

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL IN JÓZEF TISCHNER'S PHILOSOPHY

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Abstract. The problem of evil is a metaphysical problem bound up with the conditions of human existence. The radical evil of fascism and communism, according to Józef Tischner, opens up the possibility that we live in the time of a modern Manichaeism, understood as having two faces: nihilism and pessimism. The possibility of thinking of such a modern form of Manichaeism necessarily calls for a new inquiry into the question of evil. For Tischner, evil, like good, is not an object, but something in which man participates, and for this reason it cannot be objectified and defined. One can only ask how it appears.

*To be truly means to give birth to good out of the nothingness
of surrounding evil.*

(Tischner 1991, p. 221)

The problem of evil, according to Józef Tischner, is an immemorial metaphysical problem bound up with the conditions of human existence. In an axiological interpretation of Plato's myth of the cave, he wrote:

What does this experience reveal to us? It reveals the fact that the world in which we live is not the kind of world that can and ought to be. The primordial axiological experience does not tell us that something that does not exist ought to exist. It also does not tell us what we ought to do or not do. All of this appears later. At first, it tells us simply this: something is that should not be. The visible world is only a semblance of the world. Prometheus hangs nailed to a cliff, but why, what for? We all live in a cave full of shadows. Why are we so chained? Why do the just suffer? Why did Socrates die the way he did? Originally, there is always this: that something is which should not be (Tischner 1982a, p. 489).

At the same time the twentieth century, which witnessed the concentration camps and gulags, forces us to pose the question of evil once again. The radical evil of fascism and communism, according to Tischner, opens up the possibility that we live in the time of a modern Manichaeism.

In general terms, Manichaeism has now become a philosophy that does not proclaim the non-existence of good, but states that good exists only to make fodder for evil. The last act of the human drama belongs to demons. Evil, as an intelligent parasite, lets good grow until the time of harvest when it turns out that it has grown only to make evil's triumph greater. The fundamental sense of the human drama has been directed by evil (Tischner 1991, p. 109).

Manichaeism understood in such a way has two faces: nihilism and pessimism. Nihilism claims that objective and binding values do not exist; while pessimism believes that they do exist but are inaccessible to the weak man. The possibility of thinking of such a modern form of Manichaeism necessarily calls for a new inquiry into the question of evil.

Evil, like good, is not an object, but something in which man participates. That is why it cannot be objectified and then defined. One can only ask how it appears. Tischner considers three kinds of manifestation: axiological, agathological (dialogic) and structural or demonic.

I. The axiological perspective

Early on, while he was developing his thought and immediately after discovering „the axiological I”, Tischner considered the problem of evil from the axiological perspective. He was then influenced by Max Scheler's axiology. He saw good and evil as linked to the objective hierarchy of values. In *The Ethics of Value and Hope*, written in 1976, he said: „ethically, that action is good which is in harmony with the objective order of values, while morally evil action is fundamentally at odds with it” (Tischner 1982b, p. 77). The root of evil is axiological subjectivism, which might be understood in many ways. Evil can come into being as a result of various disorders in the hierarchy of value. The first such disorder is one-sidedness or moral narrowness. It consists in a striving to realize lower values which does not take into account higher values.

Pleasures and creature comforts may upset a man's health, one-sided development of bodily values may inhibit the development of spiritual values, and one-sided immersion in the sphere of spiritual values may close one off the Holy (Tischner 1982b, p. 77).

One-sidedness can also have a reverse character. It can consist in a striving to realize higher values which disregards lower values.

Another form of axiological subjectivism is perversity which consists in sacrificing higher values in order to attain lower ones. For Tischner, an instance of such falseness was Raskolnikov's attitude in *Crime and Punishment*: he decided to murder a money-lender to get finances for the completion of his legal studies. However, the subjective intentions of the agent cannot change the objective order of values. „They are only an expression of human will, which in its action is either ‘good’ or ‘evil’, which either submits to the call of values or drowns their voice with its own cries” (Tischner 1982b, p. 81).

