The Problem of *Evil*
Part One: *Evil* in Philosophical Discourse

Iosif Riviș-Tipei*

Abstract:
This article is the first in a series of three articles that endeavor to provide a short survey of answers to, and interpretations of, the problem of evil in philosophical, mythopoetic and religious discourses. The present article tackles the philosophical framework, tracing with broad strokes significant reflections on evil in the western world, from ancient Greek thought to the modern times. Interpreters discussed in the survey include such names as: Socrates, Plato, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Kant, Hegel and Nietzsche.
Keywords: problem of *evil*, philosophical interpretations of *evil*, theodicy

Introduction

The urge to make sense of evil – its origins, nature and indiscriminate presence – challenges our thinking about the divine, about the meaning of life, and about the scope of history. Numerous and varied explanations regarding the existence of evil are available and the researcher entering the debate unavoidably faces a rich history of interpreters and interpretations, one that could make the subject of a multi-volume work. The present work is the first of three articles planned for publication in the *Journal of Humanistic and Social Studies* that have this history in view. Evidently, much more modest in scope, our objective here is to survey some of the approaches and answers to the problem of evil in three interrelated discourses: philosophy, mythology and Christian religion. It is our hope that, although due to the lack of space much of what would have deserved to be included in this survey will be left unsaid, these articles will at least provide a beginning point for anyone wishing to study this history further. Below we begin this discussion with the philosophical framework, starting in the classical antiquity and subsequently introducing other significant contributions to the debate, chronologically, up until the modern era.

* Lecturer PhD, "Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad, iosif.tipei@gmail.com

Interpretations of Evil in Classical Antiquity

From time immemorial humans have assigned both evil and good to the agency of the divine. This mythical interpretation of reality, which we will address in more detail in the forthcoming second article, begun to change in the Greek antiquity with the rise of a more rationalistic approach to divinity, which required the delimitation of divine action and consequently a justification of evil that would explain its existence in an universe created by a being that is both good and intelligent. At the most basic level, Epicurus (in David Hume's words[1]) has posed the questions that describe the problem as early as the 4th Century BC:

> Is [God] willing to prevent evil, but not able? Then he is impotent. Is he able, but not willing? Then he is malevolent. Is he both able and willing? Whence then is evil?

Typically, ancient Greek religion understood evil as a consequence of the unpredictable nature of the divine. Thus, given evil's varied manifestations, Greek religious mythology posited several sources for it in the person of different gods such as Zeus, Athena, Ares, and Poseidon, and in other quasi-divine entities such as Moira, Themis, Dike, and Nemesis (Cornford, 1957: 20-21). Within this context, there raised the need to also establish and assess human responsibility. In fact, as early as Homer, the notion appeared that one's *fatum*, working hand in hand with one's guilt, bear responsibility for the evil in one's life[2]. Nevertheless, these proved insufficient, for neither the religious system nor the philosophical framework could integrate the reality of innocent suffering. Attempts for a solution to this dilemma can be found as early as Aeschylus, who advances the idea of inherited guilt[3], but the first time the issue is addressed more consistently is in the ethical intellectualist tradition of Socrates and Plato.

For Socrates, both moral evil and the physical evil are consequences of lack of knowledge. "No one errs voluntarily" – this is one of the best-known maxims attributed to Socrates. It is, at the same time, a good summary of the ethical conception of Socrates, respectively of the Socratic dialogues attributed to Plato. From this intellectual point of view, it would seem that evil "cannot even exist, because no one does something evil wilfully, but only because of ignorance". Furthermore,

---

[1] See David Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, ed. by Norman Kemp Smith, New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1947, p. 196.

[2] E.g. Homer, *Il.* 1,5; *Od.* 1,17.60. Cf. A.W.H. Adkins, *Merit and Responsibility: A Study in Greek Values*, Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1960, p. 10-29.

[3] Consider for instance, Aeschylus, *Agamemnon* 764-773.

ignorance of divine ways may cause one to conceive as evil that which is not evil.

On the other hand, Socrates argues in the dialogues against Protagoras that virtue is a science. In the words of Jean Brun, it is "a science of interiority". It involves a labour of inner conversion, through which each one must pass for himself. The philosopher, through his philosophical method (gr. *maieutike*) can only help make one aware of this need (Brun, 1996: 96).

