligible Characters in any of its forms, for it would presuppose from the outset that Schopenhauer is willing to include more in his philosophy than he originally intended. As discussed in the previous chapter, there seems to be enough evidence in Schopenhauer’s writings to reject a double ontology (and, with much more reason, a triple) based on his reiterated assertions on the unity of the world. One of the main reasons for rejecting a reading of Ideas, for example, as constituting an extra piece of ontology lies in their status as objects of knowledge. As Schopenhauer put it, the *only* difference between the “thing in itself” (for Schopenhauer, the Will) and the Idea, is that the latter constitutes the ‘most immediate objectification’ of the former. In Ideas, Schopenhauer says, “it is the *one and the same will* that reveals itself, i.e. enters the form of representation, enters *objectivity*” (WW I p. 143). The world, as presented by Schopenhauer, is not constituted by two or three types of things, but of one, the Will, that *reveals* itself into a multiplicity of Ideas, objects of perceptual experience and, I will argue, Intelligible Characters. In order to reject an ontological reading of the description of Intelligible Characters, I intend to argue that, as Janaway

rightly hints, there might be enough evidence, both implicit and explicit, in Schopenhauer's philosophy that allows us to draw a parallel with the doctrine of Ideas. Although a clearer view of Schopenhauer's introduction of Intelligible Characters may result from this, one has to be careful in delimiting how this parallelism is to be drawn. In order to present a rejection of an ontological reading of Schopenhauer's introduction of Intelligible Characters, I intend to show how they meet the conditions that allow us to argue that, in a similar way to Ideas, they also represent an objectification of the thing in itself. In other words, Intelligible Characters *are* the thing in itself while being objects of knowledge. As a consequence of this, one could say that in the same way that the Idea of a tree is present in every representation of a tree, every individual's Intelligible Character is present in each one of the individual's actions.

Keeping this in mind, I believe we can partially rely on Atwell's comments on Ideas in their relation with Intelligible Characters. Atwell's interpretation anticipates the kind of reading I intend to offer on both doctrines and their relation. In a similar way to Young, Atwell (1995) argues that:

Schopenhauer introduces the Ideas, at least in *The World as Will and Representation*, for the very purpose that he introduces intelligible characters: to complete on the philosophical level that which is left incomplete on the scientific (or etiological) level of explanation. (p. 132)

The origin of Atwell's comments is found in Schopenhauer's repeated assertions that seem to identify, with some obscurity attached to

them, the similarities in the roles of Ideas and Intelligible Characters. For example, Schopenhauer says that:

the character of each individual man [Mensch], in so far as it is thoroughly individual and not entirely included in that of the species, can be regarded as a special Idea, corresponding to a particular act of objectification of the will. (WW I p. 158)

Atwell (1995) continues by describing the similarity of the role of Ideas as being “the ‘third factors’ operative in all particular appearances and occurrences of the intuitive world, thus the ‘factors’ without which no natural change or human action can be adequately understood” (p. 133). This interpretation of the role of Intelligible Characters comes from the parallel with Ideas that Schopenhauer draws himself. Atwell’s interpretation of the role of Ideas as “third factors” is brought to light by the explanatory role Schopenhauer assigns them. As I presented in the previous chapter, Schopenhauer, by introducing the notion of universal and original natural forces, which “exhibit themselves as the lowest grades of the Will’s objectification”, presents Ideas as the philosophical explanation of nature overlooked by an etiological-scientific account (WW I p. 130). Following Atwell, the assignation of this role to Intelligible Characters comes from Schopenhauer’s own openness to the possibility that Ideas and Intelligible Characters represent the philosophical-level explanation for natural phenomena and human agency.

The passages in which Schopenhauer draws the parallel between Ideas and Intelligible Characters are numerous. One example of this is included in a previously mentioned passage in which Schopenhauer calls

Intelligible Characters a “special Idea” (See the previous quote on this same page). Additionally, in §28 of *The World as Will*, where Schopenhauer says:

the intelligible character coincides with the Idea, or more properly with the original act of will that reveals itself in the Idea. Therefore to this extent, not only the empirical character of every person, but also that of every animal species, nay, of every plant species, and even of every original force of inorganic nature, is to be regarded as a phenomenon or manifestation of an intelligible character [...] (WW I p. 156)

Although I believe this passage to be problematic as it leaves us wanting to know the difference between Ideas and Intelligible Characters (which is a problem that I will get on to in the next chapter), I also believe it draws an explicit but obscure parallel between the two doctrines. In addition to these, another important passage is found in §26 regarding the notion of natural forces which, as the reader would remember from the previous chapter, Schopenhauer explicitly identifies with Ideas (See section 2.3). On this, regarding these natural and original forces (as the causal phenomenon of the Idea), Schopenhauer writes:

in themselves they are immediate phenomena of the will just as is the conduct of man; as such, they are groundless, just as is the character of a man. Their particular phenomena alone are subject to the principle of sufficient reason just as are the actions of men. On the other hand, they themselves can never be called either effect or cause, but are the prior and presupposed conditions of all causes and effects through which their own inner being is unfolded and revealed. (WW I p. 130)

This last remark provides us with important clues about Schopenhauer's view of the role of Intelligible Characters that, in the same vein as Atwell, might lead us to reinforce the parallel between the two doctrines. There are two points I believe are worth mentioning.

First, while considering the previous passages in which Schopenhauer discusses Ideas and Characters, is it worth noticing how he presents the distinction between Ideas and their phenomena as an analogy to the case of Intelligible Characters and human action. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Schopenhauer introduces the notion of original forces (Ideas) and their unfolding through natural laws in the phenomenal world as the result of spatio-temporal forms and causal determinations. These original forces constitute "the objectification of the will" (see Section 2.3) and their inner nature remains independent of causal and spatio-temporal determinations. Thus they remain as a *qualitates occultae* inaccessible through aetiology. If we take gravity again as an example, Schopenhauer would agree that we get to know this original force through its spatio-temporal unfolding whose regularity takes the form of a natural law. In a similar way, as Schopenhauer seems to suggest in the last passage, in the doctrine of Intelligible Characters a temporal unfolding and its temporal-independent ground seem to confirm the main explanatory relation of human deeds. Human action is not different from the rest of the phenomenal experience insofar as it depends on spatio-temporal constraints. These actions, Schopenhauer remarks, are the "temporal unfolding" of the extra-temporal Intelligible Character and thus the nature of human actions remain fixed (see Section 3.1). This fixed nature, Schopenhauer says:



is *empirical* only for our comprehension, but for this reason only as an *appearance*; on the other hand, what he may be in his essence in itself is called *intelligible character*. All of his actions, consistent with his external nature as determined by motives, can occur in no other way than in accord with this unchangeable individual character: as one is, so must one act. (BM pp. 185-186)

As mentioned, Schopenhauer's account of Intelligible Characters was introduced from the necessity to find a *locus* for responsibility. If there is to be freedom in human deeds, said *locus* must be located outside the causal constraints of the phenomenal world. This *locus* is the Intelligible Character, that, as its equivalent in the original forces as Schopenhauer seems to suggest, is positioned as the ground from which all human deeds, independently from one another, unfold in a series of individuated spatio-temporal actions. Bringing the example of gravity to the doctrine of characters, Schopenhauer's remarks seem conducive to an interpretation that, as similarly occurs with gravity (as an original force) and the innumerable instances in which we see it act in perceptual representation, so is the case of the intelligible character of each person and the multiplicity of individual actions that unfold within the causal chain of events.

If Schopenhauer's previous remarks were not enough to argue for the similarities between Ideas and Intelligible Characters, three sections later he says regarding natural forces (or Ideas):

just as the material cause contains merely the determination that at such a time, in such a place, and in such a matter, a manifestation of this or that natural force must take place, so also the motive determines only the act of

will of a knowing being, at such a time, in such a place, and in such and such circumstances, as something quite individual; it by no means determines that that being wills in general and wills in this way. That is the expression of his intelligible character [...] (WW I p. 163)

This parallel is the one employed by Atwell in his attempt to identify Ideas and Intelligible Characters in their explanatory role as “third factors”. In the same way that Ideas, or original forces, are presented as “third factors” or *qualitates occultae* which go beyond a scientific and therefore aetiological explanation of nature, Intelligible Characters, as Schopenhauer would suggest from his remarks on both doctrines, stand as the “third factor”. Without this “third factor”, human action cannot be ultimately explained for it is there where the “free” (independent from any of the roots of the PSR) ground for actions is found.