II. The agathological perspective

While early on Tischner accepted the objective hierarchy of values as primary, later, when he discovered the agathological dimension, he recognized the presence of another human being as fundamental. Already in the *Ethics of Value and Hope* he wrote: „it is not values, it is not norms, not commandments that are ‘first’, but the presence of another human being” (Tischner 1982b, p. 85). The experience of another human being's presence he recognized as the originary experience (Karoń-Ostrowska 2003, p. 128). The concept of agathology appeared two years later, in 1978, in *Thinking in Values*. Then he introduced it into his philosophy of drama, which was his own form of phenomenology.

The essence of all drama is, according to Tischner, the drama of good and evil, or to be more precise, of evil and good. He wrote: „good is admittedly closer to our history, yet evil is closer to our experience. A philosophy that recognizes and uses the phenomenological method is as if predetermined and forced to give pride of place to the investigation of evil over good” (Tischner 1991, p. 98). And then: „the drama of good and evil entails all other forms of drama. (...) Only man is subject to the drama of good and evil, as only man participates in both; thanks to him or through his fault, good and evil emerge into the world” (Tischner 1991, p. 98). In its essence this drama is metaphysical. „Taking part in the drama, man through his manner of being expresses the metaphysic of good and evil” (Tischner 1991, p. 98). Only then, does the drama take on an ethical and religious character.

Evil, according to Tischner, should be distinguished from calamity. He wanted to ascribe evil only to the actions of persons. Evil is interpersonal.

Calamity is possible only in relation to stage of the drama that is the world, while evil appears in the relationships between *dramatis personae*. It is betrayal, lying, contempt, theft of property, etc. It is not a being, object, or thing (Tischner 1991, p. 17), whereas calamity, which Tischner also called ontological evil, fully manifests itself in the experience of death. „For ontological interpretation, the evil of all evils is death” (Tischner 1998a, p. 187).

If we were to relate Tischner’s distinction between calamity and evil to Leibniz’s well-known distinction from his *Theodicy*, then Tischner’s calamity would correspond to Leibniz’s metaphysical and physical evil, and Tischner’s evil to Leibniz’s moral evil. Therefore, according to Tischner, only moral evil deserves the name of evil, as only this kind involves a human agent.

Evil is also essentially bound up with good and good with evil. „One cannot think the essence of drama without the concepts of good and evil” (Tischner 1991, p. 16). Thus, drama is possible within the agathological horizon. The „Agathological horizon,” he wrote, „is a horizon in which all the manifestations of myself and of the Other are governed by a particular *logos*: a *logos* of good and evil, of what is better and worse, of rise and fall, victory and loss, salvation and perdition” (Tischner 1998a, p. 63). For Tischner this means, firstly, that evil appears in the interpersonal sphere and is inseparably connected to good. Secondly, it means that it is beyond being. Only on the level of eternal ideas are Good, Truth and Beauty interchangeable. In the finite experience of human beings, they remain in conflict. The agathological sphere is, then, a sphere of drama.

Perhaps somewhere on the heights of abstraction and eternity, transcendentals coalesce, but experienced as they are in the earthly human drama they are in a specific conflict. Hence the questions: is the being we experience a true being or just a semblance of it? Does beauty reveal the truth about the world or feed us sheer falsehoods? Is what seems good actually good? Is truth still truth when it makes us unhappy? Is it better to live among lies that bring us happiness or among truths that bring unhappiness? Precisely because transcendentals are in conflict, one discovers that one’s world is a cracked world, and that one is oneself a cracked being that is essentially, and not contingently, dramatic (Tischner 1998a, p. 53).

An answer to the ultimate question, where does evil come from, would be possible only if we found an answer to other questions: why does the sphere in which we live have to be a sphere of conflict among good, truth and beauty, and why do we have to live in so dramatic a sphere? And yet there

is no answer to such questions. That is why Tischner only states that man is a dramatic being, i.e. one who can experience good only at the price of evil.

