



CORRELATION OF EVIL WITH THE DARKER SIDE OF HUMAN PSYCHOLOGY IN THE WORKS OF SHAKESPEARE

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Evil may be described as the sum of the opposition, which experience shows to exist in the needs of individuals; whence arises among human beings at least, the sufferings in which life abound; human welfare, is what ought not to exist. Nevertheless, there is no department of human life in which there is discrepancy between what is and what ought to be has always called for explanation in the account which it has with its surroundings. For this purpose it is necessary (1) to define the precise nature of the principle that has created a variety of circumstances, and (2) to ascertain, as may be possible, to source from which it emanates.

With regard to the nature of evil, it should be observed that evil is of three kinds – physical, moral and metaphysical; all that causes harm to man, whether by bodily injury, by thwarting his natural desires, or by preventing either in the order of nature directly, or through the various social conditions under which mankind naturally succumbs to nature are sickness, accident, death, etc. Poverty, oppression, and some forms of disease are instances to this organization. Mental suffering, such as anxiety, disappointment, and remorse, and the limitation of interest from attaining to the full comprehension of their environment, are congenital forms of evil. Each vary in their natural disposition and social circumstances.

By moral evil are understood the deviation of human volition from the prescriptions of the moral order which cause such deviation. Such action, when it proceeds solely from

ignorance, is not to be classed as moral evil, which may be the result of diverting of will towards ends of which the conscience disapproves. The extent of moral evil is not limited to the general order, but includes also the sphere of religion, by which man's welfare is affected in the supernatural order depending ultimately upon the will of God, are of the strictest possible obligation. The obligation is, moreover, generally believed to depend on the motives supplied by religion and it is at least doubtful about its obligation to exist at all apart from a supernatural sanction.

Metaphysical evil is the limitation by one another of various component parts of the natural world. Through chance objects are for the most part prevented from attaining to their full or ideal perfection, whether by the part of fate or by sudden catastrophes. Thus, animal and vegetable organisms are variously influenced by climate; animals depend for their existence on the destruction of life; nature is subject to storms and convulsions, of perpetual decay and renewal due to the interaction of its constituent parts. If animal suffering is expressed by the inevitable limitations of nature; and they can only be called evil by analogy, and in a sense quite logical, it is applied to human experience. Clarke, moreover, has aptly remarked (Correspondence with Leibnitz): 'In nature is really no disorder, since it is part of a definite scheme, and precisely fulfils the intention of the natural order as a relative perfection rather than an imperfection. It is, in fact only by a transference to irrational aspirations of human intelligence, that 'the evil of nature' can be called evil in any sense but merely expression of pain in lower animals, it very obscure, and in the necessary absence of data it is difficult to say whether it is merely formal evil which belongs to inanimate objects, or with the suffering of human beings.' [Clarke Cumberland] The latter occurs many times, and may perhaps be referred to the anthropomorphic tendency of primitive minds which appear in it. Thus it has often been supposed that animal suffering, together with many of the imperfections of inanimate man, with whose welfare, as the chief part of creation, were bound up the fortunes of the rest. The opposite view is taken by St. Thomas Descartes says that men were machines, without sensation or consciousness. It was closely followed by Malebranche and Cartesians who feel men as animals, but considers that mere sense-perception, unaccompanied by reflection, cannot cause either pain and pleasure of animals to be sense or parable degree to those resulting from reflex action in man.

It is evident again that all evil is essentially negative and not positive; i.e. it consists not in the acquisition, but deprivation of something necessary for perfection. Pain, which the test or criterion of physical evil, has a subjective existence as a sensation of physical evil, has a subjective existence as a sensation or emotion; but its evil quality lies in its disturbing effect, the perverse action of the will, upon which moral evil depends, is more than a mere negation of right action, a positive element of choice; but the morally evil character of wrong action is constituted not by the elemental rejection of what right reason requires. Thus evil is defined as: ‘steresis; the Pseudo, as the non-existent; as private boni alicujus’;[Origen] Schopenhauer, who held pain as a normal condition of life (pleasure being its partial and temporary absence), nevertheless made it dependent on human desire to obtain fulfillment – “the wish is in itself pain.” Thus it will be seen that evil is not a real curse, what is evil in some relation may be good in others; and probably there is no form of existence which is exclusive of all relations. Hence it has been thought that evil cannot truly be said to exist at all and is really nothing that this opinion seems to leave out of account the reality of human experience. Though the same cause may be pleasure to another, pain and pleasure as sensations or ideas, cannot but be mutually exclusive. No one has ever attempted to deny this very obvious fact; and the opinion in question may perhaps be understood as near of stating the relativity of evil.

