

**Psychoanalysis & Philosophy:
Philosophers of the Unconscious
Schopenhauer to Nietzsche, Freud and Jung**

17 May 2020, Dr. Keith Barrett

Session 1: We will explore the philosophy of Schopenhauer, examining in detail the central ideas of his masterpiece – ‘The World as Will and Representation’ (1818/1859). Schopenhauer divides the human being into ‘will’ and ‘intellect’, and anticipates Freud in describing ‘repression’ and unconscious motivation generally, as well as by emphasising the centrality of sex to human life. He was not merely an ‘armchair’ thinker, but spent time in mental asylums getting to know the inmates, and his observations derived from this source inform his theories.

Session 2: Schopenhauer set Nietzsche on the path that led to his first book, ‘The Birth of Tragedy’ (1872), and later to his masterpiece, ‘Thus Spake Zarathustra’ (1882-5). In this session, we will study Nietzsche’s most important ideas: the opposition between Apollonian and the Dionysian; the Overman; Eternal Recurrence; and the Will to Power. We will trace his development of Schopenhauer’s key ideas – but also his rejection of Schopenhauer’s pessimism, in favour of a philosophy of life-affirmation. We will also explore Nietzsche’s achievements in the psychoanalysis of (Western) culture.

Session 3: Schopenhauer’s work was formative for the thinking of both Nietzsche and Freud – although they applied his central insights in widely diverging ways. In the final session we will study the formative influence on Schopenhauer on Freudian psychoanalysis, and the influence of Nietzsche on Jung’s thinking, in the period when he was working towards the creation of his own psychology. We will also explore the differences between the practice of Jungian psychotherapy and the practice of Freudian ‘psychoanalysis’ - and the way these differences reflect the philosophical assumptions and backgrounds of their creators .