If Intelligible Characters are the temporal-independent ground of human action (from which the parallel with Ideas is drawn) then it could be sustained that, similarly to Ideas, they correspond to an objectification of the thing in itself which would make of them objects of knowledge. This is why the second point regarding the relation between Ideas and Characters relates to an often unattended passage (unattended to also by Atwell) in §45, about the possibility of knowledge of the character. There, Schopenhauer presents a rather different use of the term ‘character’ than the one I presented concerning his previous remarks, but there are reasons to believe he is indeed still talking about Intelligible Characters. Schopenhauer says:

[...] it is one of the distinguishing features of mankind that therein the character of the species and that of the individual are separated so that, as

was said in the previous book, each person exhibits to a certain extent an Idea that is wholly characteristic of him. Therefore the arts, aiming at a presentation of the Idea of mankind, have as their problem both beauty as the character of the species, and the character of the individual, which is called *character par excellence*. Again, they have this only in so far as this character is to be regarded not as something accidental and quite peculiar to the man as a single individual, but as a side of the Idea of mankind, specially appearing in this particular individual; and thus the presentation of this individual serves to reveal the Idea. Therefore the character, although individual as such, must be comprehended and expressed ideally. (WW I pp. 224-225)

In the light of the previous passages, these last remarks would strike any reader as confusing, especially considering that this is the only use of the term ‘character par excellence’ when referring to the particular character of a given individual. The use of new terminology for referring to an individual character could lead one to think that this ‘character par excellence’ might not be our Intelligible Character. Nevertheless, these remarks appear in the third book of *The World as Will*, which means that, when considering the previous remarks on the individuality of characters, Schopenhauer is mentioning precisely the passages I presented above from the second book of his main work where the notion of Intelligible Characters is first introduced. With this in mind, I believe it is licit to consider that Schopenhauer makes use of different terminology when referring to either empirical or Intelligible Characters. In fact, Schopenhauer’s use of the isolated term ‘character’ is to be found throughout the whole of his work, meaning that his commitment to a strict

use of terms could be prone to variation.<sup>14</sup> Although this particular use of the term ‘character par excellence’ is unique in *The World as Will*, I do not believe that the range of possibilities for the meaning of the term is limitless. He has previously mentioned both empirical and Intelligible Characters as one being the temporal unfolding of the other. This suggests that Schopenhauer sees characters at two different levels, i.e. at a causal-temporal level, and at a causally-independent level. The possibility that through these remarks he is making reference to an empirical character must be rejected. To ‘express a character ideally’, if we are to understand Ideas in a rather Platonic sense and follow the direct and explicit mentions of both doctrines as Schopenhauer seemed to intend, these are to be portrayed as a universal characteristic that gets exemplified in a diversity of ways in the causal and temporal chain of events. Returning to the parallelism drawn above, Schopenhauer’s mention of a character being portrayed ‘ideally’ fits the description of the causally-independent Intelligible Character.

### **3.3 Characters as Objects of Knowledge**

As mentioned in the first chapter, Schopenhauer centres aesthetic experience on the knowledge of Ideas. The task of the genius, or the artist, is to present and express an Idea. As Schopenhauer suggests in the most recently mentioned passage, in order to do this, the artist must *comprehend* and *express* such character in a way that allows him to access the particular Idea, which in this case, is the Idea of mankind. If in arts Ideas could be reached by comprehending and expressing characters, I believe that in the

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<sup>14</sup> A few examples of this can be found in WW I pp. 130-131, 158, 225 and WW II pp. 77, 173.

previous passage Schopenhauer is implicitly advocating for the possibility of characters as objects of knowledge. This could be supported by Schopenhauer's repeated remarks on the importance of drama as one of the highest forms of artistic portrayal. In drama, Schopenhauer says, "the end, the revelation of the Idea of mankind, is attained especially by two means, namely by a true and profound presentation of significant characters, and by the invention of pregnant situations in which they disclose themselves" (WW I p. 251). Through drama, Schopenhauer continues, the artist not only presents the

significant characters as truly and faithfully as does nature itself but, so that we might get to know them, he must place them in those situations in which their peculiar qualities are completely unfolded, and in which they are presented distinctly in sharp outline [...] (WW I p. 251)

From this perspective, I believe one can follow Thomas Stern's (2014) comments on the importance and significance of drama in exploring human relations through the presentation of characters. Stern presents Schopenhauer's thoughts on the importance of drama as means for the portrayal of diverse human characters in a clear and succinct manner. In a way, I take this to be important, for it presents the artist's role in sharing and presenting these characters to the audience. In other words, Stern describes in drama the ultimate role of the artist for Schopenhauer. Stern (2014) focuses our attention on the importance of Shakespeare to Schopenhauer for his exceptional ability in character portrayal (p. 63). Stern also draws our attention to one of Schopenhauer's passages where he claims, when discussing how unalterable character is, that "Shakespeare's dramas, as a

rule, afford us the best illustration of the truth in question” (PP II p. 232). While discussing Schopenhauer’s account of the fixed Intelligible Character, Stern (2014) remarks that “drama is the form *par excellence* for exploring human relations in the context of dramatic characters whose ‘characters’ are unchanging” (p. 63). The artist, in need of portraying the Idea of mankind, presents human characters through fictional situations in which their unalterable traits unfold. If one considers the parallelism between Ideas and characters presented above, for which I believe there is enough evidence to sustain it, and if Intelligible Characters are to be considered as a ‘quasi-Idea’, then the only relevant characteristic that they should express is the one of being objects of knowledge. Although aesthetic experience concerns the presentation of the Idea, through character portrayal, Shakespearean drama offers the opportunity for reflection on the individual’s correspondence to the Idea of mankind and its individual character (Stern, 2014). The artist, it seems, ought to be acquainted (in a loose way) with both the Idea and Character in order to portray it accurately.

In order to sustain this, one has to be careful in defining what sense are we giving to the artistic acquaintance with character. While I agree with Stern’s (2014) remarks on the impossibility of drama to offer direct access to Intelligible Characters, I still believe there is more to understand from the artist’s side. Dramatic characters, as fictional creations which are put in created situations with the aim of showing the unfolding of a particular kind of character through individual actions, “have no corresponding *intelligible* character beyond space and time for us to access through aesthetic experience” (Stern, 2014, p. 64). Nevertheless, in a similar way that the

artist must have knowledge of the Idea of mankind in order to present it through drama, the portrayal of unchanging characters, although represented fictionally, should require some kind knowledge on the part of the artist. On stage, Stern (2014) suggests, dramatic characters, through a series of individual actions which constitute the empirical characters depicted, portray the 'essential' features that are consistent with one type of character. I would add that for this to be possible, in addition to the knowledge of the Idea from the artist's side, she must also have knowledge of the different characters beyond their empirical unfolding in order to portray their inalterability. Through watching drama, we do not have access to Intelligible Characters as the fixed counterpart of the empirical. The artist, on the other hand, must have knowledge of it in order to create a fictionalised unfolding of character. In other words, the artist must have knowledge of the timeless and unalterable character she intends to portray through the actions of the dramatic characters on stage, paralleled with the way in which she needs to have some knowledge of the Idea of mankind when trying to portray it through her artistic work. Thus, in the same way that the artist is to present through her work the Idea of mankind from her own knowledge of it, it seems that the only coherent way to portray the inalterability of characters must derive from a similar kind of knowledge. This takes the parallel between both doctrines even further while it also coheres with Schopenhauer's view of the importance of drama as an artistic portrayal. This suggests that, in spite of the fact that aesthetic experience is concerned with the presentation of the Idea, in virtue of this task, the artist, or the genius who has access to such Idea could (or maybe even must) also

have access to the unalterable causal-independent character that she also portrays.

Although I intend to develop an organic reading of Ideas and Intelligible Characters in more detail in the next chapter, for now, there seems to be a clear basis for sustaining that Schopenhauer, not just at the level of mere analogy, saw a parallelism between the two doctrines. As the main task of this section is to reject an ontological reading of the doctrine of Intelligible Characters in any of its forms, I believe we are now in place to argue for such a rejection in the light of the explicit similarity between the roles assigned to the two doctrines.

Considering what has been thus far revealed, I believe there is enough evidence to accept Atwell's remarks on the role and interpretation of both Ideas and Intelligible Characters. In addition to both being 'third factors' in the explanation of nature and human action, Schopenhauer's explicit mention of both doctrines is favorable for a belief that, Atwell says further, the ontological status of one could also correspond to the other. It is important to bear in mind that Atwell's use of the term 'ontological status' is not committed to what I portrayed as being an "ontological reading" of the doctrine. He notes, on the basis of what has been discussed, that whatever ontological status we assign to either Ideas or Intelligible Characters, that is, to the question about the reality of Ideas and Characters, there is enough in Schopenhauer's use of both doctrines to argue that such



status is the same for both (Atwell, 1995, p. 133). While asking about the ontological status of Ideas, Atwell (1995) remarks that the question:

'Are Ideas real?' has on one score the same meaning that 'Are human characters real?' And if the answer to the latter question is yes, then so is the answer to the former question – in the same sense and for the same reason. (p. 134)

These 'reasons', Atwell implies, are found in the role Schopenhauer assigned to both doctrines. In my opinion, I believe we can go further to present the explicit parallel between the doctrines Schopenhauer uses as evidence for this "ontological analogy".