There is practically a general agreement of authority as the nature of evil, some allowance being made on the expression depending on a corresponding variety of philosophical presuppositions. But on the question there has been, and is a metaphysical one; it is a mere experimental analysis of the actual conditions from which evil results. The question, which ‘Schop punctum pruriens’ of metaphysical is concerned not so much with the various detailed manifestations, but the hidden and underlying cause which has made these manifestations possible or necessary; and it is this enquiry in a region so obscure must be attended with great difficulty, and that the conclusions reached will be of a provisional and tentative character. No system of philosophy has ever succeeded in escaping from the discussions the subject is involved; but it is not too much to say that the Christian solution offers, on the whole, few approaches more nearly to completeness than any other. The question may be stated thus. Admitting of certain relation of man to his environment, or that it arises in the relation of the component parts of one another, how comes it that though all are alike the results of a universal cosmic process, this universe is at war with itself, contradicting and thwarting its own efforts in

the mutual hostility of its progeny? Further metaphysical in itself evil in itself may be merely nature's method, involving nothing more than a continual recession of elements of the universe, human suffering and wrong doing still and out as essentially opposed to the general development, and are scarcely to be reconciled in thought with any conception of unity or harmony in relation with the evil of human life, physical and moral, to be attributed as its cause? But when the universe is construed as all-benevolent and all powerful Creator, a fresh element is added to the problem. If God is all-benevolent, can he permit suffering? If He is all Powerful, He can be under not necessity of creating or permitting it; and again under such necessity, He cannot be all-powerful. Again, if God is absolutely good, and also omnipotent, where is the existence of moral evil? We have to enquire, that is to say, how evil has come to exist, and what is the nature of the Creator of the Universe.

Evil as an infinite abstraction is more tractable than as a concrete confrontation. If we are good at dealing with evil seeds, perhaps we can minimize the extent to which we will have to deal with evil fruits. At the totally material level of human belief, no one is interested in the concept of evil. With no justification for ascribing mystical significance to untoward events, we define evils loosely as things against human survival or well-being. Any rational vehemence on the subject of evil would only refer to its appearance as phenomena without considering spiritual dimensions. When a mystical concept of evil is introduced, evil is interpreted to be the result of capricious or malevolent forces of angry gods. Undisciplined spiritualism can fall into believing that mysterious powers of darkness are lurking about causing all sorts of mischief. Since this doesn't make any sense, we deem it to be a pre-rational level of belief and move on.

When our thinking is based on the principle of pure infinite goodness, our jurisdiction is uncontested within the realm. Might we ever need jurisdiction over a mental space not subject to infinite goodness? Could there be other jurisdictions in the infinite? We have used spirituality principally thinking to try to conceive ideas of pure goodness. Is it possible that we could use some negative seed, some upside-down thought model, to render certain undesirable words in conceivable? Is there a thought we can hold affirmatively whose effect will be to make some specific things not happen? Would this be a form of negative thinking?

