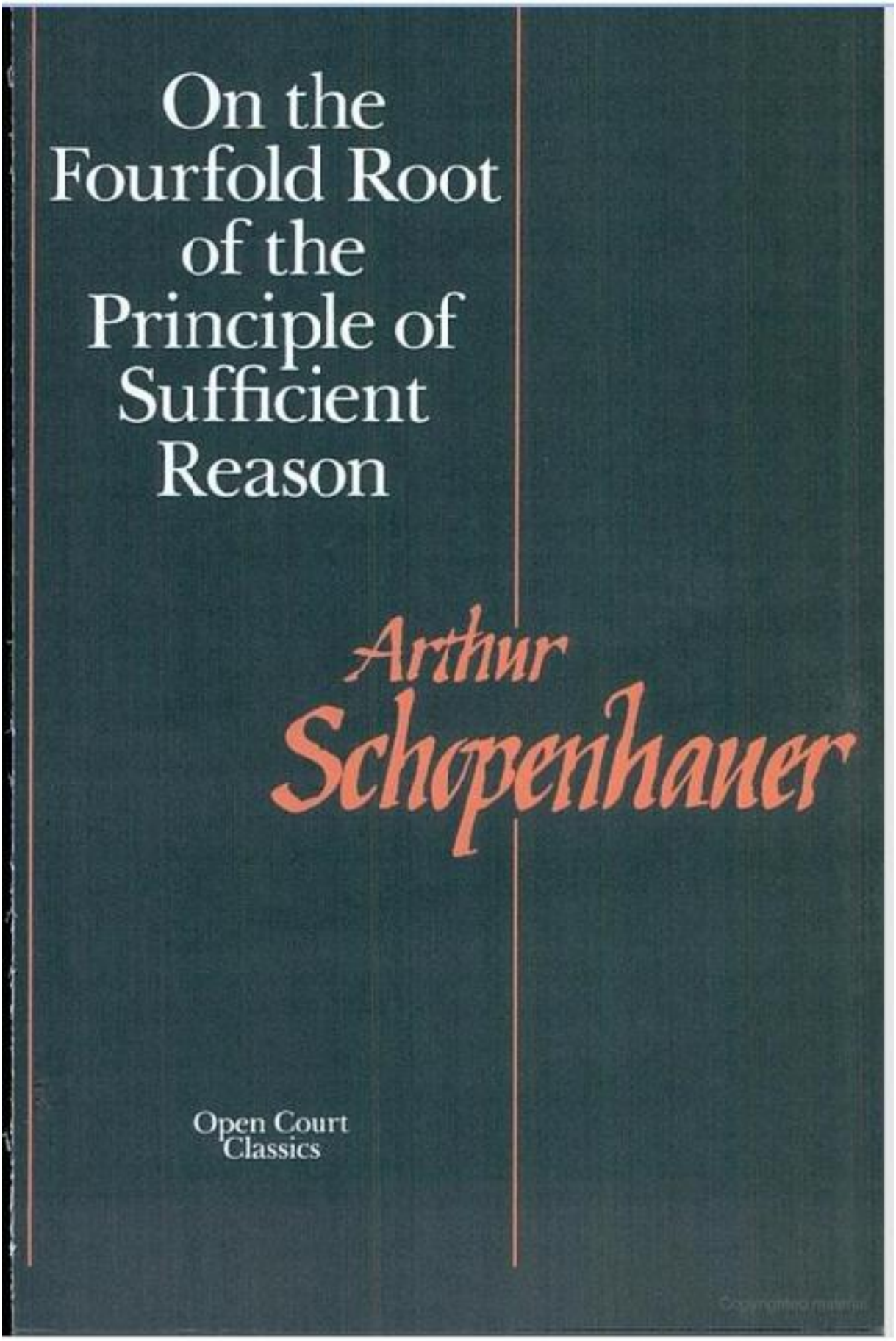
On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason
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Knowledge of the understanding is independent of the reasoning faculty and its assistance. This is clear from the fact that, if at any time the understanding attributes to given effects a wrong cause, and consequently directly perceives that cause whereby *illusion* arises, the reasoning faculty may still know correctly *in abstracto* the true state of affairs, but yet cannot come to the aid of the understanding with such abstract knowledge; on the contrary, the illusion persists fixed and unmoved, regardless of that better abstract knowledge. The above-mentioned phenomena of double vision and double touch in consequence of the abnormal position of the organs of sense are an illustration of this kind; likewise the moon that appears to be greater at the horizon; the image formed at the focus of a concave mirror and floating in space exactly like a solid body; the painted relievo regarded as something real; the motion of the shore or of the bridge on which we are

