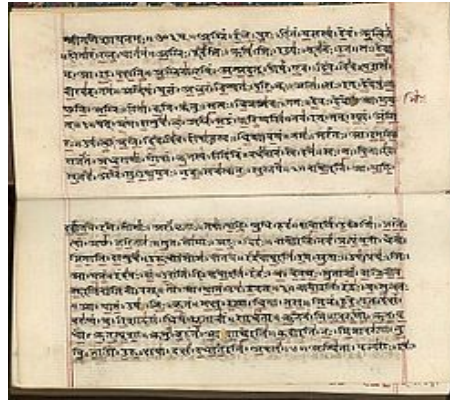


Schopenhauer and the Mundaka Upanishad



This paper is a continuation of recent critiques I have made of Indic religious ideas. In those critiques, I explained why these ideas have never appealed to me, and in this paper I will do the same—not trying to be either scholarly or exhaustive, but only to state my case simply and directly.

Some have replied to my earlier critiques by telling me that I was pushing interpretations to suit myself, looking at the wrong texts, or reading them as a Westerner (whatever that means). While of course any of those things may be true, I will attempt to show here they *aren't* true.

The second reply can be answered most easily, by simply changing texts. I was told by one reader that it was absurd of me to critique Asvaghosha's *Life of Buddha*. I should look at “serious” old texts like the Upanishads. So that is what I will do here, showing it changes nothing important in my critique—in fact making it stronger.

The third reply is also pretty easy to counter, since it is little better than a slur. It is to imply that I, a “Westerner,” cannot comprehend the meaning of words spoken by old Easterners. But those who slander me with this blanket dismissal would be better showing where or how I am wrong. I haven't seen anyone even attempt to do that, so I could just pass this by as unworthy of response. However, I will take a moment to point out how senseless the idea is, in general. If the idea had any sense to it at all, and if I therefore accepted it as valid, I would also have to accept as valid the idea that Easterners could not comprehend what I meant or intended, simply because they were Easterners. In which case I could ignore everything they said on that basis. But unlike them, I refuse to do that. I don't ignore their responses because they are Easterners, I ignore them because they have no content.

Which leaves us with the first reply, that I push interpretations to suit myself. Again, that is possible, but it should have to be demonstrated, or at least argued. Just saying it means nothing. Why should it “suit me” to disagree with the Buddha or the Mundaka Upanishad? It is implied that it suits me because I am a Westerner, and so I must prefer Western ideas or religions. But since I have also criticized Judaism and Christianity, often for the very same reasons, the reply is as senseless and baseless as the others. To my mind, I am simply telling you the reader how I think and feel about these issues, and if how I think and feel about these issues had been totally determined by my Western upbringing, I could not very well disagree with the fundamentals of that upbringing, as I do. It may very well “suit me” to remain true to my nature, which is revolted by *both* Eastern and Western religions, but since the explicit subject of this and other papers is revealing that nature, I don't see how any “push” is involved. I am not pushing any interpretation to suit myself. I am just telling you how

my mind and spirit react, so no push is involved. No interpretation, either, since the modern definition of “interpretation”—*pushed* by people like Harold Bloom and many others—has come to include manipulation. A modern reader can scarcely imagine an “interpretation” that hasn't been sullied by horrible manifestations of ego and the will to dominate. But I beg you to try to return to a time before “Theory,” to an age when a comment was just comment and a response was just a response. In writing this, I have no intention of coercing you into agreement, by tricks psychological or polemical. I write only to clarify, for myself and maybe for you, and because I find I have something to say that I haven't seen anyone else say. It therefore may be worth saying. Or not. If you find it not worth reading, I encourage you to read no further (and to send me no emails).

If, on the other hand, you can prove me wrong by cogent argument, feel free to have a go. I admit to not being an expert on Eastern religions, and I may be missing the main lines by a mile. But I doubt it. As with Christianity and Judaism, I am well aware of the merits of some of the tangential issues of Indic religions. I have never argued against religion as a whole, or any religion as a whole. All are ultimately of humans, and therefore would be expected to be a mixed bag, with many true statements and many false ones. As with Christianity, there are many things to like about Indic religions, and I am not denying it. But I think that all these religions are dead at the center, and therefore cannot hold. And they are dead for the same basic reasons, which I will repeat again below.

