Paradigma of the Psychic Entropy of Evil and the Palingenesis of All-Oneness

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Abstract

Objective of this paper is to indicate inadequate general theoretical approach to the perception of evil, which in return contributes to the permanence of “evil in the world”. Analysis will focus on the logically imprecisely adopted and observed anthropocentric and romantic relation between good and evil through debatable pairs of notions such as virtue–sin, heaven–hell, white–black et cetera. I will lay out concepts that interpret evil as a priori psychic and epistemic phenomenon producing moral issues by the transmutation via mentioned pairs. It appears in the framework of social (political) community as the ratio of the energy of “openness” and “closeness”. With this pair I replace all the traditional pairs, and I further describe it on the grounds of the analysis of narcissism. I understand narcissism as being one of the results of the lack of knowledge potentiated by fury and fear in the relation to the self. It prevents us from knowing All-Oneness, a mereological principle that takes into consideration the entire biotic community. Expected contribution consists of pointing at the methods for the reduction of evil in the world.

Keywords

cpsychic entropy, All-Oneness, narcissism, evil, mereology, openness, closeness, luminance, integrative bioethics

1. Terminological and methodological issues: preliminary overview

Historically and philosophically captivating, the problem of evil is one of the most discussed topics to date, but strangely enough, also a permanent taboo. And while its aporia of crime and punishment in this world or in the aftermath is certainly symbolically bewitching, I claim that categories playing the role in understanding of this aporia are not adequately precise, thus our use of these categories is nihilating the potentiality of nullifying the level of normality present in our moral reflection regarding existence of evil. In this paper, I will tackle the categories exclusively, avoiding case studies of particular crimes throughout the history for two reasons: because their quantity is endless and their existence apparent, and because I believe we will have a better use of this study if analysing the categorical causality behind the crimes will be its telos. Moreover, this paper has an intention to be a propaedeutics to studying All-Oneness,¹ that is, to studying the

¹ When I use the term All-Oneness, I refer to the conceptual and factual totality of biotic and abiotic community of cosmos. Similar concepts are present throughout the history of philosophy, from Heraclitus and Plotinus to Carl Gustav Jung, and they find support in the field of natural sciences, most notably in physics via discovery of the relation between elementary forces and the vacuum playing a constitutive role in the kinesis of the cosmos, but also in biology and chemistry in the context of evolutionary processes and self-organization of its internal movements. All-Oneness does not imply any type of anthropocentric god, it does not refer to one any being, rather, the notion implies the
psyche as the dialectical synthetic force within the sphere of living beings. To make my case clearer, consider Svendsen’s observation:

[…] the idea of evil was seen as a holdover from a mythical, Christian worldview whose time was already past. Initially, as I began to attempt this ‘rehabilitation’ of the concept of evil, the idea itself was still an object of fascination for me. This fascination was a result, most especially, of our tendency to regard evil as an *aesthetic* object, where evil appears as something other and therefore functions as an alternative to the banality of everyday life. We are steadily exposed to more and more extreme representations of evil in films and such, but this form of evil doesn’t belong to a *moral* category. Like most other things in our culture, evil has been aestheticized.²

Although I agree with the argument Svendsen made regarding perception of evil as being shifted into the domain of aesthetics, I cannot agree with him that aesthetics is the context from which we should draw our answers from. My question would be – why aesthetics? – and I would look for the answer in the causality anterior to aesthetical dimension of the phenomena. In my attempt to clarify the issues regarding the problem of evil, in focus of this paper I will discuss in parallel the micro-level of evil-doing in the psyche of the individual, and meso-level of evil-doing within society, while macro-level of this discussion will be indirectly implied as the mereological co-bearing of the All-Oneness. Mereology is a mathematical discipline which studies the relation of parts and the wholes they form. Here I draw from the general idea the concept of the mereology of community (society) because of its heuristic power, the ability to grasp the complexity of contexts, that is, of particular constellations building next levels of the whole. In a different context but similar sense, Matjaž Potrč concluded the following:

Thus far we claimed that the science of wholes and parts, that is mereology, is fundamental for phenomena. In Greek, *meros* means a part. Mereology is fundamental for the study of phenomena, that is, phenomenology. Phenomena is crucial for the study of ways in which the whole appears.³