The discovery of the agathological horizon or dimension does not mean of course that Tischner neglects the axiological dimension. In *Thinking in Values* he wrote about these two dimensions of human experience as follows:

Thus, we should distinguish two kinds of experience: agathological and axiological. The former is more fundamental: it reveals to us the 'negative' side of all that surrounds us. It says to us: something exists that should not be; the world we experience is an illusion of the real world. It also shows us the tragic in human existence. In this experience there is still no sense of obligation. I do not yet know what I ought to do, how I ought to do it, or whether I ought to do anything at all. Nevertheless, I already feel a sense of rebellion. At the beginning of thought there is rebellion, rebellion is thought's first fault. In this rebellion there is already preference; there is already an embryonic view of hierarchy. Preference is a condition of the possibility of thought. And then, following upon agathological experience, or based 'upon' it, comes axiological experience, the core of which is: 'If you wish, you can...' Only then do I try to see what I should do, how I should behave, who I should save, what I should pursue, and what I should leave. Agathological experience is primarily a revealing experience, whereas axiological experience is a projecting experience (Tischner 1982a, pp. 490-491).

It can also be said that „the agathological makes of sheer existence a problem” (Tischner 1998a, p. 69). Thus, it makes one face the limits of what is human. And the axiological shows the directions of possible action.

III. The metaphor of face

The gift of the agathological horizon is the «face». Tischner recalls here Emmanuel Lévinas' conception. Things have appearances, human beings have faces. The origin of encounter and drama is the revelation of the face. „Face is an expression of existential movement, through which a human being strives to justify the fact that he is, offering up his existence to the protection of good, which brings hope” (Tischner 1998a, p. 85). The face is a trace of the good, its augury, and yet at the same time it reveals possible evil. Another appears to me through presence, an intuition of existence. That existence cannot be separated, though, from the experience of evil that threatens it (Tischner 1998a, p. 66).

But in the metaphor of face, Tischner refers to a different biblical picture than Lévinas: not to the widow, the orphan and the stranger from the Old Testament but to the New Testament's Cross. He recalls three sentences that were spoken by Jesus on the cross: „Forgive them, because they know not what they do”, „My God, why have you forsaken me?”, „Into your hands I commend my spirit.” The first one reveals the heroism of the face, the second one its tragic quality, the last one the hope of salvation (Tischner 1998a, p. 85).

The drama opens the possibility of heroism, it also opens the possibility of tragedy, which consists in the victory of evil over good. The heroic triumph of good over evil may be a triumph of power revealing the indestructibility of good or a triumph of truth coming forward despite all illusions. An ideal of heroic triumph would be the union of that power and openness, when good would be both indestructible and overt. Whereas „tragedy ends with an event in which good proves to be powerless in conflict with evil” (Tischner 1998a, p. 64). The possibility of tragedy and the perspective of the tragic are an inherent possibility of every drama and encounter.

IV. Beyond Heidegger's ontology. Evil as appearance

According to Tischner, agathology transcends ontology. Therefore, he argued against the Heideggerian fundamental ontology. He criticized Heidegger, saying that in his philosophy there is a lack of agathology, i.e., a philosophy of good and evil, because he had not gone beyond the sphere of the sense of being.

Heidegger's world is perfectly filled with senses: one sense refers us to another sense, all is 'something-in-regard-to-something', all emerges out of *Dasein* and returns to *Dasein*. In that world, though, there is lack of what is most human: there is no home where human good is born, no temple where one meets God, no graveyard where one meets the dead. (...) From the standpoint of pure ontology, it is unclear why *Dasein* fears death. It is all the same to be or not to be, isn't it? *Angst* will reveal the depth of its meaning only when we uncover its deeper core, which is the presence of evil (Tischner 1991, p. 102).

It is agathology which constitutes the heart of metaphysics. *Dasein* in its Being has concern not for Being, says Tischner, but for justification, salvation (Tischner 1998b, p. 168).

The inspiration for a polemic attitude towards Heidegger was provided by the works of Lévinas. Tischner was also inspired by Lévinas to believe

that good is beyond ontology. According to Lévinas, the good is „beyond being” and the logic of being is other than the logic of the good. Responsibility is a responsibility for evil that touches Another. The consciousness of responsibility cannot be explained in terms of ontological categories, though. „A being as a being is not responsible for another being. Responsibility is where there is a consciousness of good and evil,” wrote Tischner (Tischner 1991, p. 111). On the other hand he could not accept Lévinas’s identification of being and evil. Being as such is evil for Lévinas: it is governed only by the logic of survival. Thus, it requires justification. „Lévinas has nothing against giving being over to Manichaeism,” wrote Tischner (Lévinas 1991, p. 8). His agathological conception of evil is also a polemic with Lévinas’s standpoint.