Before I get there, I will admit that these “reasons” are neither objective or universal. I am not implying that all people do or even should agree with me. They are reasons because they make sense to me, and in this way my argument will be mainly Nietzschean. I believe these things not because I was taught to believe them, or think it best to believe them, or have willed myself to believe them. Least of all, perhaps, do I believe them because they make things easier on me. In this sense, they do not “suit me.” By the common meaning of that word, it would suit me far better to agree with those around me, or at least with a small group of friends. Neither is true. I believe these things because I have always believed them and cannot do otherwise. I could not be educated out of believing these things, and did not need to be educated into believing them. In this way, I am just a lobby of one, publishing my ideas only because I was born with them, and for no other reason. They seem as worthy (to me) of publication as any other ideas—since all other ideas were born the same way, from the head of some individual—and if they do not automatically merit more attention simply because they were born to me, they also do not merit less attention because they were born to me. I see my job to post them as faithfully as possible. The world must do with them what it will.

In this way, this paper is a reply to Schopenhauer as much as it is to the writer of the Mundaka Upanishad. We are told that Schopenhauer had an open copy of it on his desk, and praised it to the skies. We should not be surprised at this, since it appealed to Schopenhauer's nature. It confirmed what he had always believed and could not help believing. In the same way, we must assume it has appealed to billions throughout history, since it mirrored to them how they already felt about life. Obviously, there is no way for me to argue against this, and that is not why I am here. You can't argue someone out of their own nature. All you can say is, “That is not *my* nature! My nature is revolted by that!” Which is what I am going to do, while embellishing it with what I call reasons.

The Mundaka Upanishad is number 5 in the Muktika canon of 108, and is one the primary or Mukhya Upanishads. It is what one might call the moral heart of the Upanishads, since rather than explain who or what Brahman or Atman is, or how the world works, the Mundaka Upanishad recommends or even *promotes* a response to the world. It is in this Upanishad that we find *Sarva Karma Sannyasa*, or the renunciation of all action. Some will see where I am going with this, and they will try to stop me by saying, “Wait, the Mundaka Upanishad is only promoting that renunciation for monks. The teacher

there is responding to monks, so of course he is going to promote their way of life.” And while that may or may not be true, the historical fact is that this renunciation has been and still is promoted beyond the monastery. As in Christianity and Judaism and Islam, the priestly life has been sold as superior, and the idea of renunciation has infested all levels of life. The Buddha promoted it, and through him Buddhism has promoted it all over the world, to all people who are interested in achieving peace, happiness, spirituality, or enlightenment. Schopenhauer promoted it, and most modern gurus promote it. It is sold in every modern yoga class, either subtly or unsubtly, explicitly or implicitly. Every yoga class in 21st century America ends with shavasana, the corpse pose, which is now treated mainly as relaxation after exertion, but which was originally a short bout of *Sarva*. Who has better renounced all action than a corpse?

Beyond that, the idea of *Mukti* or *Moksha* is not limited to monks. All of Buddhism, Jainism, and Hinduism are based on liberation from *Samsara*, escaping the cycle of death and rebirth. It would be hard to deny that, since *Mukti* is part of the word *Muktika*, and is promoted in the *Muktika* Upanishads, which are the basis for all these religions or sects. Every Indian knows of *Samsara* and *Moksha*, not just monks. Monks may spend more time pursuing “serious” things like this, but they are considered more holy for it, and this idea of holiness cements the idea throughout the entire culture, as it was meant to. Renunciation is not an esoteric idea in Indic religions, it is the heart of all of them.

This should have seemed strange to any reasoning person, especially a person such as Schopenhauer, who considered himself reasonable above all other things. It should have seemed strange, since Schopenhauer also argued that people are innately greedy. They have desires that want to be filled. For such people, renunciation should not be intuitively appealing. How could you make it appealing, much less build a religion around it? You could do so only in a world of ubiquitous and constant *suffering*. The Indic religions, like the philosophy of Schopenhauer, were a response to suffering. More than that, they were a regimen. They took suffering as the given, then built the religious response around that, as an alleviation of suffering. Remember, suffering is the first of the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism, as well as the first postulate of the Upanishads. Without the suffering, there would be no reason to promote renunciation. You simply could not sell the idea of renunciation to a people who were happy. Pacific Islanders weren't interested in any of our religions, east or west, until we had thoroughly corrupted them, and neither were Native Americans. Once they were miserable, we could then sell them our religions as a remedy for their induced pains. The modern medical establishment works on the same principle.