However, prior to any viable discussion in the given context, there are terminological and methodological issues that need to be addressed. Consistency of the permanence of evil in the world influenced me to believe that there is something misleading in moral(izing) interpretations of the evil-doing. The historical situation continues to lead us to falsely believe that the existence of evil in the world is normal, even necessary. I claim that there is something one-dimensional in the general approach to the problem, in the way in which interpretations fail to contribute to the process of overcoming the conflicted state of the world. The problem with the way in which we think about the evil-doing is related to the way in which interpretations remain consistent with the terminological structure of the notion of *moral*, from the Latin *moralis*, having a literal meaning of “pertaining to …”. Similar connotation is present in the German version *Sittlichkeit*, in Croatian translated as “običajnost”, both referring to the expected structured order of manners or character. All of them semantically disclose sedentarism, “being sitted-in” or “inseatedness”. It implies passivity, it manifests dreamy inseatedness of the moral immutability which influences not just actions *per se*, but thinking about these actions. This leads us to another general problem with the analysis of evil, mainly the fact that we are too strongly focused on physical act of evil. We revolve around the terms such as “misconduct”, “atrocity”, “felony”, and “crime”, but this “evil-doing” is but an outcome of the “evil-bearing”. Genesis of evil begins in underlying unity within the totality, the unifying relations and the content of these relations between the aforementioned biotic and abiotic, but more specifically, between the physical and the mental or between the body and mind. It implies single unifying and unchanging truth, the kind Heraclitus spoke about, though not as “minervistic” records of the current, but as the creative, dynamical, and animating force. I think of it not as if it’s a state-like totality drowning variety into undifferentiated blob, but as the unity of phenomenological n-pluriaspects governed by the category of organism.

the thoughts of beings, and, before any physical act performed upon others, it firstly manifests itself through speech. Of course, any speech act is surely physical, but that misses the point: poisonous edge to evil occurs in the initial transfer – in the thinking itself and in the communication between beings, most precisely – in the psyche of beings, which is the true carrier of the potentiality to do evil and to be evil. In fact, evil can be performed by not doing anything concrete, as Arendt implies through quoting Augustine of Hippo:

The man who, knowing the right, fails to do it, loses the power to know what is right; and the man who, having the power to do right, is unwilling, loses the power to do what he wills.⁴

In classical terms of understanding evil, this is not something to be understood as evil – and that is precisely the problem because this is how evil is “born”. Thus, before any discussion on morally problematic acts, we need to address the *a priori* epistemic – psychic – ground, which genealogically predates moral act, that is, constitutes moral reasoning. There is an element of learning involved with committing evil acts, a person learns about making herself the goal of any deed, including causing harm to others, actions which lead to establishing oneself as the knowledge paradigm for doing good. Baudrillard made a similar case when he concluded the following:

Unintelligence of evil, absence of insight into things by evil and therefore always the same discourse on the ‘foul beast’ and the same naïveté in the analysis of present events. Our whole system of values excludes this predestination of evil. Yet all it has invented, at the end of its burdensome therapy on the human species, is another way of making it disappear, that is to say, of ironically carrying the possibility of happiness to its opposite term, that of the perfect crime, that of integral misfortune, which was somehow waiting for it just at the end.⁵

The necessity by which misleading occurs, the perception that the appearance of absolute evil will happen, is empowered by an intuition that human beings are evil by nature, whether we are “tainted by the first sin” or we behave as if “one human being is a wolf to another”. This kind of negative anthropology forces us to believe that we know ourselves as evil, and thus we orient ourselves only towards ourselves, giving birth to narcissism. A narcissist exhibits extreme selfishness and eventually fails to comprehend others as worthy on their own. She wants to be the subject of every situation, and attempts to be all the others who might challenge her agency, and thus works to mentally influence them to her bidding. Lacan describes an important aspect of narcissist in this way:

I suggest that there is a radical distinction between loving oneself through the other – which, in the narcissistic field of the object, allows no transcendence to the object included – and the circularity of the drive, in which the heterogeneity of the movement out and back shows a gap in its interval.⁶