In his agathology of evil, Tischner questions both St. Thomas’ privative conception of evil (evil is lack of good, evil does not exist) and the Manichean conception (evil exists independently of good). In this way, he tries to transcend the irreconcilable opposition, stating that evil is neither a being nor non-being. What is evil, then? It is a phenomenon.

The stance taken is in harmony with the classic philosophy of evil, which says that evil is lack of being; what is a phenomenon after all if not a lack of being, pretending to be a being? Yet, we are not in contradiction with the Manichean conception of evil, according to which evil exists as an independent being. Maybe it exists so, but we content ourselves with analysing only phenomena. In this way at the starting point, we have adopted a neutral attitude, not taking any of the sides which are at odds (Tischner 1998a, p. 299).

Between being and non-being there is something «third»: a phenomenon, or to be more precise, an appearance. Although it does not exist really, evil «appears» (Tischner 1991, p. 17).

Thus, Tischner proposes a shift from an ontological analysis of evil to a phenomenological analysis. Ontology tries to reduce the problem of evil to the problem of being. The question put by ontology asks about the manner in which evil exists. Whereas „the phenomenological way of asking about the essence of evil means to throw light on the phenomenon of evil and differentiate it from other phenomena, even those that evil is most closely associated with” (Tischner 1998a, p. 176). The conception of evil as an appearance comes from Tischner’s description of the essence of evil. Evil threatens and tempts at the same time. If evil were something real, i.e. something realised, it could not tempt one to realise it. It cannot be said, either, that evil does not exist, for then it would not be able to terrify or threaten.

Thus, the problem of how evil exists cannot be solved. Therefore, it ought to be suspended. A way of thus «bracketing» is limiting the problem of evil to the sphere of the phenomenal. Into this sphere we are led by the conception of evil as a phenomenon. Thus, we do not ask about the existence of evil, but we say that it is given, which means it is really experienced. Tischner wants to analyse how evil works, how the dynamics of its essence are manifested and not if and how it exists.

V. The demonic perspective

Yet, evil does not appear between I and you as a result of my or your action. It can appear as a result of an action only because it is already possible. As a phenomenon evil turns out to be an apparition. „Evil enters among people, taking advantage of the ambiguity of objects and events, an ambiguity, which comes from the sheer existence of many standpoints on the same thing” (Tischner 1998a, pp. 151-152). Evil threatens and tempts. Therefore, according to Tischner, the phenomenon of evil has a few conditions of possibility. The first one is suffering connected to committed evil as well as threatening evil. Evil threatens with death (here Tischner analyses the relation between the Master and Slave in G. W. Hegel), with suffering (here he gives an analysis of the Great Inquisitor’s speech), finally with damnation (which is illustrated by Kierkegaardian „sickness unto death”). The second condition is an illusory feeling of pleasure and happiness which evil promises.

These two conditions reveal the two faces of the same evil, which repels and fascinates. Finally, the third condition is the presence of another human being. Evil always appears in the interpersonal sphere. If it threatens and tempts, it must be something more than just an ordinary passive phenomenon. The concept of evil presupposes then some activity and, therefore, some subjectivity of evil.

It also leads us to the question of its existence, although Tischner tried to «bracket» this problem. He recalls here the biblical story about the fall. Between Adam and Eve there is a voice of Good (God) and a voice of evil (Demon). „Does the third one exist really?,” he asks. „This question is an eternal torment to ontology, which believes that only what is real can act. Man, in his action, succumbs to what is and to what is not, as well” (Tischner 1998a, p. 300). It is this that the essence of drama consists in. „Evil means that good beings stand to each other as enemies. But what puts them in

such an opposition? Who? Fate, blindness, a demon? (...) So before good becomes an opponent of another good, evil has emerged in between them and become the fundamental principle of tragedy" (Tischner 1998a, p. 65). Instead of asking what is, we ought to ask who and what we listen to.