What is most amazing is how close Schopenhauer was to realizing this. His entire philosophy—along with most of the modern philosophies then and now—was a reaction against Christianity. But why react against Christianity? *Because you were suffering from it.* This is what Nietzsche understood. Remember, Nietzsche was at first a disciple of Schopenhauer, then turned against him. It was precisely because he recognized the ineptitude of Schopenhauer's response that he turned against him. Schopenhauer called Hegel a clumsy charlatan, and Nietzsche finally understood that Schopenhauer was another. Nietzsche saw that Schopenhauer had at first renounced Christianity as a source of induced suffering, but then had embraced the *Mundaka* Upanishad as a bandage for this suffering. Schopenhauer had thereby traded suffering for an even greater suffering, had traded illogic for an even greater illogic. He apparently didn't understand that it was the renunciation in Christianity that he was suffering from in the first place.

It is like the man who is beaten by his wife. She dies and he goes out and finds a new wife who will beat him even more. His suffering has addled his brain, and he has forgotten it is possible to marry a woman who doesn't beat him at all. Without the beating, the suffering is gone, and the need for

renunciation is gone with it.

Nietzsche was brilliantly able to diagnose Schopenhauer's illness, which was the pathology of attachment to suffering. The sufferer becomes so inured to his suffering, he thinks only of a palliative, forgetting the possibility of a complete cure. Schopenhauer was so thankful for the palliative of Indian renunciation, he forgot that Christianity could be cured outright.

I am not saying Atheism is the cure, since it neither medicated nor cured Schopenhauer's suffering, and since I have no intension of promoting Atheism. It didn't do much for Nietzsche, either, though he wasn't a very successful Atheist. By that I mean he wasn't very good at believing life was meaningless, and he almost succeeded in creating his own new religion (see *Thus Spake Zarathustra*), one that was able to fill Christianity's void without replacing it with a variant. Some will say that Schopenhauer's Upanishad medication (and his poodles) at least kept him out of the asylum, and while that is true, it isn't therefore a strong argument for his philosophy. A monk avoiding the asylum is sort of like a lifer avoiding a hanging. It is a technicality, at best.

What I am saying is that I find it curious that Schopenhauer freely chose to replace the nihilism of Christianity with the even greater nihilism of the 5th Upanishad. He chose to replace the induced suffering of 18th century Christianity with the induced suffering of 6th century BC priestly Indian monks. You see, to chose *no suffering* instead would have been to invalidate his previous suffering. That invalidation would be more painful than the original pain, so he found himself in a no-win situation. He was also in a no-win situation because no matter how well he disproved Christianity, he still lived in a Christian culture. A disproof is not equivalent to a destruction, and he didn't feel free to act according to his new philosophy. That is, he didn't feel free to be gay or to play with young girls or whatever it was he really wished to do. So even though he didn't believe in the culture around him, it still made him suffer. In fact, he suffered all the more without the belief in his culture, since his misery could no longer be rationalized as being in the service of some greater good. He had to find another service for his suffering, another way to justify it, and the 5th Upanishad gave him that. His failure to act was then not timidity, it was service to a purer religion, one that demanded renunciation and praised it as the greatest holiness.

But let us return to the idea before the last one, the idea that sufferers are addicted to their suffering, and cannot countenance invalidating the years they have been married to it. This is why you can't discuss suffering with Indians. For them to even contemplate the idea that most suffering in India is unnecessary and avoidable is more painful than the suffering itself, since it means they are in some sense *guilty*. If you go along with a system of institutionalized suffering, you are in part responsible for that suffering, and that idea is unbearable. It is far better to suffer yourself, because you can then include yourself in the list of victims. Christians are often pathologically attached to guilt, and wallow in it, but Indians are adept at avoiding all signs of guilt, even when it is merited. That is, guilt is on our religious shortlist but it isn't on theirs. Their entire religious structure shields them from the sort of responsibility we call guilt, and it is impossible to lead an Indian along that line of argument. To even look sideways at the idea that some or most suffering was avoidable would be to invalidate the entire history and structure of India.

We do the same thing here, of course—though in slightly different ways—and Christianity encourages the same sort of institutionalized and induced suffering, and the blindness to it. Jesus either said, “the poor you shall always have with you, but the Son of Man you will not always have,” or it was allowed by Christians to be inserted into their scriptures. Either way it is a beastly thing to have to read from someone who is sold to you as holy.