Final outcome of this behaviour is the mereological collapse of the All-Oneness into a narcissist, into a singleton, who pseudo-logically behaves as if, and believes she is the All-Oneness. Narcissist encloses away the mereological richness of the totality of biotic and abiotic community, and because of this, narcissism can be considered the prime characteristic of human beings in general – as species. It is worthy to mention that the root meaning of narcissism – *narke* – means numbness, intoxication – and as such reflects our species as those who fell in love with themselves on account of the All-Oneness. Narcissism is the dominant opiate of our species, and was naively represented through psychology and psychiatry as a matter of individual cases, an anomaly.⁷ Narcissism plays a

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⁷ Quite the opposite, I claim that history of humanity has the traits of narcissi-epidemic. Psychoanalysts provided somewhat better theories on narcissism, and there is a number of them. For example, Freud speaks of libidal narcissism,
central role as a specific “meta-magnet” attracting numbness, greed, and moral relativism, it is a “mereological fissure” preventing us from attaining contextual unity beyond the unity of ourselves, while against it plays the disposition of thinking about others as a reflection of the All-Oneness we are a part of. Clearly, history showed us that by simply establishing a social contract we did not get far in solving the problem of permanence of evil. I believe that we can overcome these issues by thinking through the perspective of All-Oneness, yet only if we observe evil as the antithesis to the All-Oneness, and think of it as the absolute narcissism preventing the perception of the mereological eccentric positionality through the judgment of the energy ratio of openness and closeness. This is my first hypothesis, and by it I suggest to consider understanding interrelations within society as a “domain of energy” made of “atoms” in everlasting interactive movement. Harmony between the “atoms” is maintained by the energy of openness (the Good), while aporetic limitations and disorder are maintained by the energy of closeness (the Evil). What is required is the shift in the perspective, the clarification of the new form of the understanding of eccentric positionality (Plessner) as the continual transcending of the n-positions in which we are not subjects of anything, but pure predicates in relation to other “atoms” of community which we perceive as subjects. This subversion of the role of subject and object allows us to invest our energy of openness into prosperity for other members of the community who similarly strive to their telos, in return they do the same for us. On the micro-level, the relation between the two energies produces either stable psyche of the individuals and a positive internal relation to oneself, or it produces “knots of energy” breeding anguish of ire, bitterness, and fear. From the perspective of practical solutions to the disorder, we are dealing with certain circulus vitiosis which amplifies psychic entropy of living beings – the process of “setting-apart”, disharmonizing, depletion of openness into closeness. Jung explained the principle of entropy in the context of psyche in this way:

Principe of entropy is from our experience known only as the principle of partial processes that represent a relatively closed system. We can observe psyche as one such system. (...) Since only relatively closed systems are available to our experience, nowhere are we in a situation to be able to observe the absolute psychic entropy. However, the stronger is the enclosing of psychic system, the stronger is the proof for phenomenon of entropy. [Jung’s footnote 41 states the following: System is completely closed when outside input of energy is further not possible, only then entropy takes place]
We can see this especially in cases of psychic disorders, characterized by the intense exclusion of outside world.\textsuperscript{10}

This begins not with acts, but with talking and thinking, and the negative energy – manifestation of closeness in the sense of constructing enclosures in the meso-level network of “energy relays” of co-existence – has fertile ground in the psyche of living beings. This interrelation, and the corruption of All-Oneness, does not refer only to human beings – it refers to all living beings, to the fullness of the biosphere and beyond, as all of the living or non-living units are unavoidably members of the mereology of All-Oneness. The positive totality, the outwardity of openness phenomenon, suggests to us that there might be a qualitative difference between evil (closeness) and good (openness). More precisely, that closeness is a deviant post-effect of the complexity of interrelations of the ever-opened totality. This influences our way of thinking about the method for preventing evil. Augustine of Hippo understood this well:

But evils are so thoroughly overcome by good, that though they are permitted to exist, for the sake of demonstrating how the most righteous foresight of God can make a good use even of them, yet good can exist without evil, as in the true and supreme God Himself, and as in every invisible and visible celestial creature that exists above this murky atmosphere; but evil cannot exist without good, because the natures in which evil exists, in so far as they are natures, are good. And evil is removed, not by removing any nature, or part of a nature, which had been introduced by the evil, but by healing and correcting that which had been vitiated and depraved.\textsuperscript{11}