The life that Socrates proposes to his interlocutors is one of intellectual asceticism. During it, man renounces ready-made opinions and egocentrism, and places himself in the universality of the moral law. This is why Plato and Socrates, respectively, are viewed sympathetically by many Christian authors. Contemporary Russian Orthodox theologian Pavel Florenski notes, for example, that "the best of the Greeks already knew the self-destructive nature of evil". By its very nature, evil is "the kingdom divided against itself". This notion of dismembering the action of evil is expressed in great depth by Plato in the myth of the Androgyne" (Florenski, 1999: 114). Thus, generally speaking, it is evident that Socratic intellectualism can be very easily connected with the moralization of the problem of evil present in Christian theology. Florenski also writes: "There is no reality in man that is evil; but the misuse of powers and faculties, that is, the breaking of the order of reality, is evil ... Evil is nothing but a spiritual deformation, and sin – all that leads to it". On the other hand, virtue is a science because it presupposes the knowledge of the essence (Brun, 1996: 97). The ideal to which Socrates looks is *arete* (Bres: 33-34), an ancient concept of Greek spirituality, which is now being reinterpreted in an ethical sense. There is an *eidos* of *arete* and *eide* of different species of *aretai* (Peters, 1993: 46).

Continuing on the same path of Socratic moral intellectualism, Plato links in his later dialogues the idea of evil as ignorance to the gnoseological problem of the possibility of false judgment. From the gnoseological point of view, this consolidates the idea of knowledge as a spiritual ascension in the world of Ideas, an ascension whose appropriate instrument is the dialectical method. Good, *agathon*, is the end of the dialectical process.

When we approach Plato's philosophy from the perspective of the problem of evil, an important aspect is the body-soul dualism. Ioan Petru Culianu speaks of a "strong anthropological dualism" (1994: 153). Researchers generally see in this dualism Plato's indebtedness to the Orphic-Pythagorean conception of the soul. Plato adopts the Pythagorean view that the body is a tomb/prison for the soul and the

Orphic view that the body is a prison for the soul[4]. As Stere puts it, "the soul, a spiritual principle, would dwell in the body as in a prison" (Stere, 1998: 83). Nevertheless, in spite of such a pessimistic anthropology, Plato maintains that the world has been formed in the best possible way (*Phaedo* 99b-c) and that the divinity can only be good (*Timaeus* 29a), even if he ponders on the possibility of the opposite view.

This complex of ideas is connected to the theory of remembrance or recollection. The concept of *anamnesis* moves to the level of philosophical knowledge, because what we remember is a knowledge of Forms. The purpose of life then and the definition of philosophy are related to a purification that represents the preparation for death and for the return of the soul to its natural habitat. Only the knowledge of the absolute Good can restore to the soul the freedom to which it aspires. Purification, that *catharsis* of which Plato speaks, is meant to restore what is divine in man, freeing his soul from any deformation suffered during earthly life, from all the "infirmities" of knowledge, resulting from interest and attachment to the realities of the sensitive world.

There is, however, a partial overcoming of Socratic intellectualism in the late dialogues. Plato comes to admit that the soul can cause both good and evil. At the same time, the process of hypostasis that led him to convert Socratic definitions into ontological realities suggests, at least in one instance, the existence of an *eidos* of evil. This "announces the rise of ethical dualism, which in Plato's early writings is present at the level of body and soul, on the cosmic plane, probably as a result of the amplification of contacts with the Iranian tradition" (Peters, 1993: 139).