While it is true that some suffering is unavoidable—and that suffering may even be a desirable ingredient of life, giving it richness—it is also true that a large part of the suffering of the past was unnecessary, avoidable, and added no possible richness. Even more than that, it was induced. Manufactured. Anyone who has studied history, and especially the history of religions, knows that the priestly classes of all religions have thrived by inducing pains which you could then pay them to alleviate or mitigate. When they weren't inventing new methods of suffering, they were using existing suffering to their own ends, interpreting it as the wrath of the gods that only they could quiet. For instance, if you had lost a child, the priests had no problem telling you it was your fault. You had failed to make the right prayers or had spit in the wrong place or had worn the wrong clothes to temple or something. Only the right number of coins in their plates could solve the problem. So suffering+guilt=priestly wealth.

This is why Nietzsche thought the Indic religions were cleaner than Western religions: at least the former dispensed with the guilt. The Eastern priests didn't need to *double* your pain to gain power over you. In the east it wasn't suffering+guilt=wealth. It was suffering+renunciation=less suffering for the rich and more riches for the priests. But in neither the east nor the west was there any idea of addressing the causes of the suffering. Suffering has always been a goldmine for priests, and the last thing they want to do is cure it. As with doctors, there is no interest in curing. What is wanted is permanent and expensive treatment.

Or think of energy providers. We hear a lot about free energy, which would cure a lot of suffering. But energy providers don't want free energy. Nobody gets rich from free energy. What is wanted is expensive energy. Large parts of the US government also subsist on this plan. The Department of Homeland Security manufactures a terrorist threat and then sells the taxpayer an expensive and permanent solution to that fake threat. Suffering, expense, and problems are induced, because all three make people rich. If you aren't happy, you might consider the possibility that it isn't because you are unenlightened. It is because thousands of people work very hard every day to be sure you aren't happy. It is their job, and they are very good at it. No one has a financial interest in your health or happiness: it is your sickness and suffering they depend on and profit from. If you are healthy and happy, they see you only as an untapped market.

But back to the Mundaka Upanishad. Reading over the previous pages I realize I still haven't begun to make clear the depths of my disgust for this tract. I don't think it would be possible to create a more perfect anti-religion or example of anti-holiness. You see, it isn't just suffering which is taken as a given. I have admitted that suffering *is* a given, and even defended suffering in previous papers, so suffering is not the root of the problem here. It is the *use* of natural suffering by the priests to manufacture unnatural suffering, and thereby a permanent base for themselves. Christianity did this with great success, brilliantly adding guilt to the mix to immediately double the dosage of suffering. But the Eastern religions are even more perfect, since they have managed an even more complete reversal of nature. They have no need to double the dosage with guilt, since the original dosage was already maximal and fatal. The fatal dosage is completely contained in the first postulate of these religions, and it needed no later accelerators or adjuvants. And because the fatal dosage is contained in the first postulate, it is out of sight. Just as mathematicians tend to closely check all lines of a proof except the first line, religious people tend to argue least about the most fundamental assumptions. In my science papers, I have shown example after example of famous equations that seem to be based on flawless reasoning and flawless proofs, but which rest on false axioms. For some reason, scientists let the first postulate hang. Because it is an assumption, they let it be. We see the same thing in religions, where the most important things are hidden at the ground level, and are rarely or never questioned. A

lot has been written about reincarnation being the foundation of Eastern religions, and whether that idea is true or false. But I have seen very little or nothing written on the accompanying idea that reincarnation is a trap. These religions start with a *set* of assumptions:

- 1) All life is a cycle of birth and death and rebirth.
- 2) All life suffers of this cycle.
- 3) To avoid the suffering, one can only escape the cycle, and that is achieved by renunciation of the cycle.

Assumption three is where the poison exists, and it is rarely questioned. It is insidious because it seems to follow from the previous two assumptions. But it doesn't follow at all. In fact, it is upside down. It is a precise inversion of what should follow in any healthy religion:

- 1) All life is a cycle of birth and death.
- 2) All life includes suffering.
- 3) Despite this suffering, all life also includes great joys and wonders.
- 4) The primary feature of a healthy life is not resignation in the face of tragedy, but gratitude in the presence of beauty, complexity, and the fantastic aspects of all reality. The cycle of birth and death is beautiful and wondrous itself, and if this not clear, the adept should study to understand it. Enlightenment does not consist of understanding that life is a trap to be escaped, it consists of understanding that both life and death are gifts to be embraced.