The key moment of “healing” is, much as Augustine of Hippo did in his \textit{Confessions}, communication. We should not be thinking about All-Oneness, openness and closeness as if they are pseudometaphysics of otherworldly, transcendent principles that imply static factuality, rather, both good and evil are dynamic communication of energy, a transfer of information from point A to point B. Evil occurs with closing of the information, with subjects communicating to themselves via others, instead of simply communicating to others in order to gain their own information, when behaving as if others are merely a subpoint of the absolute oneself in the mereology of relations. This type of behaviour is identifiable in most of the common evil-bearing acts: bullying the weaker, stealing, fraudulence, killing for pleasure or gain, falsifying history, truth or knowledge regarding e.g. god, taking advantage of the ill or disabled for gaining wealth \textit{et cetera}. The problem is the level at which this type of behaviour occurs: it is the question not of the individuals, e.g. psychopaths, but of masses. They are governed by the \textit{intentional unconscious} operating on the basis of intuited knowledge of the negative anthropology.\textsuperscript{12} All of them are driven by sentiments of anger and fear orienting around substitution of All-Oneness for the self. Likewise, good occurs with opening the information, with being a point of progress for the whole and a gathering point for the particulars, with dedicating yourself to “midwifery”, to mereological maieutic: instead of bullying the weaker, you offer your back to support her growth, and you teach her how to offer her back to the weaker,

\textsuperscript{10} Karl Gustav Jung [Carl Gustav Jung], \textit{Dinamika nesvesnog} \textit{[Dynamics of Unconscious]}, Matica srpska, Beograd 1978, p. 96. More precisely, Jung thinks about cases of affective numbness that results from schizophrenia, but I claim that this can, in a much broader sense, be considered in contrast to being fully aware of the All-Oneness. In the second chapter of this paper I will provide more arguments for this claim.


\textsuperscript{12} \textit{Intentional unconscious} is a term that was coined in collaboration with Luka Perušić. The goal was to find a suitable semantic image that explains the mereological agent of the action dynamics of both the unaware and aware subjects, of subjects that have no authentic understanding of the structure prior to the acts being undertaken, and whose mereological contribution is controlled by heterogeneity, but also of those who do yet cannot control this agency. They can be closely related to the social system of any particular ideology, but not necessarily – the processes are more fundamental than the meso-level of interaction, they can originate from within the beings without outside influence. This notion is somewhat complementary with the discussion regarding intentional unconsciousness and unconscious intentionality as found in phenomenological research and in the research of mind, for example by John R. Searle and Carl Gustav Jung. This requires a different study altogether and hereforth is only referenced.
because although mereological nature of the All-Oneness strongly suggests hierarchy, there is, in fact, nothing such to it. Kant writes:

The opposite of egoism can only be pluralism, that is, the way of thinking in which one is not concerned with oneself as the whole world, but rather regards and conducts oneself as a mere citizen of the world.  

Finally, if evil can thus be understood as miscommunication, then we ought to dedicate our focus to the question of how knowledge is transferred and how does it “contribute” to the problems of psychic entropy. From slumber this wakens another problem which established itself in the past hundred years, which is a neglecting of the term psyche, and complete discursive confusion of the terms “psyche”, “spirit”, “ghost”, “reason”, “mind”, “soul”, and “mental”. For example, in psychology psyche is understood as the totality of conscious and non-conscious content, while in institutional psychiatry a “psychic disorder” is just an organic brain disorder, that is, disorder of the reason, meaning that “psyche” is limited to the aspects of the brain, while neuroscientists often equate brain with “mind” without giving much thought. Firstly, the problem is with the presupposed understanding of psyche by which it is empirically observable. Already Heraclitus understood the depth of psyche, claiming in fr. 35 that you cannot find its limits, which was something that Karl Jaspers outlined in the contemporary context:

We can comprehend and study only that which for us became an object. Yet soul as such is not an object. It becomes an object in a sense in which it appears perceivable within the world: in accompanying somatic occurrences, in understandable expression, in behaviour, in actions – more forth, it manifests itself in language communication, speaks of what it means and thinks, produces work. In all these facts, which are demonstrable in the world, effects of soul are laid before us, occurrences in which we directly perceive the soul, or on the basis of which we deduce regarding the soul. The soul itself is not our object [subject]. We experience it in us as a conscious experience and visualize the experience of the Other, be it from the objective phenomena or from reports of our own experiences. But that experience is an occurrence, too. We may let the soul become objectified through pictures and parables. However, it remains to be the all-encompassing which does not become an object, but rather out of which the individual facts become objective.