Since the reading of an ontological interpretation of Ideas was rejected, I believe the same should be the case for Intelligible Characters. As with Ideas, there simply is not enough evidence in Schopenhauer to believe that Intelligible Characters would correspond to an extra piece of ontology. Therefore, Janaway's interpretation of the doctrine of Intelligible Characters and consequently his way of presenting the problem of plurality and individuation, through Schopenhauer's reference to their belonging to the 'in itself', find a better explanation through what I have called an "epistemological reading". This means that the Intelligible Character's belonging to the realm of the 'in itself' can be interpreted as an "epistemological category", comparable to the case of the doctrine of Ideas. Nevertheless, such a reading still presents some difficulties on its own. If we are to accept an epistemological reading of the assertion that Intelligible Character's belong to the 'in itself', we still have to deal with Schopenhauer's repeated assertions that deny the possibility that the 'in

itself” is an object of knowledge. As a consequence, this would leave us with the contradictory assertion that Intelligible Characters, being part of the ‘in itself’, could not be objects of knowledge in which case all parallelism with Ideas ought to be rejected from the outset. I believe that such a blunt contradiction, in the light of Schopenhauer’s repeated remarks characterising both doctrines, could lead to a better interpretation of Schopenhauer’s description of the doctrine of Intelligible Characters and regard them as an epistemological category equivalent to one of the Ideas, i.e. as objects of knowledge, and therefore objects of representation, independent of the causal determinations that determine our knowledge of the objects of perceptual experience. There is enough evidence, especially in the second and third books of *The World as Will*, to sustain that the place Intelligible Characters have in Schopenhauer’s system is closer to the one of Ideas instead of being isolated from the rest of the elements within it. For this reason, in order to give an answer to the problem of individuation, I believe one is in a position to refer to the doctrine of Ideas as another instantiation of the problem of transcendental diversity. If the question about the possibility of individuation and plurality regarding the doctrine of characters represents an utter contradiction on Schopenhauer’s part, then the same contradiction ought to be exposed regarding the doctrine of Ideas.

Thus far I have shown the similarities in both doctrines and how the problem of individuation and plurality in the doctrine of Intelligible Characters relates to the original worries regarding Ideas as a third category, supposedly being located somewhere between objects of perceptual experience and the thing in itself. From that perspective, in the next chapter,

I intend to resolve, for both doctrines, the difficulties concerning their individuation and plurality. As I have been mentioning, this follows Atwell's interpretation in reading both Ideas and Intelligible Characters as 'third factors' without which human agency and natural changes can not be understood. At the same time, I intend to answer an immediate question that arises from such interpretations regarding the difference in the roles played by one and the other. My answer, while addressing the difficulties of individuation and plurality, it is also meant to present a blunt difference in the kind of role that both elements play in their interpretation as 'third factors'. This leaves us not just with the single problem of explaining plurality outside spatio-temporal determinations for both doctrines, but also with the need for explanation of what differentiates one doctrine from the other. I intend to solve the problem for both doctrines through Schopenhauer's understanding of efficient and final causes. Hopefully, this will provide clearer insight into the organic unity found in Schopenhauer's philosophy and also a clearer understanding of Schopenhauer's own comments on what the essence of his philosophy is. At the same time, it will help us differentiate between the roles of each doctrine. Before embarking on that task, though, I would like to highlight Schopenhauer's comments on character when referring to natural kinds, the purpose of which is to close the gap that might exist between their role in explaining nature and the role assigned to Ideas.

### **3.4 Characters of Natural Kinds**

In this final section, I would like to draw attention to some of Schopenhauer's own remarks on the doctrine of characters that, it seems to

me, might give us some insight on how to better understand Intelligible Characters in their role as “third explanatory factors”. The importance of this section lies in that it serves, along with all that has been said thus far, as an introduction to my interpretation of the difference in the roles of Ideas and Characters in explaining perceptual phenomena. Thus, the aim of this section is to show that there are reasons to believe that the intention of such passages could be understood as extending beyond mere analogy in that they give us a clearer understanding of the doctrine of characters by widening the use of the term to other instances and not reducing it to the topic of human agency. Characters, I argue, in the same vein as Ideas, can be understood as a sort of *qualitas occulta* that ultimately serve as a grounds for perceptual phenomena.

Thomas Stern (2014) makes mention of Schopenhauer’s comments on characters of natural kinds while discussing the fixity of character and its expression through different circumstances in drama (p. 63). Through (Shakespearean) drama, Stern argues, highlighting the importance of this art form to Schopenhauer, the fixed character of the dramatic character is presented to the audience through a series of diverse actions that express the character in different ways. The development of the dramatic character throughout the play, as Stern presents it, accords with Schopenhauer’s thesis that human actions unfold differently due to changes in circumstances, but always express the same fixed character. When referring to a critique of Schopenhauer’s view that states that his view on characters would not make sense of the development of dramatic characters, Stern (2014) says that such critiques

underestimate the subtlety of Schopenhauer's view with its emphasis on revealing character under different circumstances [...] as the circumstances change, so do the kinds of things that people do – but this is merely their (fixed) character expressing itself in different ways. To borrow one of his analogies, it might help to think about the 'character' of water. (p. 63)

Thus, Stern makes use of Schopenhauer's mention of the 'character of water' as an analogy for explaining how the same and fixed character is to be expressed through a variety of different actions in a diversity of circumstances.

While talking about how fixed is the character of each individual, Schopenhauer says:

The way in which the character discloses its qualities can be fully compared with the way in which every body in nature-without-knowledge reveals its qualities. Water remains water with the qualities inherent in it. But whether as a calm lake it reflects its banks or dashes in foam over rock, or by artificial means spouts into the air in a tall jet, all this depends on external causes; the one is as natural to it as is the other. But it will always show one or the other according to the circumstances; it is equally ready for all, yet in every case, it is true to its character [...] So also will every human character reveal itself under all circumstances, but the phenomena proceeding from it will be in accordance with the circumstances. (WW I p. 139)

I believe Schopenhauer's mention of characters regarding natural kinds could prove to be insightful in the light of Atwell's interpretation of the doctrines of Ideas and characters in their explanatory role in

understanding nature and human agency. As a consequence, I also believe that Schopenhauer's mention of characters outside the discussion of human agency opens the door for an expansion of the role of characters in explaining some features of perceptual phenomena. Thus, these comments ought not to be treated necessarily as constituting mere analogies designed for us to understand the human character. Let us see now how this is so.

There are two primary reasons for sustaining the relevance of these comments on character. The first is more circumstantial. Schopenhauer's repeated mention of what I will call the 'character of natural kinds', which is found in more passages than just the previous, leads me to believe that the introduction of characters (understood as timeless Intelligible Characters) is not to be reduced to an understanding of human agency, but to nature in general, to which we, as individuals, also belong. As I intend to show, there are different instances in which Schopenhauer makes explicit mention of character both when referring to diverse natural kinds and when talking about different animal species. In a section titled "On the Objectification of the Will in Nature without Knowledge" of the second book of his primary work, Schopenhauer makes some similar remarks to those just shown. He says:

hydraulics can be conceived as a description of the character of water, in that it states for us the manifestations of will to which water is moved by gravity. These always correspond exactly to the external influences, for in the case of all non-individual modes of existence, no particular character exists along with the general one; thus they can easily be referred to fixed fundamental characteristics, which we call laws, and learn by observing

the experience of water. These laws state exactly how water will behave in different circumstances of every kind [...] (WW II p. 297)

What Schopenhauer refers to as the ‘character of water’ seems to have its importance in that it reflects the behaviour of that element under different external circumstances within the world of perceptual experience. Here Schopenhauer talks about the ‘fixed fundamental characteristics’, very much like the way in which he portrays the fixed human character as the diversity of the observable behaviour of natural kinds that unfold in perceptual experience due to ‘external influences’. As expressed in the previous quote, similar to human behaviour, organic nature can also be described as having a character. Water, for example, ‘is true to its character’ either by adopting the form of a stream or remaining still while contained. All the possible ways in which water “behaves” are contained in its character that, contrasted with the case of individuals, remains fixed and the same for the whole kind. A similar account is given by Schopenhauer when he talks about the character of the species in contrast to the individual character of every human being. Schopenhauer says that “animals have only the character of the species, not an individual character. But in the manifestation of man, the character of the species is separated from the character of the individual” (WW I p. 220). In organic nature, and not only in human agency, there seems to be a character, i.e. fixed characteristics that unfold in experience with the constancy and consistency of a law. Under external circumstances, the way in which any of the natural kinds behaves, or even every human being, is the perceptual unfolding of the fixed

character that serves as a ‘ground’ for the variety of behaviours seen in experience.