Evil in Modern Rationalism

Under this heading we will refer to the thought of the three great representatives of modern rationalism – René Descartes, Benedict Spinoza, and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz – particularly at aspects that are of interest from the perspective of the theme of this paper, i.e. the problem of evil. As a general characterization we can say that modern rationalism is not an atheistic philosophy. In rationalist thought, God, as the primary and absolute cause, plays an essential role, since only the effects produced by an omnipotent being are strictly and absolutely necessary (Cottingham, 1988: 109-114). Descartes, as pointed out by Kolakowski, blocks "the path from Nature to God, breaking the link between the essence of God and His effective law". The separation of God's will from His essence meant His separation from creatures. God

[4] E.g. *Phaedo* (109b-c); *Republic* (514a-517). On these, see J.N. Bremmer, *Rise and Fall of the Afterlife*, London and New York, 2002, p. 11-26.

is absolutely free, but this means "that God enjoys the freedom of indifference" (Kolakowski, 1993: 23). Spinoza carries on this conception. His philosophy deprives God of a number of qualities that the Christian tradition has ascribed to him and which are necessary in order to be identified as a person. Spinoza's conception, writes the same Kolakowski, "is undoubtedly incompatible with the Christian tradition" (*Ibidem*: 27). Leibnitz also conceives of God's intellect as independent of His will.

We may say, then, that modern rationalism takes the intellectualism of Western philosophy to its limits. In this context, Descartes is confronted with something that can be related to the Christian conception of evil. The problem of error, writes John Cottingham, "poses a problem for the Cartesian meditator that is closely parallel to the traditional theological puzzle of the existence of evil" (Cottingham, 1988: 158). If God is good and the source of all truth, the explanation for the existence of error acquires a special significance. Descartes raises the issue that error has its source outside of human reason. Thus, he considers the possibility that a negative court, with divine attributes and external to man, "particularly strong and skilful", may have given all its effort to deceive us. Once considered, however, Descartes completely rejects the alleged existence of this "evil genius" (Deac, 2004: 27) (As Michel Foucault pointed out, during his meditations Descartes also rejected the hypothesis of madness). Descartes' solution is to place the error entirely on the weakness of the human intellect and free will. Although trustworthy, the intellect has limited power. There are things it does not perceive clearly. Will, on the other hand, extends far beyond the intellect. In cases where he does not perceive something clearly, man should suspend his judgment. This does not happen often. Therefore, "in the exercise of our free will lies both the source of our error and the means of its avoidance" (Cottingham, 1988: 159). To summarise, in a well-known passage from his *Meditations*, Descartes uses language that is close to the traditional description of sin:

> From all this, I perceive that the cause of my errors is neither the God-given power of willing, considered in itself, for it is extremely extensive and perfect of its kind; nor the power of understanding, for whatever I understand, since my understanding is a gift of God, most certainly I understand it correctly, nor is there any possibility of my being deceived in this. So what is the origin of my errors? It can only be this: that, since the range of the will is greater than that of the intellect, I do not confine it within the same limits, but extend it even to matters I do not understand; and since it is indifferent to these, it easily falls away from the true and the good, and this is both how I come to be deceived and how I come to sin. (Descartes, 2008: 42).

One of the aims of Spinoza's philosophy was to critique the idea of finalism. The notion of purpose cannot benefit from a rational justification. It is only a creation of the imagination, a "fiction of consciousness" (Stere, 1998: 236). Spinoza's philosophy is first and foremost a philosophy of necessity. In the context of this philosophy, good and evil are relative notions, devoid of rational meaning. They can only exist by reference to a purpose. Good and evil are defined by their relation to the exigencies of reason. Good is what promotes knowledge. It is a superior form of knowledge, the philosophical one, the knowledge of substance, identical with God or Nature. In Spinoza's system, evil is an "illusion" that results from ignorance (Ricoeur, 1974: 311-312). In particular, Spinoza completely abandons the "suspect argumentation of theodicy" (*Ibidem*: 312). Benefits and catastrophes, he points out, happen without discrimination to both the good and the bad, both believers and unbelievers.

Leibniz is the one who introduces in 1696 the term "theodicy" (1951), a neologism he creates (Râmbu, 1997: 5). Of course, however, the problem implied in the term has long been raised in the biblical writings. Thus, before Leibniz, there were theories and arguments that could be categorised as theodicy. The theodicy of Irenaeus of Lyons, for example, starts from the idea that one could not attain moral good or love for God without the evil and suffering in the world. Evil can "sculpt" the soul and eventually cause someone to become truly moral and close to God. God creates an epistemic distance so that we are forced to put in a lot of effort and energy to get to know him and thus become truly good. As such, evil is but an instrument of knowledge and a creator of character.