In more concrete sense, the problem occurs when we take a look at the use of these notions in the context of institutions: we have “mental” institutions, “psychic” institutions, “sanitariums”, “bedlams”, and “insane asylum”, accompanied with derogatory terms such as “nuthouse”, “funny farm”, and “madhouse”. In Croatian, a term “umobolnica”, literally meaning “hospital for mind” or “hospital for reason”, is occasionally still used “off the record”. The problem is the following: patients are treated, and diseases understood depending on the semantic context of the notions in use. Can my issues be cured with chemicals, or by social support and care, that depends on what notions endow our reasoning, and thus the probable damage of the extension of confusion regarding the way we think about phenomena is not measurable, but it can certainly be imagined and should not be ignored. Much like body serves to produce and convert substances into energy, so does psyche produce and covert “cognitive” phenomena, such as will or emotion, into acts. What would happen to the current practice if, for example, we would restore the Ancient Greek understanding of psyche which rejected dualism of mind and body that became popular during Middle Age and would certainly reject the concept of either soul or mind being equal to brain functioning? In fact, Greeks in many ways argued the opposite, and psyche was related to breathing, blowing, taking of space, was understood as the principle of vitality, as psukhē literally meaning “breath”, “life”, and “soul”. Democritus, for example, argued the following:

It is fitting for men that they should make a logos more about the soul than about the body. For the perfection of the soul puts right the faults of the body. But strength of body without reasoning improves the soul not one whit.” (B. 187)

While it is reported that Anaxagoras, differentiating between mind and psyche, instructed about the mind as follows:

He [Anaxagoras] has written the following about Nous: ‘The other things have a share of everything, but Nous is unlimited and self-ruling and has been mixed with no thing, but is alone itself by itself. For if it were not by itself, but had been mixed with anything else, then it would partake of all things, if it had been mixed with anything (for there is a share of everything in everything just as I have said before); and the things mixed together with it would thwart it, so that it would control none of the things in the way that it in fact does, being alone by itself. For it is the finest of all things and the purest, and indeed it maintains all discernment (gnōmē) about everything and has the greatest strength. And Nous has control over all things that have soul, both the larger and the smaller. And Nous controlled the whole revolution, so that it started to revolve in the beginning. First it began to revolve from a small region, but it is revolving yet more, and it will revolve still more. And Nous knew (eignō) them all: the things that are being mixed together, the things that are being separated off, and the things that are being dissociated. And whatever sorts of things were going to be, and whatever sorts were and now are not, and as many as are now and whatever sorts will be, all these Nous set in order. And Nous also ordered this revolution, in which the things being separated off now revolve, the stars and the sun and the moon and the air and the aether. This revolution caused them to separate off (…).’

In Timaeus, Plato argues that “soul” consist of elements, emphasizing the importance of harmonizing the soul, because in the case of the opposite, when the power of the immortal part is not aligned with the power of the mortal part, human beings see the soul and body as if they are separated. This masks away the true power of life, and causes internal disorder within human beings.

From only a selection, it is clear that their understanding implies broader mereological connection of elements that form the biotic and the abiotic. “Dance” between life and death, between kinetics and statics, between body and soul, outline the complexity precisely in the discussion about the psyche, appearing to be an entangling polygon of the before mentioned poles. It is here where the analogy between good and evil can be drawn through the scheme of openness and closeness. The source of these relations already begins in the field of unconscious, and it is the repeating that embodies it into a drive underlying both individuals and society as a particular whole. I suggest that we should think of psyche as the moving energy whose openness and closeness, and the issues that are in that sense produced, such as psychic disorders, are defined by internal and external influences ordained by the mereological relation of elements. My goal was to point out that “soul”, “mind”, “psyche” is neither separated from body, nor it is in any way isolated from the rest of the atomarium of All-Oneness. Psyche is the outcome of the dialectics of the totality of body and the totality of mind, the “actualis” of the mind and body potentiality, a grounding synthesis which reveals itself as the presence of being itself, the energy governing all internal and external acts. In the next chapter, I will thus more specifically focus on the conclusion that evil should be, thus, considered as a psychic disorder in the sense in which psyche was described up to this point, and that we will not be able to deal with it invasively, for example, with morality enhancement, advanced prison systems or exclusion punishment, rather, with bringing them into the light of All-Oneness through nurture and education. […]