Lao-Tze's philosophy was much closer to this conception of life than the religion of the Upanishads or the Buddha, as I have mentioned before, and Nietzsche was also moving toward this conception, although his philosophy remained polluted by many of the negatives of Christianity. He had recognized the inversion and was trying to flip the world back over. But he had lived head downwards too long and could not survive the blood rushing back to his feet. He also continued to live in an inverted culture, and hadn't the power to flip all those around him. Even if he had successfully righted himself, he would still have been a bird flying north in a flock flying south.

The Mundaka Upanishad is a perfect priestly poison because if you accept the idea that life is a negative cycle that needs to be escaped, you have not only doubled your dosage, as with guilt, you have raised it to a large exponent. Let us say you have lost a child. That is your natural dose of suffering, which most people have been able to outlive. A Christian priest at his historical worst would have doubled your suffering with some sort of guilt. But even then, the suffering would be limited to the one event. The Eastern priest, though, had found a way to take that one instance of suffering and not just double it, but to magnify it a thousand times. He did this by defining the suffering as the prime aspect of all life, and then undercutting your entire life by telling you it is a trap. Instead of suffering for the loss of your child, you now suffer every moment, for every thought and action you have. Even the high points of your life are part of this general trap, and you can be made to suffer for them, too.

In this way, these Eastern religions are far more insidious than modern Atheistic science, which only tells you your life is meaningless. But life as a trap is even worse than a meaningless life. A meaningless life is morally flat. It is neither positive nor negative. But the ideas of *Samsara* and *Moksha* give life a strong negative aspect. Life is worse than meaningless, it is a cage that you should and must escape. It is a bad thing, a thing you have been yoked with as a punishment. If you believe that, you are more likely to live your life like a prisoner, which is precisely what most religions and governments have desired you to do.

Just as it is worse than Atheism, Hinduism has also been worse than Christianity. Christianity was bad enough, since it demoted the importance of this life in favor of an afterlife. You resigned yourself to the present in favor of future expectation. The churches and governments floated empty promises in front of your face to prevent you from acting against them now—which allowed them to steal everything you had more easily. But the Indic religions were even worse, since they explicitly defined this life as a sort of hell. For the lower classes it was an outright hell, but even for the upper classes it was only a hell with minor amelioration. If you were reborn into any class, it was because you had not yet completed your punishment. You had not yet renounced the trap of life.

This is why I read Schopenhauer and even Nietzsche with amazement. Nietzsche was much harder on Christianity than he was on Indic religions, and I have to think he didn't look very closely at the latter. I also read Thoreau and Emerson and Salinger in amazement, on this issue at least. Although at most times they all spoke more like Lao-Tze than the Buddha, they never seemed to recognize the crushing nihilism at the root of these Indic religions. And I am amazed to see my friends and acquaintances turning away from Christianity only to turn toward Buddhism or Hinduism. They can't seem to see that they are simply trading one set of crafty priests for an even craftier set of priests.

If I am not promoting Atheism, what am I promoting? I am not promoting anything. Your mental and spiritual life is your responsibility and your achievement. I am no guru. I don't want your spiritual money or your blessing. Well then, what method of spiritual health do I follow? Can I at least tell you that? I can. I have found by personal experience that the more you cleanse your life of the old religions, the less need you have of any religion. The addiction mostly evaporates, that is, and old questions lose their fascination. You are no longer vexed by the old inconsistencies, because you realize they were all manufactured to vex you. But isn't this “lack of religion” the same as Atheism or agnosticism? Not at all. Disinterest in manufactured vexations is not Atheism, since it doesn't imply a disinterest or disbelief or doubt in meaning or even gods. I don't disbelieve in gods or in meaning, I just don't know anything about them, and have no trouble admitting it. I have questions just like anyone else, but don't see any way to answer them. And I find I can get along very well without answers. If dogs and cats can get along without knowing much about the gods, so can I.

It is not the lack of answers that causes suffering, I have found. It is the belief—planted in you by priests—that life is not worth living if you don't know these things. It simply isn't true. I am universally curious, but I have never expected to know everything. The things I don't know do not cause me pain. They are just grist for the morrow.

Which is not to say that my spiritual life is nonexistent. Far from it. I bow down before all beauties, from flowers to trees to stars, since all are equally beyond my comprehension. I give thanks to everything around me, of which I am but a small part. In chapter 1 of *Walden*, Thoreau says,

Our hymn-books resound with a melodious cursing of God and enduring Him forever. One would say that even the prophets and redeemers had rather consoled the fears than confirmed the hopes of man. There is nowhere recorded a simple and irrefragable satisfaction with the gift of life, any memorable praise of God.