Leibniz tries to prove otherwise. Generally speaking, the presuppositions of theodicy are both the belief in divinity and a certain emancipation from religion. It is human reason assuming the role of God's advocate. However, Leibniz's demonstration remains a "justification of the intimate belief that the world is the creation of God, and for the evil of the world he bears no guilt" (*Ibidem*: 8) a "theoretical defence of faith in the victory of good in the world" (*Ibidem*: 7)[5]

Leibniz's main thesis in *Theodicy* is that the universe we live in is the best of all possible worlds. This is so because it is the creation of a perfect God. The philosophical foundation of theodicy, however, is the

[5] Bertrand Russell, for example, drew opposite conclusions from the same premises: here, in this world, there is a great deal of injustice, and as long as it continues, it becomes a reason to assume that justice is not the governing law of this world; this state of affairs fuels a moral argument against divinity, not one in its favor.

theory of pre-established harmony. The impossibility of *monads* to influence each other requires the conception of a pre-established harmony, whose creator is God" (Râmbu, 1997: 13). Then, only certain combinations of monads are "aggregable", i.e. they can exist together logically. There are thus purely logical constraints as to what even the most benevolent creator can accomplish (Cottingham, 1988: 175-185). The social and moral order can only be understood from the perspective of the universal and eternal. Man, and his world, are parts of the universal order. Leibniz uses various comparisons from the world of the arts. Just as touching the keys of a piano does not have to produce the same sound to give birth to the harmony of a musical composition or just as a beautiful painting contains dark nuances, the "black spots" in society and life belong to the same harmonies of the cosmos (Râmbu, 1997: 15).

God does not want evil, Leibniz believes, but He allows it. He distinguishes between three forms of evil: metaphysical, moral and physical. The first of these is fundamental, for metaphysical evil consists in the imperfection of the created universe. Metaphysical evil – imperfection – was necessary because creation cannot be on the same plane as the creator. Moral evil is identical with sin. It results from the imperfection of the created beings, that is, from metaphysical evil. Finally, moral evil results in physical evil, which consists in suffering. This would normally be the punishment for sin. Yet, when those who have not sinned suffer, the remedy, Leibnitz admits, can only be found in a future life. Ultimately, however, evil is almost nothing – *presque néant* – in comparison with the good contained in the universe as a whole. Evil is but the absence of good. Nothing is bad in itself, absolutely (*Ibidem*: 17).

Evil in Kant and Hegel

Among the modern philosophers, Immanuel Kant is the one who gives evil a role that brings it closer to the Christian concept of original sin. The concept of radical evil appears in Kant's *Religion within the limits of reason alone* (1960). The issue of radical evil, with which this work opens, differs from that of original sin, insofar as the principle of evil is not correlated with an origin, in the temporal sense of the term. It represents only "the supreme maxim which serves as the ultimate subjective foundation for all the evil maxims of our free will". In this sense, Kantian ethics can be located within Augustinian thought-world. According to Ricoeur, however, Kant elaborates on this tradition, providing a conceptual framework that Augustin lacks. He pursues all the way the

specific "practical" concepts of: *Wille*, *Willkur*, *Maxim*, will, arbiter (free will or free choice), maximum of the will (Ricoeur, 1974: 302).

Radical evil appears as a disturbing possibility in the heart of Kantian ethics. He refers to the possibility that, beyond the various wrong choices, there may be "a moral disposition" which pushes man to "adopt evil to its fullest, as evil as a solution". This would mean that "man ... is evil only because he overturns the moral order". Man "thus overthrows the order of solutions, acting by his maxim against the moral order". This is not just a theoretical possibility. If "within human nature" there were a "inclination" in this regard, it would mean that we have a natural inclination toward evil. There would be in the whole human species, Ricoeur shows, a "tendency" (*Hang*) towards evil, as opposed to the "predisposition" (*Anlage*) towards good, constitutive of good will. This evil must be called radical because it "corrupts the basis of all maxims". The parallel with the concept of original sin thus seems justified. Kant does use terms of Christian origin to describe this situation. Evil reason, and ill-will, he writes, would "elevate the conflict with the law itself to the rank of possibility ... and thus the subject would be transformed into a diabolical being". Simply put, "such a disposition is evil" (Kant, 2011: 50-51) and "this evil is the rotten stain of our species" (*Ibidem*: 53).