This leads us to the second and most important reason why such comments on character are particularly relevant: In a similar way that Intelligible Characters appear as the ultimate ground for the unfolding of human agency, they could also be presented as a sort of *qualitas occulta* for the explanation of the representational manifestation of species and natural kinds. Let us remember that characters, as they are presented in the explanation of human agency, are meant to account for the notion that we act on our own will, i.e. that we are the doers of our deeds. The interpretation of characters as *qualitates occulta* can be ascertained from Schopenhauer’s own comments on the matter. He says:

Spinoza (Epist. 62) says that if a stone projected through the air had consciousness, it would imagine it was flying of its own will. I add merely that the stone would be right. The impulse is for it what the motive is for me, and what in the case of the stone appears as cohesion, gravitation, rigidity in the assumed condition, is by its inner nature the same as what I recognise in myself as will [...] In the case of man, this is called character; in the case of the stone, it is called quality; but it is the same in both. (WW I p. 126)

Schopenhauer’s recognition of the shared inner nature of what we found in ourselves through the exercise of agency and the stone’s behaviour under external influences, does not reduce the assignation of characters to human beings in the discussion of agency. Although here Schopenhauer calls ‘quality’ to that which serves as a ground for the stone to behave in a



law-like manner under the influence of external circumstances, we have seen in previous quotes that at times he openly talks about the character of natural kinds. Similarly, as it occurs with his use of the terms ‘character’ and ‘intelligible character’, I believe we should be open to recognising that at times Schopenhauer is not committed to a single use of terminology as he bluntly ignores continuity in his use of nomenclature. Thus, if we are to understand Schopenhauer’s use of Intelligible Characters as the locus of responsibility, in the way in which all human actions follow the fixed and timeless character, then we ought to recognise that this is also the case for the rest of organic nature. I believe this gives a wider scope to the adoption of the doctrine of characters than what is commonly ascribed to it. If we consider the doctrine of Characters in its parallelism with the doctrine of Ideas and follow Atwell’s interpretation of both as “third explanatory factors”, then the former doctrine is bound to have a shockingly similar role to the latter in our understanding of nature. As we only know an individual’s character through the unfolding of her actions in perceptual experience, so we also know the character of natural kinds or species through their behaviour. This being so if the intelligible character of each individual remains as a “third factor”, or a *qualitas occulta*, without which no explanation of human agency is ever complete, then the same occurs with the behaviour of organic nature in general. As Ideas are, Intelligible Characters are the *qualitates occultae* without which an explanation of nature, in general, is never complete, for they are the ultimate explanatory devices for behaviour under external circumstances.

At this point, an obvious question arises: if Ideas and Characters are to give an explanation of nature in general as “third factors”, what is it that differentiates one from the other? I intend to provide the answer to this question in the next chapter. This is related to Schopenhauer’s understanding of Aristotelian causality in two of its forms: Efficient and Final causality.

## Chapter 4

### The Integration of the Doctrines of Ideas and Character

#### 4.1 Efficient and Final Causes: The First Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason

The aim of this chapter is to present how the doctrines of Ideas and Characters are integrated into the whole of Schopenhauer's system. This is done by means of presenting their role in the explanation of nature through efficient and final causes. The doctrines of Ideas and Characters, I argue, come to fill an incomplete view of the world as portrayed in the *Fourfold Root*.

In order to present the full extent of the roles played by Ideas and Characters there are two forms of the PSR that will occupy our attention. We will concentrate on these two forms because they focus specifically on the kinds of representational objects that we have been discussing throughout the presentation of the doctrines of Ideas and characters, i.e. objects of perceptual experience and human actions. Although Schopenhauer dedicates the whole of the *Fourfold Root* to present all the forms of the PSR, he still does not make explicit *how* the explanation of organic and inorganic nature is to be achieved by either efficient or final causes. This is where the second volume of *The World as Will* becomes useful. My intention in this section is to show explicitly what this link, between the first form of the PSR and an explanation of organic and inorganic nature, looks like. As I explained in the first chapter, I follow

White's thesis on the importance of the *Fourfold Root* as the foundation of Schopenhauer's system (see Section 1.1).

As mentioned in the introductory chapter, the first class of objects that occupy Schopenhauer's attention in describing the first form of the PSR is the one of "*intuitive, complete, empirical* representations" (FR p. 33, emphasis in original). Therefore, the first form of the PSR concerns the connectedness between objects of perceptual experience. The form of this principle, Schopenhauer says, is as follows: "If a state of one or more real objects appear, then there must be another *previous state*, from which the new one follows according to a rule, i.e. as often as the first exists, every time" (FR p. 38, emphasis added). This, Schopenhauer continues:

exclusively refers to *alterations* of material states and to absolutely nothing else [...] It is the regulation of outer *experience* appearing in time, but these are altogether material. Any alteration can only occur when another, determined according to a rule, has preceded it, but through which, then, it occurs as necessarily brought about. (FR p. 40, emphasis in original)

This form of the principle, then, while applying exclusively to objects of perceptual experience, states that the necessary relations that take place between one and another state of matter is the one of causality, in the form of one state of matter always being preceded by another. In order to find the cause of a particular state, one has to look back on the order of previous states to find the one from which the actual state of matter derives its necessity and came to be. What matters to us is the scope of the account he adopts when presenting this form of the principle and to what extent we can expect these relations to give us knowledge of the natural world. This is

the reason why Schopenhauer's account of objects of empirical reality, the core of which gives name to this form of the PSR, results insightful in our understanding of the necessity to introduce the doctrine of Ideas as an explanatory complement to the understanding of nature through efficient causes.

For Schopenhauer, the faculty of understanding unifies time and space and applies its form, causality (see Section 1.1). As I have mentioned, causality refers only to alterations of material states and therein lies the key to understand what this form of the principle is really about. Schopenhauer, when referring to matter as what remains when we "strip" everyday objects of its form and specific qualities, makes the following remarks:

those forms and qualities that we have eliminated are nothing other than the particular and specially determined *way of acting* of bodies, which constitutes their difference as such. Therefore, if we disregard the forms and qualities of objects, then what remains is only *activity in general*, pure acting as such, causality itself (considered objectively) – that is, what remains is only the reflection of our own understanding, the image of its only function projected outward, and matter is pure causality through and through: its being is its action in general. (FR p. 80)

The key characteristic of the form of the PSR of becoming is that its type of objects, i.e. objects of perceptual experience, are in a state of constant change, which is a product of their interaction with each other. Objects of experience, ultimately understood as always-changing states of matter, have *activity* (change) as their essential characteristic. The first form of the PSR acts, therefore, upon the whole range of objects of perceptual

experience, from inorganic to organic objects. As a consequence of this, although Schopenhauer presents causality and all of its forms as acting on the same kind of phenomena, he establishes an explanatory difference between them, rooted in the further distinction among objects of perceptual experience. Causality, Schopenhauer would say, acts over objects of experience in different ways. This distinction, Schopenhauer says, lies in that “the greater the receptivity, the more subtle the mode of influence can be” (FR p. 49). In an arbitrary way, Schopenhauer makes a distinction between inorganic (or lifeless) and organic objects regarding the type of causal relations that govern them. Among the latter, he also distinguishes between plants and animals as being acted upon differently by causality. Thus, as a consequence of the distinction among bodies of experience, Schopenhauer says, “the causality which directs all alterations likewise is of three forms, namely as *cause*, in the narrowest sense of the word, or as *stimulus*, or as *motivation* [...]” (FR p. 57).

The first form of the PSR extends to all objects of perceptual experience, but it does not act over all of them equally. In its three different forms, *cause in the narrowest sense*, *stimulus*, and *motive*, Schopenhauer says causality helps us explain and understand nature through the knowledge of the relations between perceptual objects. Cause in the narrowest sense, or as Schopenhauer calls it in *The World as Will*, *efficient cause*, “is the one according to which all alterations in the *inorganic* kingdom result” (FR p. 48). In *On the Freedom of the Will*, he describes it as “that by means of which all mechanical, physical, and chemical alterations of the objects of experience occur” (FW p. 57). It is the type of

causality that, for example, tells us that for the formation of H<sub>2</sub>O, one oxygen and two hydrogen atoms are present and connected by covalent bonds. Interestingly, Schopenhauer saw in efficient causes an explanation for the changes and alterations of thoughtless matter. Through efficient cause, science is able to explain the formation of inorganic nature and thus provide us with insight into the way nature works.