standing while a ship is sailing under it: high mountains that appear to be very much nearer than they are owing to a want of atmospheric perspective, this being the result of the purity of the air round their high peaks. In these and a hundred similar instances the understanding assumes the usual cause with which it is familiar. It therefore perceives this at once, although our reasoning faculty has discovered the correct state of affairs in different ways. The understanding, however, is inaccessible to the teaching of reason, since in its knowledge it precedes reason and so cannot be reached by that faculty. Thus *illusion*, i.e., deception of the understanding, persists unmoved, although *error*, i.e., deception of the faculty of reason, is prevented. What is correctly known by the *understanding* is *reality*; what is correctly known by the *faculty of reason* is *truth*, i.e., a judgement having a ground or reason (*Grund*). To reality is opposed *illusion* (what is falsely perceived); to truth is opposed *error* (what is falsely conceived).

Although the purely formal part of empirical intuitive perception and hence the law of causality together with space and time are contained a priori in the intellect, the application of this law to empirical data is not given to it simultaneously; on the contrary, it reaches this only through practice and experience. This is why new-born infants, who certainly receive impressions of light and colour, do not yet apprehend and really see objects. On the contrary, throughout the first weeks they are under a stupor that passes off when their understanding begins to exercise its function on the data of the senses, in particular of touch and sight, whereby the objective world gradually

enters their consciousness. This dawning consciousness is clearly recognizable from the growing intelligence of their gaze and from a certain purpose and intention in their movements, especially when for the first time they show by a friendly smile that they recognize those who look after them. We can also watch them experimenting for a long time with sight and touch in order to complete their apprehension of objects under different illumination, in different directions, and at different distances. Thus we see them pursue a silent but serious study until they have learnt all the above-mentioned intellectual operations of vision. Nevertheless this schooling can be much more clearly verified in the case of those who are born blind and have undergone an operation late in life; for they are able to give an account of their observations. Cheselden's blind man became famous (the original account of him appears in Vol. 35 of the *Philosophical Transactions*), and there have since been repeated instances of this. It is always confirmed that

those obtaining the use of their eyes late in life certainly see light, colours, and outlines immediately after the operation, but yet have no objective perception of things; for their understanding must first learn to apply its causal law to the data that are new to it, and to the changes thereof. When Cheselden's blind man for the first time saw his room with its different objects, he did not distinguish anything, but had only a general impression as of a totality consisting of a single piece which he took to be a smooth surface of different colours. It never occurred to him to recognize separate things lying behind one another at different distances. With the blind who have thus obtained their sight

the sense of touch to which things are already familiar must first make them acquainted with the sense of vision, must present and introduce them, so to speak. To begin with, such people have absolutely no capacity for judging distances, but grasp at everything. When one such person saw his house from outside, he could not believe how all the large rooms could exist in so small a thing. Another was highly delighted when he made the discovery some weeks after his operation that the copper engravings on the wall represented all kinds of objects. In the *Morgenblatt* of 23 October 1817 there is an account of one born blind who obtained his sight at the age of seventeen. He first had to learn intelligent intuitive perception; when he saw an object previously known to him through touch he did not again recognize it; and thus he mistook goats for human beings, and so on. The sense of touch first of all had to make that of sight acquainted with every single object. In the same way he had absolutely no capacity for judging the distance of objects seen by him, but reached out for everything. In his book: *The Eye: A Treatise on the Art of preserving this Organ in healthy Condition, and of improving the Sight* (London: Churchill, 1839) Franz says on pages 34-36: "A definite idea of distance, as well as of form and size, is only obtained by sight and touch, and by reflecting on the impressions made on both senses; but for this purpose we must take into account the muscular motion and voluntary locomotion of the individual." Caspar Hausar,[21] in a detailed account of his own experience in this respect, states that upon his first liberation from confinement, whenever he looked through the window upon external