Referring to Hegel[6], Paul Ricoeur shows that evil is reduced to a moment in the dialectical process and acquires significance from the perspective of totality. To the extent that the concept of sin finds its place in the Hegelian system, the forgiveness of sins becomes the process of "passage of one contrary into the other, of singularity into universality, of the judged conscience into the judging conscience and reciprocally". Forgiveness is therefore the "destruction" of judgment, the latter being a category of evil, not salvation (Ricoeur, 1974: 313). The same is true of the concept of tragedy: insofar as it finds its meaning in the Hegelian system, it is radically re-signified. The tragic emphasis shifts from moral evil to the externalizing movement of the absolute spirit.

In Hegel, dialectics makes the tragic coincide with the logic: "something must die for something else, superior, to be born". From this point of view, misery is present everywhere, but everywhere it is also overcome, in so far as reconciliation always triumphs over destruction and suffering. Thus, in Hegel, evil is illusory. Thanks to the concepts of

[6] See, G.W.F. Hegel, *Conscience – the 'Beautiful Soul': Evil and the Forgiveness of It*, in *The Phenomenology of Mind*, trans. with an introduction and notes by J.B. Baillie, 2nd edn, London: Allen & Unwin / New York, Macmillan, 1949, p. 642-679.

dialectics and the "cunning of reason"[7], Hegel therefore seems to revisit the problem of theodicy.

Phenomenological Ethics and Existentialism

With Friedrich Nietzsche[8], a profound change of vision in ethics takes place. If in Hegel and Kant we can speak of ethical intellectualism, Nietzsche's theory brings the end of this history. That, at least, was Nietzsche's intention. Here we make reference in particular to Nietzsche's "immoralism", respectively his project of "reinterpretation of all values", by which he means that the whole of traditional ethics falls on the side of evil, at least from the perspective of the new values that are to be created by the *Übermensch*. Much of phenomenological ethics, and virtually all existentialism, inherits from Nietzsche this suspicion toward traditional ethics. This is one of the reasons why in reality none of the great philosophers of the twentieth century developed an "ethics".

Referring explicitly to Friedrich Nietzsche, Max Scheler seeks to highlight the "value delusion of *ressentiment*" (Scheler, 1994: 40) which stands right at the heart of our moral conceptions. Scheler defines resentment as a "self-poisoning of the mind" in which the most important starting point is the "thirst for revenge" (*Ibidem*: 29). Scheler's approach is, at the first level, phenomenological, so he defines *ressentiment* as "having to do entirely with the soul," e.g., with negative feelings, such as the desire for revenge, hatred, envy, jealousy (Zamfirescu, 1998: 8). *Ressentiment* arises from the tension between desire and helplessness, which then leads, in the conditions of maintaining helplessness, to the falsification of reality (*Ibidem*: 9-11).

Scheler differs from Nietzsche in that he is interested not so much in the momentary resentment of Christian morality as is in modern morality, particularly bourgeois morality. Thus, he complements phenomenology with a sociology of resentment. Its main idea is that regardless of individual qualities and feelings, the very structure of modern society "is rooted in *ressentiment*". As such, in the modern

[7] The "cunning of reason" consists of the fact that the spirit of the world uses the passions which animate "the great actors in history," unfolding, without their knowledge, a second intention, disguised in the first intention of the selfish ends they are caused to pursue by their passions (see Paul Ricoeur, *Evil, a Challenge to Philosophy and Theology*, *JAAR*, 53.3, 1985, p. 642-644).

[8] For Nietzesch's thought on the problem of evil, see, Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals* & *Ecce Homo*, trans. W. Kaufmann & R.J. Hollingdale, New York: Vintage Books, 1989; and Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale, Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

society "*ressentiment* has become an important determinant and has increasingly modified established morality" (Scheler, 1994: 61). Modern society replaces personal acts of love, from person to person, with impersonal mechanisms (*Ibidem*: 97). The main feature of the modern world is the overemphasizing the value of utility over the values of life. Scheler analyses the ethical principles of the modern world: the recognition as value only of that which is acquired through one's own work; the subjectivization of values; the elevation of the value of utility above the value of life in general. The very idea of the moral equality of all people, so important in modern morality, results from resentment. Thus, the Schelerian theory of resentment also has an axiological opening.