In remarks reminiscent of what has been presented in the section of Ideas, Schopenhauer admits the incapacity of efficient causes to give us a complete account of nature. He says:

all efficient causes from which everything is explained always rest on something wholly inexplicable, that is, on the original *qualities of things and the* natural forces that make their appearance in them. By virtue of such forces they produce a definite effect [...] (WW II p. 173)

Efficient causes, then, although they give us knowledge of the causal nexus between one state of matter and the one that follows from it (mostly for inorganic nature), fall short in explaining why such relations take place as a necessity. Schopenhauer, in a rather explicit remark on the extension of this form of the principle, says:

The endless chain of causes and effects produces all *alterations*, yet it never extends beyond these, so two things remain untouched. These are, on the one hand, *matter* [...] and, on the other hand, the original *forces of nature*, because these forces are the means *by which* alterations or effects are possible at all- the means by which causes first receive causality. (FR p. 47).

Although insightful, efficient causes fall short in providing what for Schopenhauer would be a “complete explanation” of nature. Bounded by its same principles, efficient causes can only give an account of the connectedness between objects of perceptual experience, leaving out in its explanation the original forces that make all the causal connections possible from the outset. In order to give a complete explanation of phenomena, Schopenhauer is in need of an element that helps him give an account of these original forces.

In spite of the fact that this comment refers directly to the first form of the principle, I do not believe it necessary to reduce its truth to only efficient causes. Regardless of the form of causality, as Schopenhauer would say, it is true that neither, in the endless chain of alterations of states of matter, can go beyond objects of perceptual experience, for these exclusively constitute its objects. Causality, as the first form of the PSR, only applies to objects of representation and, therefore, in any of its forms, it cannot go beyond the type of object it refers to. I do not believe there is any further reason to reduce such inability of acting beyond its type of objects exclusively to any of the particular forms of causality. Hence, I believe it is reasonable to say that since this inability applies to causality in its entirety, by consequence, it also applies to all its forms. In other words, causality is bound to give us an insight into the world at a representational level, specifically about objects of perceptual experience, either of organic or inorganic nature, but it can go no further.

Similarly, as it occurs with the first form of causality, I believe that it is licit to say that due to the inability of efficient causes to give a complete



account of nature, and due to the fact that it is just one of the forms of causality, hence derived from the same principle as the rest of its forms and applicable to the same object, we could admit that such inability also applies to causality in the form of motives. I intend to show that this limitation,, although not expressed by Schopenhauer, has its explanatory counterpart in the fourth form of the PSR and its object.

Schopenhauer describes this type of causality for the first time in the *Fourfold Root*. There, he remarks that it “directs animal life proper, thus their doings, i.e. the external actions consciously performed by all animal beings” (FR p. 48), thus being the causal explanation of the latter. A motive, Schopenhauer adds further, “is a cause and operates with the necessity that all causality entails” (FR p. 50) and is expressed in that all animals, through cognition, move towards an aim and end (FR p. 49). In general terms, Schopenhauer considers this type of causality as that from which all animal and human action is performed. If we take as an example the behaviour of any animal, one would find, according to Schopenhauer, that the most immediate cause of the actions arising from such behaviour lies in the motive or end that motivated the animal to perform it. Now, if we apply this to a particular case, a motive that may constitute a causal explanation of the barking of a dog is the dog’s unconscious “willingness” to defend its territory and frighten a possible threat. This type of causality, as described here, is also named by Schopenhauer in *The World as Will* as *final causes*, i.e. a teleological explanation.

It is interesting that Schopenhauer, in *The World as Will*, expands his understanding of the way the final causes are explicative of nature. The

remarks about causality presented on the *Fourfold Root*, although thoroughly presented, are better understood in the light of his account on the topic as it appears in his prime work. There, he presents an account of causality, and the forms it takes, that follows more closely and expressly an Aristotelian one. Schopenhauer says:

The efficient cause is that *by* which a thing is; the final cause is that on *account of which* a thing is. The Phenomenon to be explained has in time the former *behind* it and the latter *before* it. Merely in the case of the arbitrary actions of animal beings do the two directly coincide, since in them the final cause, the end or aim, appear as *a motive*. (WW II p. 331, emphasis in original)

This way of presenting both forms of causality is crucial for understanding their explanatory power. In *Fourfold Root*, Schopenhauer makes explicit the fact that causality applies exclusively to the first class of objects of representation, while at the same time he explicitly leads the reader to the recognition that the law of causality is the product of the application of the understanding which gives unity to the otherwise separated forms of time and space. These remarks have their basis in Schopenhauer's view on the first form of the PSR and the unity of objects of experience that, as mentioned, is only achieved through the application of causality. Nature, Schopenhauer says, "achieves without reflection, and without a conception of an end, that which *appears* so appropriate and so deliberate" [Emphasis added] (WW II p. 327). The suitability of teleology, or the explanation of phenomena through final causes, for giving an account of a blind and thoughtlessly organized nature lies in that it implies the assumption, brought by the subject, "of the suitability of every part" (WW II

p. 329) that constitutes nature as a whole. Thus, every entity that constitutes either organic or inorganic nature, due to its dependence on these forms of intellect, finds itself to be related to another and is in principle able to be explained by any of the three forms of causality. We find in human beings, for example, the suitability of all three forms of causality as explanatory. We could explain the formation of our bodies through efficient causes, the reaction of our bodies through stimuli, and our performed actions through final causes, i.e. via motives. The fact that we see in ourselves causality in all three forms does not imply, Schopenhauer would say, that we are in possession of any special characteristic, but, with more or less sense, the whole of nature is able to be explained in more than just one of these forms. Hence, Schopenhauer refers to the difference of two forms of causality by saying that “final causes (*causae finales*) are the clue to *the understanding* of organic nature, just as efficient causes (*causae efficientes*) are to that of inorganic nature” (WW II p. 329, emphasis added). From an epistemological perspective, objects of perceptual experience are to be understood and explained, with more or less coherence, by these forms of causality. We can explain the origin of our actions through motives, the process of healing through stimuli, and the formation of our bodies through efficient causes.

Interestingly enough, some of the examples that Schopenhauer presents while discussing final causes as explicative of organic nature help us understand, although indirectly, a complete account of nature as a whole. In section XXVI of the second volume of *The World as Will*, Schopenhauer exemplifies this by calling the nest of the termites the “motive” for the

toothless jaw of the anteater, or the hard egg-shell that the chicken breaks when it is born a “motive” for its pointy beak (WW II p. 332). I believe that Schopenhauer expects the reader to understand this along similar lines of what he presented as efficient causes. Being a priori, causality explains the relation between objects of experience, and in the case of certain kind of relations, they are explained by the influence of one object over another, given as a motive. A way of understanding this, Schopenhauer remarks, is that “all movements that the animal as *animal* performs [...] occur in consequence of a cognized object, thus *on motives*”, and therefore, he concludes, “an *animal* is any body whose characteristic external movements and alterations, in accordance with its nature, always follow *from motives*” (FW pp. 59-60). This explains, in the form of the PSR, that every action an animal performs relates to another object (in the form of a motive) that, although at times unconsciously, serves as an explanation of it. Although Schopenhauer does not discuss the possibility of states of affairs as given causes, the main idea behind this lies in the fact that there is a range of different forms in which these objects relate to each other and that the relation between two given objects can take, in a non-exclusive way, more than one form. The chicken’s possession of a beak could be explained by the anatomical explanation of the molecular configuration of the beak and also by the end or function that the beak has in the life of the bird. Nevertheless, in the same way as with efficient causes, it does not require much to realise that final causes fall short in the explanation of nature, even in a Darwinian account of nature, for that would presuppose teleology. Even if we explain an animal’s behaviour *qua animal* in terms of final causes, the

question remains about by what means such behaviour takes place. Explanation through final causes cannot give an account of the “original force” in nature, by means of which a certain behaviour or action takes place. Once again, as with efficient causes, Schopenhauer is left with an incomplete explanation of perceptual representation.

In the next section, I intend to argue that Schopenhauer does in fact give us an answer to the incompleteness of explaining the experienced nature through efficient and final causes. He provides the philosophical counterpart to both of these types of scientific explanation of nature through the introduction of the doctrines of Ideas and Intelligible Characters, both of which complement his view on the fourth form of the PSR.

#### **4.2 The Doctrines of Ideas and Character as an Answer to the Incompleteness of Causality**

As I have been anticipating, and thus not surprising for the reader, I believe Schopenhauer gives an answer to the incompleteness of an explanation of nature as portrayed in the *Fourfold Root* through the adoption of the doctrines of Ideas and Intelligible Characters. The importance of this answer, and therefore of this complement to a scientific assessment of the world, lies in what was mentioned in the second chapter about the relevance philosophy has in explaining the unity of reality. The nature of this explanation, as mentioned in the introduction, is the essence of philosophy and is circumscribed by its metaphysical limits and independence from the forms of knowledge. Schopenhauer’s entire system is erected from the basis that the world, distinguished between representation and thing in itself, is *in appearance* separated in two halves.

