

Thoughts Out of Season

Occasional Reviews & Notes
Of Mutual Interest
Compiled by Tim & Terry Forward



Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860)

LIKE A PHOTON (sort of)

The history of Schopenhauerian thought goes back to the sources of the life of thought in our Western world, whence issue European science and European art, and in which the two are still one. It goes back to Plato. The Greek philosopher taught that the things of this world have no real existence; they are always becoming, they never *are*. (“One never steps into the same river twice.” – Heraclitus, c. 6th-5th century BC). They are of no avail as objects of actual knowledge, for that can subsist only in what is in and of itself and always in the same way; whereas they [of this world], in their multiplicity and their purely relative, borrowed existence., which might as well be called non-existence, are never anything but the subject of an opinion based on sense-experience. They are shadows . . . ¹

¹ Thomas Mann, translated by H.T. Lowe-Porter, *Essays of Three Decades* (1948; New York; Alfred A. Knopf) 374.