French existentialism continues this "hermeneutics of suspicion" applied to bourgeois morality. Albert Camus's "stranger" (1971) – the notion has Gnostic nuances, as showed by I.P. Culianu – is a stranger because he lives the drama of lucidity, the drama of one who "woke up" and, by this very virtue, he is in strong contrast with the many who "adjust" (Stere, 1998: 446). Jean-Paul Sartre introduces the famous concept of "stinkers" – *les salauds* – to label all those who are characterized by a tendency to take refuge in the "crowd," in "anonymity", those who mitigate their responsibility and disregard the fact that this is the primary imperative of freedom (Stere, 1998: 438; Sartre, 1972). These are the conformists, the slaves of tradition, the Pharisees, for whom current prejudices are an instrument of defence against responsibility. Adherents of traditional morality, these believe in a system of moral and intellectual values drawn up by universal reason or by divine wisdom that stifles the voice of conscience. The "stinkers" are then cowards who, being incapable to face the obstacles of reality, find their escape in a dream-world. In the end, to these Sartre adds other categories: the believer, the lover, the bourgeois, and the man of bad faith who lies to himself by oscillating between lucidity and self-delusion. All of these are opposed by the "champions of freedom", that is, by those who have the courage and ability to assume the "sentence of freedom".

Finally, we ought to turn to the work of Martin Heidegger. In discussing his thought, one must take into account the famous *Kehre*, which divides Heidegger's creation into two distinct epochs, that of existentialist ontology and that of the radical overcoming of existentialism. Regarding the issue of evil, we are more interested in the first period of creation, the one marked by his treatise *Being and Time* (Heidegger, 1953). There is something in this work that "resembles" the concept of original sin. It is Heidegger's concept of inauthenticity or, as Ernest Stere translates it, the state of "decay" of *Dasein*. Man's "fallen being" is characterized by temptation, apparent silence, alienation,

stumbling, hollow talk, curiosity, and ambiguity. To be fallen means to be tempted to live a facile existence as *man* (a term that indicates anonymity), in the sense of giving up oneself. This is, in fact, what gives an existentialist nuance to the ontology and phenomenological anthropology practiced by Heidegger in his *Sein und Zeit*.

Originally fallen, man however can save himself if gaining a lucid consciousness of his condition. Inauthenticity thus includes in itself a nuance of possible authenticity. What conditions though one's liberating reawakening is not the work of intelligence, but of a specific "existentialist" sentiment, the tragic feeling of anxiety. Anxiety is the feeling that disturbs deeply and the only sentiment that can free us from the tyranny of anonymous conformity, platitude, and the banality of everyday life. Through anxiety, then, *Dasein* rediscovers its lost authenticity.

In Heidegger, anxiety has an ontological value; it has the gift of revealing Nothingness to us in its original way of being. *Dasein* is not a fixed structure, an essence, but rather it is always its own possibility. *Dasein* is defined as a project (*Entwurf*), it projects itself in its own possibilities. And the extreme possibility of *Dasein* is death. The imminence of death persists in the heart of each human being as an inevitable appeal, although imperceptible during ordinary life. Thus, to live authentically means to live in full accordance with this direction of life which, for man, is death. Self-projection and self-anticipation, which according to Heidegger are structural elements of worry, find their concrete, original form in what the German philosopher calls *Sein zum Tode*. The being is thrown into the world to die (Stere, 1998: 429-431).

Conclusion

This short history of philosophical thought on the problem of evil within the western tradition has provided several provocative takes on the question at hand: Socrates' moral intellectualism and Plato's philosophy, in which we discover the elements necessary for ontologizing evil and the significance of a body-soul dualism; Descartes' gnoseology, Leibniz's theodicy, and the impossibility of theodicy in Spinoza's philosophy, veritable analytical landmarks; the concept of radical evil asserted by Kant and Hegel's "return" to theodicy; and Nietzsche's "immorality" coupled with ideas from Max Scheler, Albert Camus, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Martin Heidegger. We have seen within this survey that ethics tends to become a rationalization of the problem of evil, i.e. a reduction of the problem of evil to wrong choice, while axiology tends to reduce evil to a particular case of polarity of values. Such phenomenological discourse evidences the rationality specific to religious discourse, leaving out, however its

"irrationality", that is, the language of symbol and myth. Thus, a continuation of this discussion on evil will necessarily take into account such language – a project we propose to address in a forthcoming article in this journal.