Therefore, the complement to a scientific world-view comes to adjust the explanatory balance by uniting these two aspects of reality. Moreover, it presents the philosophical counterpart, and thus gives the last possible explanation, of the purportedly limited view that science has to offer.

I believe that the key aspect still in need of further explanation to understand Schopenhauer's purpose and the importance of his introduction of both doctrines, lies in the relation that the basic distinction between the subject of *cognition* (or subject of knowing) and subject of *willing* has with these doctrines. Borrowing Schopenhauer's expression of his philosophy being like 'Thebes with a hundred gates', I believe it true that any aspect of his system leads us to its core, i.e. to the unity of the subject of cognition and the subject of willing or, as sometimes he also calls it, the miracle *par excellence* (FR p. 136). In his exposition of the fourth form of the PSR, Schopenhauer opens the door, for the first time in the *Fourfold Root*, to catch a further glimpse into the world of the in itself. As with PSR of becoming, the fourth form of this principle has its own particular object, which in this case is of a whole different kind, viz. the subject of *willing*. This, Schopenhauer remarks, "is object to the cognizing subject and indeed is given only to the inner sense; thus, it appears only in time, not in space [...]" (FR p. 133). The subject of willing is presented by Schopenhauer as the object of *introspection*. The subject of cognition, knowing all of the representation that in one way or another is subject to the PSR, is the necessary unknowable counterpart of the objects of knowledge. It is, in other words, one of the necessary sides of the subject-object relation. Therefore, Schopenhauer remarks, the knowing subject *qua* knowing

subject can never be the object of knowledge (see Section 1.1). What we *do* know about ourselves though is not the subject *qua* subject of knowledge but *qua* subject of willing. In introspection, Schopenhauer notices, “we find ourselves always as *willing*” (FR p. 136). And it is the shared identity between the subject of knowing and the subject of willing that makes it “the knot of the world and therefore inexplicable” (FR p. 136). It is in this point, in ourselves as willing and knowing subjects, where both halves of the world meet. For Schopenhauer, in an inexplicable way and without being tied to the rules of cognition, i.e. to the rules of the PSR, we encounter in ourselves both the world as representation and as *Will*. Representation because we have awareness of our own bodies *qua* objects of perceptual experience and *Will* because it is the most immediate (due to its independence from the form of space) form of knowledge given by inner experience.

The importance of the subject of willing in Schopenhauer lies in that while being independent of all the forms of cognition, it gives us insight into the inner nature of ourselves and of the world. Schopenhauer’s introduction of the subject of willing appears to be an attempt on his part to explain the ultimate condition of a metaphysical subject that remains in unity with the subject as representation. The subject of willing, then, appears as the object of the fourth form of the PSR in so far as it is the source of *motivation* from which individual doings are to be explained. Falling short of providing an explanation of actions and doings through motives (or the third form of causality), the PSR of motivation leads us to recognise the special role the subject of willing has. Even with the knowledge that individual human

beings operate through motives, as it has been shown in the previous section, it is yet a mystery why certain actions have a specific motivational ground. Through the knowledge of the subject of willing, or in other words, through our inner experience,

we know that an event is an act of will, evoked by a motive that consists of a mere representation. Thus we recognize the influence of the motive, like all other causes, not only from the outside, and hence only mediately, but we simultaneously recognise it from the inside, quite immediately, and therefore in accordance with an entire way of acting [...] Here we stand behind the scenes [...] and experience the secret of how, in accordance with its innermost nature, the cause produces the effect [...] *motivation is causality seen from within.* (FR p. 137, emphasis in original)

The fourth form of the PSR complements the incomplete version of nature given by causality in its third form (as motives). In a way, it completes the account given by the PSR of becoming in the form of motives and adds the remaining piece in Schopenhauer's scheme of the world as being both Will and representation. An explicit remark on this is found immediately following Schopenhauer's exposition of the law of motivation, where he says:

The law of motivation is related to the law of causality [...], so this fourth class of object for the subject [subject of willing] [...] is related to the first class [objects of experience]. This insight is the cornerstone of my whole metaphysics. (FR p. 138)

After introducing the object of inner experience, Schopenhauer completes the idea of the causality of action. On the one hand, we are able



to explain the representational aspect of actions through causality seen as a motive. On the other, we come to understand that the way our actions unfold in representation in one way as compared to another is the product of our shared nature as subjects of willing. Nevertheless, there is still more to understand about the influence that the subject of willing has on the subject, namely, the more specific influence the will, manifested in the subject of willing, has over cognition.

Schopenhauer describes this influence by saying that it “compels cognition [...] generally directing attention to this or that and evoking any series of thoughts it prefers” (FR p. 138). The will, Schopenhauer continues, “is what sets the whole mechanism in action: in line with the person’s interests, i.e. their individual ends [...]” (FR p. 138). Being that the will sets the whole mechanism of action into motion and is the hidden director that orchestrates possibilities of action, it is the *law of motivation* that serves as the metaphysical ground for the unfolding of our actions. Looking back to the introductory chapter, Schopenhauer establishes the difference between human beings and animals in their self-determination through motivation derived from concepts. Possessing reason, human beings are able to find a source of motivation in abstract concepts whose ultimate origin is the abstraction from particular instances of experience. Human beings have the peculiar characteristic of being motivated by abstract representations. On this, Schopenhauer remarks that the law of motivation determines the association between ideas, “for that which rules the sensorium, and determines it to follow analogy or another association of ideas in this or that direction, is the will of the thinking subject” (WW II p. 136). In other

words, the subject *qua* subject of willing influences cognition and the association of ideas that serve as our source of motivation, driving us into an action. Knowledge of the subject of willing is what gives Schopenhauer the basis to claim that the world ‘in itself’ is nothing else but will. To say that the world ‘in itself’ is Will, is the same as saying that we, in our inner nature, shared by all nature, are subjects of willing.

I believe there is enough evidence, from what has been discussed thus far, to establish that the importance and meaning of Schopenhauer’s adoption of the doctrine of Intelligible Characters goes beyond the need to find a *locus* for freedom: the doctrine’s importance is found in that fact that it is the metaphysical counterpart that completes the explanation of the causality of action. For the reasons just given, I agree with Matthias Kossler’s (2009) words: “The metaphysics of will can [...] be regarded as a necessary correction of the first unsatisfactory causal model” (p. 84). By saying that it is the willing subject that influences cognition and thus ultimately drives the subject to a variety of possibilities of action, Schopenhauer is still in need, as happened with the explanation through efficient causes, of an ultimate element that acts as the metaphysical counterpart to motives. Although one might say that Schopenhauer has provided a solution to this problem by saying that the Will fills this role, the concept of Will is still too vague and broad to do so. Although Schopenhauer presents the Will as the ultimate metaphysical standpoint of reality, as a notion it is too general for constituting an explanatory principle of human action. Moreover, in contrast with the notion of Intelligible Character, the notion of Will does not become known to us through a

progression that starts with the knowledge of outer experience; it is immediate. As Schopenhauer remarks, the “actual identity of the cognizer with that which is cognized as willing [...] is *immediately given*” (FR p. 136, emphasis in original). Therefore, there is no basis to claim what I would call an “epistemological identity” between the notion of subject of willing and Intelligible Characters. By this, I mean that there is a difference between the epistemological means from which we gain access to these notions. I will expand on this point in what follows.

With Will being that which appears as the other half of the world, Schopenhauer is in need of a more specific characterisation of the form it adopts when determining the unfolding of actions. In other words, he must find an objectification of the Will that allows him to complete the *apparent* (for the subject) dual image of the unfolding of activity. I believe this need is more clearly understood when considering the following remarks on the association of ideas. Schopenhauer says: “any image that is suddenly presented in our imagination, and any judgement that does not follow from a ground that was previously present must be evoked through an *act of will* that has a motive [...]” (FR p. 138, emphasis added). This *act of Will*, as Schopenhauer defines it, can be identified with the Intelligible Character which the empirical character of each individual, i.e. the empirical unfolding of her actions, must follow as a model (see Section 3.3). We have seen that the reason Schopenhauer must call the object of inner experience as *Will*, is that it appears as an object for us. But in the unfolding of actions, we see that the Will appears as a character that preserves continuity and “stamps its seal” on every individual action. Therefore, it is only known once such

empirical unfolding has already taken place. Following a similar logic, this is why it would be called *character*, for it displays a constant character in every individual action. Schopenhauer introduced Intelligible Characters with the consideration that they possess a role similar to one of the Ideas. From the parallelism presented above, I believe one can go further in describing Atwell's interpretation of both Characters and Ideas as "third explanatory factors", and present them as the two philosophical counterparts and complements for the explanation of causality at two different levels.

