



The Essays of Arthur Schopenhauer; Studies in Pessimism

Arthur Schopenhauer

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***Studies in Pessimism* is a collection of Arthur Schopenhauer's essays, which unites his principle discussions of philosophical pessimism; a trait which was his most definitive.**

Over his career, Schopenhauer developed a unique, atheistic philosophy, whose ethical and metaphysical properties formed a quintessential pessimism. Identifying a confection of absurdities in life, and using human history to evidence and reinforce his beliefs, Schopenhauer philosophizes that human existence consists mainly of blind and aimless striving.

A core tenet of Arthur Schopenhauer's thought was that the human will had no end goal or purpose. Although the will can vigorously strive at any level of its manifestation, the lack of - indeed, the impossibility of - an ending renders its efforts purposeless and fruitless. Furthermore, contends Schopenhauer, the wills of beings compete with one another: this competition creates conflict, misery and struggle.

This book contains nine of Schopenhauer's essays discussing pessimism, each of which contains a topic pertinent to his overarching philosophy. Since he first published his essays on pessimism, many commentators and scholars have identified similarities between Schopenhauer's beliefs and the Buddhist faith. Buddhism holds that human striving is insatiable, and that the solution is *nonexistence*.

By 'nonexistence' the Buddhists, and Schopenhauer, do not mean suicide - for this does not tackle or end the root cause of the suffering - but instead a continual moderation of desire. By stymieing worldly desires, and excluding the chaotic mentality of want and striving from life, a person can enjoy a more peaceful and happy existence resigned from the tumultuous striving which underlines everyday human existence.

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