REFERENCES:

Adkins, A.W.H. *Merit and Responsibility: A Study in Greek Values*, Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1960.

Bremmer, J.N., *Rise and Fall of the Afterlife*, London & New York, Routledge, 2002.

Bres, Yvon, *La psychologie de Platon*, Publications de la Sorbonne – Recherches 41, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 2nd Edition, 1968.

Brun, Jean, *Socrate*, Bucharest, Editura Humanitas, 1996.

Camus, Albert, *L'étranger*, Collection Folio 2, revised edition, Paris, Gallimard, 1971.

Cornford, F.M. *From Religion to Philosophy: A Study in the Origins of Western Speculation*, in *The Library of Religion and Culture*, New York, Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1957.

Cottingham, John, *The Rationalists*, in *A History of Western Philosophy 4*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1988.

Culianu, Ioan Petru, *Călătorii în lumea de dincolo*, Bucureşti, Editura Nemira, 1994.

Deac, Ioan, *Principiile metafizicii carteziene*, Iaşi, Editura Polirom, 2004.

Descartes, René, *Meditations on First Philosophy: With Selections form the Objections and Replies*, Trans. & Notes by Michael Moriarty, Oxford World's Classics, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008.

Florenski, Pavel, *Stâlpul şi Temelia Adevărului: Încercare de teodicee ortodoxă în douăsprezece scrisori*, Iaşi, Editura Polirom, 1999.

Hegel, G.W.F., *Conscience – the 'Beautiful Soul': Evil and the Forgiveness of It*, in *The Phenomenology of Mind*, trans. with an Introduction and Notes by J.B. Baillie, 2nd edition, London, Allen & Unwin – New York, Macmillan, 1949, p. 642-679.

Heidegger, Martin, *Sein und Zeit*, Tübingen, Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1953.

Hume, David, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, Edited by Norman Kemp Smith, New York, Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1947.

Kant, Immanuel, *Religia în limitele raţiunii pure*, Bucharest, Editura Humanitas, 2011.

Kant, Immanuel, *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*, Trans. & Notes by T.M. Greene and H.H. Hudson, New York, Evanston & London, Harper & Row Publishers, 1960.

Kolakowski, Leszek, *Religia*, Bucureşti, Editura Humanitas, 1993.

Leibniz, G.W., *Theodicy: Essays on the Goodness of God, the Freedom of Man and the Origin of Evil*, trans. E.M. Huggard, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1951.

Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Human, All Too Human*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale, *Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986.
Nietzsche, Friedrich, *On the Genealogy of Morals* & *Ecce Homo*, trans. W. Kaufmann & R.J. Hollingdale, New York, Vintage Books, 1989.
Peters, Francis E., *Termenii filozofiei greceşti*, Bucureşti, Editura Humanitas, 1993.
Râmbu, Nicolae, *Studiu introductive*, in G.W. Leibniz, *Eseuri de teodicee*, Iaşi, Editura Polirom, 1997.
Ricoeur, Paul, *Evil, a Challenge to Philosophy and Theology*, in "JAAR", 53.3, 1985, p. 642-644.
Ricoeur, Paul, *The Conflict of Interpretations: Essays in Hermeneutics*, trans. Don Ihde, Evanston, Northwestern University Press, 1974.
Sartre, Jean-Paul, *La nausée*, Paris, Gallimard, 1972.
Scheler, Max, *Ressentiment*, trans. Louis A. Coser, Marquette *Studies in Philosophy 4*, Milwaukee, WI, Marquette University Press, 1994.
Stere, Ernest, *Din istoria doctrinelor morale*, Iaşi, Editura Polirom, 1998.
Zamfirescu, Vasile D., *Studiu introductiv*, in Max Scheler, *Omul resentimentului*, Bucureşti, Editura Trei, 1998.