Schopenhauer has made clear the usefulness of both efficient and final causes for explaining the relation between objects of perceptual experience. He has also expressed the incapacity of efficient causes to give a complete account of nature due to the constraints presented by the PSR. In this sense, as one possible interpretation, Ideas and Intelligible Characters (whether referring to individuals or species) appear as the necessary metaphysical explanation, the other side of the coin, for a portrayal of the relation between objects of perceptual experience at these two levels. These doctrines come to complete the explanation of nature which is presumably dual, but that finds unity when its constituting elements appear as the result of the forms imposed by the knowing subject. Due to the portrayal of Ideas and Intelligible Characters, for which I remit to the previous chapters of this thesis, their independence from the PSR allows them to fit the role of explanatory devices and derive their own portion of reality, thus being "more real" than their empirical counterparts. To illustrate this point and the difference between the notions of Idea and Intelligible Character, let us imagine the following. A man is lying under a tree and an apple falls on his

head. He starts wondering about what caused the apple to fall. After a thorough investigation he realises that the ultimate cause of the apple falling is gravity, but then another question arises: Why does gravity behave as it does? What I believe would be Schopenhauer's answer to this example is: The man, from a particular instance of the action of gravity in his perceptual experience, independently of any particular instance of it, concluded that there must exist an original force; he reached the Idea of gravity. In other words, he would say that gravity *qua* gravity is just a representation that, mysteriously for the subject, has its origin in the Will as a thing in itself. The notion of gravity that the man has now, reached through progressive knowledge and starting from his enquiry through efficient causes, is an immediate object of knowledge that finds itself independent from any causal relation with other objects. It is gravity at its "purest state", its Idea. Ideas, as I believe Schopenhauer presents them, are not the final link in the causal chain of explanation (for they are outside the PSR) On the contrary, they are the ultimate object of knowledge which makes possible such progression of the chain in terms of efficient causes. In other words, the Idea is the metaphysical counterpart of its representational instances that, in a way that will remain unknown for the subject of knowledge, determines how the (efficient) causal relations are to take place. In turn, the subject of knowledge who in this case is the man that is contemplating this Idea, does not care about its relation to any other object in representation including himself. He became a *pure subject of knowledge*.

If my reading of how Ideas are explanatory of causality in terms of efficient causes is correct, then I believe a similar account could be

sustained for Intelligible Characters. The main difference between one and the other is that the means by which subjects reach their knowledge are different, insofar as they depict a different form of causality in perceptual experience. What I believe to be a further reason for introducing Intelligible Characters (or at times just plainly ‘characters’) in addition to the notion of Ideas, is that the starting point from which we get some insight of characters is different in that it constitutes a distinct form of the law of causality. Intelligible Characters, then, appear as the explanation for an understanding of the world through final causes. If we are wondering about either the actions of a species or a specific individual, we ought to reach a static character, an Intelligible Character, that, as Ideas do, allows for the motivational causal chain to take place when a determinate action occurs. This character, as Schopenhauer describes it, is only to be the object of knowledge as the seal that unifies every individual action in experience. In theatre, the artist is able to express, in a fictional way, this notion of a static eternal character.<sup>15</sup>

At this point, and before continuing, I would like to consider Edward Kleist’s (2010) thesis on the role that Intelligible Characters play in the unification of human consciousness. Kleist’s remarks on this arise from his attempt to solve Janaway’s problem about individuation. Although I agree with most of Kleist’s analysis and conclusions regarding the role of the doctrine of Intelligible Characters, I believe his analysis errs in some respects when he attempts to establish a correlation between this doctrine and Ideas. I believe that Kleist, in his efforts to correlate the two doctrines,

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<sup>15</sup> See Cartwright (1988) for an account of Schopenhauer’s distinction of characters.

failed to sufficiently emphasize the role of Ideas in contrast with the role assigned to Intelligible Characters. This led him to associate both doctrines while failing to discuss the necessity and importance of each doctrine individually.

Briefly, Kleist's thesis regards Schopenhauer's adoption of Intelligible Character as the notion that gives unity to human consciousness.<sup>16</sup> In other words, through Intelligible Characters, Schopenhauer "indicates *will* as the one responsible for its coherence" (Kleist, 2010, p. 23) in an individualized way thus shaping moods, feelings and desires. Intelligible Characters, Kleist (2010) remarks, "could be understood as a volitional impulse that unconsciously and passively drives the very generation of consciousness itself by weaving together the succession of discrete acts of attention" (p. 23). This is so, because Intelligible Characters are rooted in the Will through their association with Ideas. Nevertheless, there are two points to which I would like to attend. The first relates to Kleist's attention to the correlation between Ideas and Intelligible Characters, and the second, to the role of Ideas in a teleological explanation. Regarding the first point, Kleist establishes a correlation between the two doctrines and says that:

individual human beings are individuated in one way by their spatio-temporal positions, thus by means of the *principium individuationis*, but in another way, their individuality is rooted in the articulation of the *Ding-an-sich* [Thing in itself] into Ideas. Schopenhauer applies his Platonic-Kantian conception of species-Ideas as the articulation of the *Ding-an-sich* into

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<sup>16</sup> See Gardner (1999) for further discussion of the form of Will's influence on consciousness.

intelligible characters towards the claim that individual human character has its roots [...] in the objectification of the will into Ideas. (Kleist, 2010, p. 19, emphasis in original)

Kleist's source for these assertions is Schopenhauer's remark that "the intelligible character coincides with the Idea, or more properly with the original act of will that reveals itself in the Idea" (WW I p. 156).

I believe there is enough material in Schopenhauer to correlate the doctrines of Ideas and Intelligible Characters. Nevertheless, it seems to me that there is a distinction to be made. One possible conclusion is to that individual human characters are rooted in Intelligible Characters which in turn, as is the same with Ideas, are rooted in the thing in itself. Therefore, Schopenhauer would make use of the notion of Ideas and the notion of 'act of will' for establishing that this is so. Another possible conclusion is that the individual human character has its roots *in* the articulation of the thing in itself into Ideas. I believe that if the second option is adopted, as Kleist would suggest, the whole notion of Intelligible Characters would be rendered useless because the only necessary element for establishing the root of individuality would be the Idea of each individual. Without thinking that Schopenhauer uses the terminology just for the sake of it, there is enough evidence throughout his work to read that individuality has its roots in the first option.

The second point I would like to emphasize is directly deduced from the first. Since Kleist is suggesting that individuality is rooted in the articulation of Ideas, he reaches the inevitable consequence that he is not able to recognize Schopenhauer's remarks on the differences between



efficient and final causes for explaining inorganic and organic nature respectively. Kleist says that Schopenhauer “thought that means-ends relations contribute to our knowledge of appearances in much the same way as the ascription of efficient causality conditions our knowledge of appearances” (Kleist, 2010, p. 20). Shortly thereafter, he says:

Schopenhauer’s debt to Platonism with regard to teleology lies in the conception of Ideas as being formative principles which give unity to organisms and non-living forces [...] Schopenhauer attributes to the Ideas a teleological role insofar as they determine the relation among means and ends which defines organic unity. (Kleist, 2010, p. 21)

There are two points I would like to clarify. First, I have already shown in the second chapter that Schopenhauer gives an explicative role to Ideas in that they constitute the metaphysical counterpart of original forces through an explanation from efficient causes (see Section 2.3). In the same way, I have also already shown that Schopenhauer does, in fact, make the distinction between the roles of efficient and final causes in explaining inorganic and organic nature (see Section 4.2). Taking this into consideration, Kleist’s interpretation of individuality being rooted in the articulation of Ideas renders useless, once again, the whole notion of Intelligible Characters in the determination of the unity of either organic or inorganic nature. If Ideas already establish the unity for both and if efficient and final causes are equally explicative of nature as a whole, then there would be no need for Schopenhauer to present a further notion of Intelligible Characters, as Ideas would be playing a double role in the explanation of the unity of nature as a whole. In such a case, Kleist’s

interpretation of Intelligible Characters as giving unity to individual consciousness is doubtful in the light of the unclear necessity for them to play such role.

In contrast with Kleist's interpretation, I believe that my reading of the doctrine regarding the understanding Intelligible Characters as the metaphysical counterpart of an explanation through final causes is more comprehensive considering Schopenhauer's different uses for the terminology. First, my interpretation is not limited to regarding the role of Intelligible Characters as fundamental to the formation of an individualized consciousness, but it also extends to the explanation of the character of species (mentioned explicitly by Schopenhauer) and finds coherence with Schopenhauer's use of the term 'character' for natural kinds. Additionally, my interpretation does not disregard Schopenhauer's explicit assertions about the utility and near exclusivity of efficient and final causes for the explanations of inorganic and organic nature respectively. If we regard Ideas as fundamental for a teleological explanation of nature, we would render the introduction of Intelligible Characters useless due to the sole ability of Ideas to fill that place. From there the questioning could go even further to ask whether Ideas could be used as the "locus for responsibility" instead of Intelligible Characters. By correlating Ideas and Characters in the way he does, Kleist leaves the door open for the argument that Characters are an extraneous and unnecessary element of Schopenhauer's philosophy.