To human belief, there are things that are clearly good, things that are clearly bad. In Shakespearean tragedy, the main source of the storm or convulsion which produces suffering and

death is never good. Good contributes to this convulsion only from its tragic implication adultery and murder with its opposite in one and the frame changes. The main source on the contrary, is in every case evil. The love of Romeo and Juliet conducts them to death only because of the hatred of their senseless houses. Guilty ambition, seconded by diabolic malice issuing in murder – opens the action in Macbeth. Iago is the main source of the convulsion in Othello, Goneril, Regan and Edmund in King Lear. Even when this plain moral evil is not the obviously prime source within the play, it lies behind it. The situation with which Hamlet has to deal has been formed by adultery and murder. “If it is chiefly evil”, as points out A. C. Bradley, “that violently disrupts the order of the world, this order cannot be friendly to evil or indifferent to the distinction between poison and food. [Bradley A C]

In fact, if we confine our attention to the hero and to those cases where the gross and palpable evil is not in him but elsewhere, we find that the comparatively innocent hero still shows some marked imperfection or defect – irresolution, precipitancy, pride, credulousness, excessive simplicity, excessive susceptibility to sexual emotions and the like. These defects or imperfections are certainly in the wide sense of the word evil, and they contribute decisively to the conflict and catastrophe. And the inference is clear. The ultimate power which shows itself disturbed by this evil and reacts against it, must have a nature alien to it.

Also, Evil exhibits itself everywhere as something negative, barren, weakening, destructive, a principle of death. It isolates, disunites and tends to annihilate not only its opposite but itself. That which keeps the evil man prosperous, makes him succeed, even permits him to exist is the good in him. [ibidem] When the evil in him masters the good and has its way, it destroys other people through him, but it also destroys him. At the close of the struggle, he has vanished and has left behind him nothing that can stand. ‘What remains is a family, a city, a country, exhausted, pale and feeble but alive, through the principle of good which animates it; and within it, individuals who, if they have not the brilliance or greatness of the tragic character, still have our respect and confidence. And the inference would seem clear. If existence in an order depends on good and if the presence of evil is horrible to such existence the inner being or soul of this order must be akin to good.’ [ibidem]

In fact, the system or order which shows itself omnipotent against individuals is mortal. Still, the evil against which it asserts itself, and the persons whom this evil inhabits are not really something outside the order, so that they can attack it or fail to confirm to it. They are within it and a part of it. It itself produces them, produces Iago as well Desdemona, Iago's cruelty as well as Iago's courage. It is not poisoned, it poisons itself. It shows by its violent reaction that the poison is poison and that its health lies in good. But one significant fact cannot remove another, and the spectacle we witness scarcely warrants the assertion that the order is responsible for the good in Desdemona but evil for the evil in Iago. If we make this assertion we make it on grounds other than the facts as presented in Shakespeare's tragedies.

In *King Lear* evil is shown in the greatest abundance and the evil characters are peculiarly repellent from their hard savagery, and because so little good is mingled with their evil. Here, in fact we see a world which generates terrible evil in profusion. Further, the beings in which this evil appears at its strongest are able to a certain extent, to thrive. They are not unhappy, and they have power to spread misery and destruction around them. All this is undeniable fact. This type of evil is destructive. It 'founds nothing, and seems capable of existing only on foundations laid by its opposite.' [ibidem] It is also self-destructive. It sets those beings at enmity. They can scarcely unite against a common and pressing danger. If it were averted, they would be at each other's throats in a moment. The sisters do not even wait till it is past. Finally all of them are 'dead a few weeks after we see them'. [ibidem] These also are undeniable facts; and in face of them, it seems odd to describe King Lear, as says Dr Johnson, 'a play in which the wickedness prosper.' [ibidem]

Thus the world in which evil appears seems to be at heart unfriendly to it. And this impression is confirmed by the fact that the convulsion of this world is due to evil, 'mainly in the worst forms here considered partly in the milder forms which we call the errors or defects of the better characters.' [ibidem] Good, in the widest sense seems thus to be the principle of life and health in the world; evil, at least in their worst forms, to be a poison. The world reacts against it violently and, in the struggle to expel it, is driven to devastate itself.