While that may be overstating the case, his point is well taken. For me, religion or spirituality has never been a way to relieve suffering or beg indulgences. It is useful mainly as a method for giving thanks, broadly and nearly indiscriminately, to the four or six directions and to anyone or anything that is there to receive it. But isn't this just barbarism or paganism? Isn't it pantheism? Maybe, although I no longer worry myself with tags. The priests have tagged these notions with their own epithets, in order to control them. They need to attack every idea they aren't selling. But I have to believe that

even if there are gods as discrete entities, and even if they don't inhabit trees or the Sun or Moon, they could not mind if we thank them via these things we can see. They must take into account our limited knowledge. Just as we wouldn't expect cats to obey our rules, the gods can't expect us to obey theirs. The "revealed" religions are such a melange of contradictory advice and obvious claptrap, they can't blame us for being confused. If we have the proper respect for the world around us, they must forgive us specific errors of worship. They would not punish misaimed gratitude.

I can't believe that any god ever damned the ancient peoples for worshiping trees or animals or heavenly bodies, as long as they cared for one another and the world around them. In the same way, I can't believe any god or power would look with a smile on modern people destroying the Earth, simply because they did it in the name of the correct monotheism. No god worth praying to through any channels can look kindly on carelessness, disrespect, or ingratitude. No god or power can look kindly on priests defining life as a trap or cage, simply to profit from it.

But don't I theorize about things like stars? Don't I claim to have made scientific discoveries? Doesn't that contradict some of what I just said? I don't see how. I don't think we know everything or can know everything, even about limited things like an atom or photon. But that doesn't mean we can't know *anything*. We can discover partial answers to any number of questions, and have. Science is a fine thing, and it can produce real understanding. Nor does that understanding preclude any future worship. Just because I understand something about a star does not mean I have to quit bowing to it. Just because I understand that Jupiter is planet, and can list his statistics, does not mean he no longer worthy of my awe or adoration.

My critique of science has not been a general critique. I have not critiqued it as a spiritual person or a religious person. I have not Deconstructed it. I have not even advanced a Humean or Godelian critique, claiming it gives us no real knowledge. My critique of science has been a specific critique of *modern* science, and the ways it has cheated on its own foundations in the past century or so. I have never argued that science or rationalism are fundamentally flawed. I have shown that the specific equations of the past are wrong. I have shown that specific assumptions are false. I have shown that science has been promoted beyond its actual merits. But I could hardly be attacking science as a whole, since what I am doing when I analyze old equations is science. I am showing inconsistencies and trying to correct them. Demanding coherence is a large part of the old scientific method, and I have defended that part of science all along.

So, as you see, many of the old dichotomies evaporate with the old vexations, as the ancient and venerated anti-religions are dumped. The modern Atheists try to make us choose between science and religion, or between material and spirit, but those divisions are manufactured like most everything else. Newton did not recognize those divisions, and neither did Galileo, even while he was in prison at the behest of the Pope*. These divisions, like the vexations, benefit those who are trying to sell you their faction or fiction, but once you stop buying you realize the divisions were illusory. The Atheists have their products to promote just like the priests. They have their TV programs and research and colliders and magazines to sell, and they think the non-religious are more likely to buy. So they are apt to propagandize you as viciously as the priests and politicians. In fact, the modern Atheist is very likely to be both priest and politician, working for both the government and the church of the government—which is commerce. By simply refusing to buy, you confound both priest and politician, Theist and Atheist.

In closing this paper, I would like to suggest that Schopenhauer's real redemption and salvation was his poodles and cats and other furry friends, which we are told he doted upon. This is what kept him out of

the asylum, not his books. Oh, that we could have given Nietzsche a golden retriever!—we might have saved him his collapse. Schopenhauer claimed he read from the Upanishads daily, but I don't tend to believe it. That all looks like a pose to me. What I can imagine he did do daily is care for his animals, which shows his humanity above all else I have read of him. Denied the company of young women or men, he made due with pets. Considering what he thought of women, this was probably all for the best. If Goethe's flings are painful to read about, what would Schopenhauer's have been, if he had found the courage to fling? They would have been disasters of the first order. Which means that although Nietzsche's exhortations to the healthy man to act freely on his impulses may have been right, some limited renunciation by the unhealthy may also be called for. Renunciation as the first postulate of a religion is nihilism. Schopenhauer's renunciation of women was probably a sign of good sense, a relief to the women around him, and insurance of his dignity and permanent reputation.

*Galileo was finally cleared by the Vatican. . . in 1992.