Now it is time to provide a solution to the problems previously presented and argue why this reading agrees with an interpretation of Schopenhauer's philosophy as an organic unity. First, I have presented that

the problem of Ideas as third ontological factors, somewhere between representation and the thing in itself, neglects Schopenhauer's intentions to present the distinction between the two as being the result of the forms applied by the knowing subject. Therefore, Ideas are not to be read as an extra ontological category, for Schopenhauer advocates the unity of the world as Will and representation. This difference is only made by the knowing subject, who in the knowledge of Ideas becomes a *pure subject of knowledge* when contemplating a particular object of representation. Second, as we have come to see, based on explicit remarks by Schopenhauer himself, that Magee's worries about the utility of the doctrine of Ideas are unfounded for their importance comes from the necessity of giving a philosophical account that completes the scientific image of the world. In such a case, regardless of the latest discoveries in biology through the analysis of genes, the role Ideas play in explaining nature arises from Schopenhauer's own necessity to portray the unity of the world in its two aspects. This is the reason why Ideas are not to be "replaced" by genetic discoveries that explain the constancy of species. When contemplated, Ideas, although belonging to the realm of representation due to their dependence on the *pure subject of knowledge*, are to be seen in their independence from the PSR and therefore from the relation between individual objects of experience with one another. Third, once explained that the parallelism between Ideas and Characters goes beyond an interpretation that regards them as "third explanatory factors" (which is why they are necessary for getting a complete picture of the world), it is relevant

to state why in both cases the plurality of these two does not represent a problem for Schopenhauer.

The reason why plurality does not pose a problem for either of these two doctrines lies in the fact that the assessment is based on a misconception. As I have presented, space and time are the necessary features that allow for plurality. Nonetheless, in the chapter on Characters, a distinction was made between plurality without space and time and plurality in the 'in itself'. As a complement to the view of nature through the PSR, Ideas and Characters acquire their plurality from a very different source than do objects under the PSR. Returning to the first form of the PSR, objects of perceptual experience have *change* as their essence. States of matter *become* other states through their interactions. This is possible only through the concurrence of time and space that allows for their plurality *in function* of the constant change in which matters are found. On the other hand, Ideas and Intelligible Characters, as the eternal counterparts of these changing objects and as objects that are not to be related to others, hence dependent on the subject of pure knowledge, acquire their status as objects only through the knowledge of individual empirical objects in their isolation from others. I believe, as I have emphasised throughout this thesis, that Schopenhauer is at times inconsistent with his use of terminology. Such being the case, the Ideas' independence from the PSR would not make them objects at all, for if they are not to be individuated they would hardly constitute objects in the same sense that objects of perceptual experience do. By using the term 'objects' for referring to objects of experience and Ideas, it seems he is making use of the loose concept that refers to the necessary

counterpart of the subject. If this is the case, then both Ideas and Intelligible Characters acquire their plurality solely from the necessary standpoint of being objects for a *pure subject of knowledge*. Ideas and Characters alike are plural as long as there are subjects that contemplate them. As an analogy (and only as such), one could take the example of concepts, whose plurality seems to depend on a very different source than objects of experience. Although for Schopenhauer Ideas are not concepts and not a ‘construction’ from a subject, they are also dependent on a knowing subject. In Schopenhauer’s words,

if accordingly we attempt to *imagine an objective world without a subject*, then we become aware that what we are imagining at that moment is in truth the opposite of what we intended, namely nothing but just the process of the intellect of a knowing being who perceives an objective world [...]  
(WW II p. 5, emphasis in original)

Any attempt to contemplate a world without subjects will inevitably lead to an imagined example of the world from the perspective of a subject. Ideas and Characters, as objects for the subject, belong to the world as representation and should not be regarded as mystic pieces of ontology.

## Conclusion

My intention in this thesis has been to defend three major claims presenting an interpretation of Schopenhauer's use of the doctrines of Ideas and Intelligible Characters. I started by showing one of the problems that arises from Schopenhauer's adoption of the doctrine of Ideas. This critique, I argued, was based on two main premises: The first is that Schopenhauer makes a blunt ontological distinction between the world of the 'in itself' and the world of representation. Second, the world of representation is identified with what I have called the world of *perceptual experience*. In order to show that this reading misinterprets Schopenhauer's original intentions, I presented a brief summary of the Platonic and Kantian elements that are necessary to consider in Schopenhauer's philosophy that led him to adopt (and accordingly adapt to his thought) Ideas in his distinctive manner.

Then I presented Schopenhauer's view on philosophy and its role of giving a metaphysical account of the world that "completes" the scientific explanation of nature. There, Ideas were presented as playing not only the role as objects of aesthetic experience but as the necessary philosophical counterpart of aetiological explanation. He does not make an ontological distinction between the world as Will and representation: the distinction is rather epistemological. My first claim consisted in that we are to understand Ideas not as an extra piece of ontology but as a device, located in his representational framework, that aids to give a complete account of nature in its entirety.

In Chapter Three, I presented the content of the problem of individuation regarding Intelligible Characters and how it is derived from the previous considerations on Ideas. Overall, the problem assumes that Schopenhauer would include Intelligible Characters as another piece of ontology. Allegedly, their individuation does not cohere with Schopenhauer's own acknowledged restrictions for its possibility. I proceeded to address this problem first by establishing the parameters within which the answer had to be given. Then, I presented an explicit parallelism found in Schopenhauer's works between the doctrines of Ideas and Intelligible Characters. This allowed me to establish what possible role Intelligible Characters were to play in Schopenhauer's system. At the same time, with the help of such exposition, I outlined the answer to the problem of their individuation. Intelligible Characters, as objects of knowledge, must be included as an integral part of Schopenhauer's representational framework. This led to the second major claim, viz. that Intelligible Characters are necessary for Schopenhauer's account of the world in its unity, in a similar way as with the doctrine of Ideas as shown from the exposed parallel between the two.

The purpose of Chapter Four is to show that the doctrines of Ideas and Intelligible Characters could be interpreted as Schopenhauer's explanatory devices meant to complete the epistemological framework in his view of a unitary understanding of the world. Ideas fit this interpretation by completing the scientific image of the world through efficient causes, while Intelligible Characters, due to their connection with the law of motivation, could be understood as explanatory devices meant to complete

explanations through final causes. The third and final claim, thus, presents Ideas and Intelligible Characters as necessary philosophical components in Schopenhauer's system, meant to give a complete account of the world left untouched by causality in its *efficient* and *final* forms.

In spite of the fact that at times Schopenhauer does not make consistent use of some terminology, I believe there is enough evidence throughout his works, to sustain an interpretation of Ideas and Intelligible Characters as explanatory devices, highlighting their epistemological role rather than an ontological one. In this interpretation, questions about their ontological status and plurality are answered through a different approach. Both Ideas and Intelligible Characters depend on the knowing subject and do not constitute "another piece of the puzzle", but rather another level of his representational framework. In spite of the fact that this particular reading is meant to solve some issues of inconsistency in Schopenhauer's work, there is still room for other interpretations. I do not believe that a system as rich and complex as Schopenhauer's is restricted to one-sided readings. I am aware that a complete consistency will hardly be achieved, though I believe that consistency in some aspects of Schopenhauer's philosophy ought not to be disregarded. Schopenhauer's exposition will always leave possibilities for different interpretations. Even though this thesis intends to calm some worries, I am aware that this is not achieved without compromising some consistency in some other aspects of his writings. As presented, Schopenhauer's hardly consistent use of nomenclature and his reiterated remarks on what seems to be, for example, the ontological status of Ideas leave us craving for clarity. Overall, I believe



that attempts to find coherence in his system as a whole will have the unpleasant consequence of leaving some uncertain details of Schopenhauer's exposition unexplained. Whether or not Schopenhauer could have been more prolific in the presentation of his philosophy is something I will not refer to. Nevertheless, it is clear from the different pieces of literature on the topic that it is not an easy task to produce a committed and thorough analysis of his system without leaving some difficult issues unattended and unexplained.

Although many important issues were not developed in this thesis, I hope that this interpretation of the unity and functionality of Schopenhauer's philosophy serves as a ground that helps readers to understand, under a different light, the diversity and depth of Schopenhauer's thought.

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### Abbreviations employed in reference to Schopenhauer's works:

<b>BM</b>	Prize Essay on the Basis of Morals
<b>FR</b>	On the Fourfold Root of the Principle Sufficient Reason
<b>FW</b>	Prize Essay on the Freedom of the Will
<b>MR</b>	Manuscript Remains
<b>PP</b>	Parerga and Paralipomena, Vols. I–II
<b>WW</b>	The World as Will and Representation, Vols. I–II

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