On the basis of reading of *Hamlet*, evil may be defined as the inscrutable working of it in human mind through the characters like Claudius and Gertrude who are the progenitors of evil,

and, therefore, remain sources of the development of tragic plot in Hamlet. Claudius involves himself in the evil of betrayal in double ways. After betrayal he gets not only the kingdom of his brother but also his wife, the mother of the protagonist, on the basis of whose nature he broods ‘frailty thy name is women’, and through out continued to brood on the very nature and working of evil on his mother’s mind. He appears to be less angered and more astonished at this working of evil on his mother’s side. In Hamlet, if Claudius appears to be a character that evil grabs by birth, Gertrude certainly is the resultant effect of the evil of seducement.

In Macbeth, certainly ‘fair is foul and foul is fair’. The witches which are symbolic of evil character do not perform any evil act. They simply become instrumental in instigating man’s ambition. The witches predict about both Macbeth and Banquo. Banquo never takes the law and judgement in his hand while Macbeth takes both in his own hands, of course on the compulsion and instigation of his wife. She does not only instigate, but also compels Macbeth to commit the heinous crime of murdering a guest who was very kind and affectionate to both Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. The evil may here be defined as, an evil of lust and ambition. This lust and ambition is there in Claudius too, but in Macbeth it works on external level, whereas in Hamlet, it works on internal level. Macbeth is once instigated by his wife to kill King Duncan, then onwards he goes on ceaselessly killing and murdering so many people. In Hamlet, Claudius after killing his brother wants to enjoy peaceful life, which he is not afforded either by Hamlet’s reticence or the governance of his father’s ghost for revenge, which he expects from Hamlet. The play Hamlet and Macbeth establish that evil works for doom and damnation this way or that way.

After defining evil, particularly in Shakespearean context, it may be said that evil is necessarily inherent in matter independent of the Divine author of good, and in Him, is common to the theosophical systems, to many of the pure rational conceptions of Grey, much that has been advanced on this subject in later times. ‘In the Pythagorean idea of a numerical principle of the world, good is represented by unity and evil by multiplicity [Philolaus] ‘God is the author of all that, but men have sometimes chosen good and sometimes evil.’ [ibidum] Empedocles, again, attributes hate, inherent together with its opposite, love in the universe. Plato held God to be ‘... for the evil of the world; its cause was partly the necessary imperfection of material and created existence of the human will [Plato]. With Aristotle, ‘..evil is a necessary aspect of the constant

truth, has in itself no real existence.’ [Aristotle] The Stoics conceived evil in a somewhat similar manner, the immanent Divine power harmonizes the evil and good in a changing world. Moral evil proceeds from the separation from the Divine will, and is overruled by it to a good end. In the hymn of Cleantheus to Zeus (Ston Ecl.), the author perceived an approach to the doctrine of Leibniz, as to the nature of evil and goodness of the world, see thee in earth or sea or sky, save what evil men commit by their own folly; so thou hast fitted together, that there might be one reasonable and everlasting scheme of all things. In the mystical system of Eckhart it has its place in the evolutionary scheme by which all proceeds from and returns to God, are moral order and in the physical, to the accomplishment of the Divine purpose. Eckhart’s , monistic or pantheism seems to have obscured for him many of the difficulties of the subject, as has been the case with those by whom it have since been carried to an extreme conclusion.

Christian philosophy has, like the Hebrew, uniformly attributed moral and physical evil to the action of the man who himself brought about the evil from which he suffers by transgressing the law of God, on obedience to his passions on which he depended. ‘Evil is in created things under the aspect of mutability and possibility of defect, not as existence of mankind, mistaking the true conditions of its well-being, have been the cause of moral and physical pain’. [St. Aug.] The evil from which man suffers is, however, the condition to which it is permitted. Thus ‘God judged it better to bring good out of evil than to suffer no evil to exist at all.’ [ibidum] Evil contributes to the perfection of the universe, ‘as shadows to the perfection of a picture, or humans their manners’ [ibidum] Again, ‘...the excellence of God’s works in nature is insisted on as evidence of the Divine goodness, by which no evil can be directly caused.’ [Greg. Nyss] Thus Boethius asks, Can I be the author of good, if God is the author of evil? ‘As darkness is nothing but the absence of light, is creation, so evil, merely the defect of goodness.’ [St. Aug.] St Augustine’s view that ‘evil should be permitted for the punishment of the wicked and spare the good, shows it is under this aspect, the nature of good, and is pleasing to God, not because of where it is; i.e. as the penal and just consequences of sin’ [ibidum]. Lackow arguments to oppose the dilemma, as to the omnipotence and goodness of God, which he puts into the logic (Ira. Dei, xiii). St. Anselm (Monologium) connects evil with the partial manifestation of good by creation of God alone.