objects, such as the street, garden, etc., it appeared to him as if there were a shutter quite close to his eye, and covered with confused colours of all kinds, in which he could recognize or distinguish nothing singly. He says farther that he did not convince himself till after some time during his walks out of doors, that what had first appeared to him as a shutter of various colours, as well as many objects, were in reality very different things; and that at length the shutter disappeared, and he saw and recognized all things in their just proportions. Persons born blind who obtain their sight by an operation in later years only, sometimes imagine that all objects touch their eyes, and lie so near to them that they are afraid of stumbling against them; sometimes they leap towards the moon, supposing that they can lay hold of it; at other times they run after the clouds moving along the sky, in order to catch them, or commit other such extravagancies . . . . Since ideas are gained by reflection upon sensation, it is further necessary in all cases, in order that an accurate idea of objects may be formed from the sense of sight, that the powers of the mind should be unimpaired, and undisturbed in their exercise. A proof of this is afforded in the instance related by Haslam[22] of a boy who had no defect of sight, but was weak in understanding, and who in his seventh year was unable to estimate the distances of objects, especially as to height; he would extend his hand frequently towards a nail on the ceiling, or towards the moon, to catch it. It is therefore the judgement which corrects and makes clear this idea, or perception of visible objects."

The intellectual nature of intuitive perception, here

discussed is confirmed physiologically by Flourens: *De la vie et de l'intelligence* (*Deuxième édition*: Paris: Garnier Freres, 1858). He says on page 49 under the heading: *Opposition entre les tubercles et les lobes cérébraux*: "We must make a great distinction between the senses and the understanding. The removal of a cerebral tubercle determines the loss of *sensation*, of the *sense* of sight: the retina becomes insensible, the iris becomes set. The removal of a cerebral lobe allows *sensation*, *sense*, *sensibility* of the retina and *mobility* of the iris to continue: it destroys simply *perception*. In the one case we are concerned with a *sensorial* fact, in the other with a *cerebral*: in the one case it is the loss of *sense*, in the other the loss of *perception*. The distinction of perceptions and sensations is nevertheless a great result, and its demonstration is obvious. There are two means of causing loss of vision through the brain: (1) through the tubercles, that is the loss of sense, of sensation; (2) through the lobes, that is the loss of perception, of intelligence. Accordingly, sensibility is not intelligence or understanding, thinking is not feeling; and thus an entire philosophy is upset. Therefore the mental conception is not sensation; and here we have a new proof of the radical defect of this philosophy." Further on page 77 under the heading: *Séparation de la Sensibilité et de la Perception*: "One of my experiments shows that we must clearly distinguish between *sensibility* and *perception*. If we remove an animal's *brain in the real sense* (the *lobes* or *cerebral hemispheres*), the animal loses its sight. But with regard to the eye nothing has altered; objects continue to be projected on the retina; the *iris* remains contractile, and

the *optic nerve* perfectly sensitive and responsive. And yet the animal no longer sees; there is no longer any *vision*, although everything appertaining to *sensation* continues to exist; there is no longer any *vision* because there is no longer any *perception*. Consequently *perceiving* and not *feeling* is the first element of the *intelligence* or *understanding*. *Perception* is the business of the *intelligence*, for it is lost along with *intelligence* and by the removal of the same organ, namely the *lobes* or *cerebral hemispheres*. *Sensibility* is not its business at all, since it continues to exist after the loss of *intelligence* and the removal of the *lobes* or *hemispheres*." [Tr.][23]

The famous verse of the philosopher Epicharmus proves that the ancients also understood in general the intellectual nature of intuitive perception:

"Only the mind can see and hear; everything else is deaf and blind." [Tr.][24] Plutarch quotes it *De sollertia animalium*, c. 3), and adds: "But sensation in our eyes and ears does not produce any perception in the absence of intelligence," [Tr.][25] and shortly before he says: "It is the theory of the natural philosopher Straton who shows that without intelligence it is quite impossible to perceive." [Tr.][26] But shortly afterwards he says: "Therefore all beings that perceive must also have intelligence, since only through intelligence are we able to perceive." [Tr.][27] A second verse of Epicharmus, quoted by Diogenes Laërtius (III, 16), might be related to this:

"Sagacity, O Eumaeus, does not belong to us alone,
but every living being also has intellect." [Tr.][28]