Descartes and Malebranche held that the world is the best possible for the purpose for which it created: the manifestation of the attributes of God, if it had been less fitted as a whole for the attainment of this objective. The will of perfectly benevolent Creator was elaborately treated by Leibniz in answer to Bayle, who has arguments derived from the existence of evil against that of a good and omnipotent God. Leibniz found the crux of his theory from those of St. Augustine and from St. Thomas, and deduced from them his theory of Optimism (q.v). And it is the best possible; but metaphysical evil, or perfection, is necessarily involved in the constitution, since it could not have been endowed with the infinite perfection which belongs to God alone. Moral & physical, all evil is overruled by God to a good purpose. More ever, the world with which we are acquainted, evil is a factor in the whole of creation, and it may be supposed that the evil it contains is necessary for the examples that are unknown to us. Voltaire in “Candide”, undertook to throw ridicule at the idea of “best possible that can be admitted, is that the theory is open to grave objections. And on the other, it fails to account for the permission (or indirect authorship) of evil by which it is known. Bayle had specially taken exception. We can not know that this world is the best possible; and if it were, it can include so much that is evil, should a perfectly good God have created it? It may be urged, moreover, that a degree of finite goodness which is not susceptible of increase by omnipotence, without ceasing to fall short of it.

Leibniz has been more or less closely followed by many who have since treated the subject from the Concept. These have, for the most part, emphasized the evidence in creation of the wisdom and goodness of its thought. In the Book of Job, the hero suffers without cause, who is clueless as to the origin of the pain he undertakes. Such was the view of King (Essay pm the Origin of Evil, London, 1732), who insisted, still the best possible world; of Cudworth, who held that ‘...evil, though inseparable from the nature of impertinence, is a matter of men’s own fancy and opinions, rather than the reality of things, and therefore not to be made the matter of accusations against Divine providence.’ [Cudworth] Derham (Physico-Theology, London, 1712) took occasion from the subject to remark excellence of creation to commend the attitude of humility and trust towards the creation of ‘.....this elegantly formed world, in which we find everything necessary for the sustenance, use and pleasure both of man here below; as well as some whips, some rods, to scourge us for our sins’. [Derham] Priestly held a doctrine of an immanent power, and consequently attributes evils solely to the divine will; which however he justified by the good ends which man was made to sub serve [ibidum] Clarke, again, called

special evidence of method of design, which bear witness to the benevolence of the Creator, in the midst of an abject disorder. Rosmini, closely following Malebranche, pointed out that the question of the possibility of a bright world has really no meaning, any world created by God must be the best possible in relation to its special purpose neither goodness or badness can be predicated of it. Mamiani also supposed that evil be inseparable from good so as to disappear as the finite approached its final union with the infinite.

Further evil is viewed by many as a mode in which certain aspects of moments of the development of nature are devoid of consciousness. In this view there is no distinctive principle to which evil can be assigned, and its origin is as mysterious as a whole. These systems reject the specific idea of creation; and the idea of God is either rigorously thought as an impersonal principle, immanent in the universe, or conceived as a mere abstraction from the methods, whether viewed from the standpoint of materialism or that of idealism, is the one ultimate reality. The evil is thus merged in that of the origin of being. More ever evil, in particular, arises from error, and is to be at least minimized, by improved knowledge of the conditions of human welfare (Meliorism). Of this kin doctrines of the Ionic Hylozoists , whose fundamental notion was the essential unity of matter and life; also, that of the Elicits, who founded the origin of all things in abstract being. The Atomists Leucippus propounded what may be called, doctrine of materialistic Monism. This doctrine, however found its first complete manifestation in the philosophy of Epicurus, which explicitly rejected the notion of any external influence on nature, whether with or without power. According to the Epicurean Lucretius the existence of evil was in a way a creation of the world by God:

“Nequaquam nobis divinitus esse creatum
Naturam mundi, quae tanta est praeditaculpa” [Lucretius]

The recently construed system, or method, called Pragmatism, has this much in common with Pessimism as an actually unavoidable part of the human experience which is in point of fact identical with truth and what we make it; evil tends to diminish with the growth of experience, and may finally vanish; though it may always remain the irreducible minimum evil. The origin of evil is, like the origin of all things, infact may be fitted into any theory of the design of the universe, simply because no such theory is possible. “We can easily comprehend the character of

the cosmic mind whose purpose are fully revealed by the strong mixture that we find in this actual world's particulars – the mere word design, by itself has no consequences and explain it aptly. Nietzsche holds evil to be purely reserved, certain aspects at least, as transitory and non-fundamental concept. With him, ‘... mankind in the present state, is properly adapted to his environment.’ [Nietzsche] In this mode of thought the individual necessarily counts for veritable & transient manifestation of the cosmic force; and the social aspects of humanity are those under which they are mostly considered, with a view to their amelioration. Hence, the various forms of Socialism: The icon of a totally new, though as yet undefined, form of social morality, and of the constitution and mutual reactions of so called ethical and scientific religions inculcating morality as tending to be generally good. The first example of this was that of Auguste Comte, who upon the materialistic basis of Positivism, founded the “religion of humanity” to substitute an enthusiasm for humanity as the motive for right action, for the motives of supernatural reassurance.

Evil is threefold, viz., “malum naturae” (metaphysical evil), “culpa” (moral), and “paena” (physical) (I, Q. xlvi, a. 5,6; Q lxiii, a.9; De Malo, I,4). Its existence sub serves the perfect universe would be less perfect if it contained no evil. Thus fire could not exist without the corruption of the wood, the lion must slay the ass in order to live, and if there were no wrong doing, there would be no sphere for corrective penance. God id said (As in Isaiah 45) to be the author of evil in the sense that the corruption of man as ordained by Him, as a means for carrying out the design of the universe; and on the other hand, the entire consequence of the breach of Divine laws is in the same sense that the corruption of man as ordained by Him, as a means for carrying out the design of the universe; and on the other hand, the entire consequence of the breach of Divine laws is in the same sense due to Divine appointment; the universe and its laws could be broken with impunity. Thus evil, in one aspect, i.e. as counter balancing the ordinary aped good (IV, Q. ii, a.19). But the evil of sin (culpa) though permitted by God, is in no sense due to him, but the cause is the abuse of free will by angels and man that the universal perfection of this universe, metaphysical evil, that is to say, and indirectly, moral evil as well, is included in the design of the universe known to us; but we cannot say without denying the Divine omnipotence, that another equally perfect space was created in which evil would have no space.

It is obviously impossible to suggest a reason why this universe in particular should have been created, since we are necessarily incapable of forming an idea of any other universe than this. Similarly, we are sure God chose to manifest Himself by the way of creation, instead of, or in addition to, the other ways, which He has, or may have attained the same end. We reach here the utmost limit of speculation; and the ultimate reason for creation (as distinct from its direct motive) is paralleled, at a much earlier stage, the inability of the non-creationist schools thought to assign any ultimate cause for the existence of the world, and observed that St. Thomas's account of evil is a true Theodicy, taking into consideration as it does ever belong and leaving unsolved only the mystery of creation, before which all schools of thought are equally helpless known in the fullest sense, why this world was made as to know how it was made; but St. Thomas has as acts of the Creator admit of complete logical justification, notwithstanding the mystery in which, for him can never wholly cease to be involved. The amelioration of moral evil and its consequences can take lace by means of individual reformation, and not so much through increase of knowledge as thorough direction of the will. But since all methods of social improvements that have any value must necessarily approach to conformity with Divine laws, they are welcome and furthered by the church, as tending to accomplish the purpose for which she exists.

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