Tischner also refers to Descartes's metaphor of the malign genius (*genius malignus*). „It is a phenomenon which appears between «I» and «you». We create this apparition with our own sight, and it creates us a bit, too; it has in itself the mirror of the malign genius, who blurs the true image" (Karoń-Ostrowska 2003, p. 140). Descartes's malign genius rules using illusions, misleads and deludes. Evil understood as an appearance embraces some untruth, an illusion or lie. It conceals some good and impedes man's reaching it. „In this metaphor, evil can be put down to a «fall into untruth.» Man deluded by the malign genius knows not what he does. The malign genius flings him into darkness. In the darkness, even the noblest deeds turn into their opposites" (Tischner 1998b, p. 16). For that reason, it is worth mentioning in passing that Tischner believed that „Descartes's philosophy should be interpreted in terms of dialogue rather than philosophy of being" (Tischner 1998b, p. 217).

Still, there is a limit to the action of this appearance: will. Man becomes evil because there is an evil possibility. Yet, he becomes evil on his own, when he adopts this possibility. Evil needs man to become.

It is not able to destroy man if man does not destroy himself. Hence, evil is not only an ordeal for the reason, but also an ordeal for the will. At this point, the appearance reveals both its power and powerlessness. Powerlessness, for the appearance alone as an appearance can do nothing. But also power, for it can make use of the forces slumbering in man and induce him, against himself, to destroy himself (Tischner 1998a, p. 193).

Tischner described various dimensions of dialogic evil in *The Philosophy of Drama*. There we can read: „Phenomenology was to be, according to Husserl's intentions, a science of the essences of phenomena, based on ordinary experiences of an object. If so, then meaning to analyse the essence of the phenomenon of evil, it has to take into particular consideration the experience of encounter" (Tischner 1998a, p. 175). Authentic encounters free us from evil, as they transform the land of exile into the Promised Land.

Man's world is a scene of his drama. Man comes into this world and seeks a home in the world, he raises temples to God here, builds roads, has a workshop, finds the cemeteries of the ancestors, among whom he will rest. What does it

mean that the world is a scene of drama? It means: the manner of experiencing the world cannot be separated from the manner of experiencing others, and especially from the manner of living a drama with another man (Tischner 1998a, p. 220).

The experience of the earth is not immediate then, but mediated through encounter. Only the mutuality of encounter makes the earth the Promised Land. Tischner saw four fundamental places of the Promised Land: home, workplace, temple, cemetery. Evil makes a home into a hiding place, a workplace into a penal colony, desolates temples, and changes cemeteries into the territory of apparitions.

VI. The structural perspective

In *The Debate over the Existence of Man*, Tischner extended his conception of dialogic, or rather anti-dialogic, evil, as described by agathology, to the conception of structural evil. The point of reference was for him the Kantian conception of radical evil. For Kant, radical evil consists in defying principles and comes from human weakness.

According to Tischner, „Kant does not reach the level which is deeper than the level of deeds, the level which might be called the level of «participation» by human being in «structures»” (Tischner 1998b, p. 29). Kant did not «appreciate» the weight of evil which might invade the principles as well. „The man of the Enlightenment turned out to be a good dancer, who danced well but to the wrong music. Kant said «fulfil your duty». Those who were convinced they were «fulfilling their duty» found themselves in the dock in Nuremberg” (Tischner 1998b, p. 31).

The death camps were the place where structural evil was manifested. Evil acquired there a new quality. The problem is not any more the guilt of the deed, but the guilt of participation. The new quality of structural evil also consists in demonstrating the possibility of radical Manichaeism. In the death camps evil crossed the limit of human comprehension. It became something much deeper than defiance of rules and faithlessness to the law.

Tischner appreciated Jean Nabert's description of evil as what is „impossible to justify” (Tischner 1998b, p. 35). He believed, though, that the „impossibility of justification” does not close the horizon of rationalisation. The reason of evil is always in greater evil, and the reason of greater evil is in yet greater evil. „The logic of manifestation suggests that in an «evil man» operates a «demon»” (Tischner 1998b, p. 38). A demon is not

any more the one who tempts and deceives by showing evil as good. „Demonic evil reveals itself as a reality in which we take part. Not in the sense, though, that we are demons, but that in our action and through it a phenomenon of the demonic may manifest itself” (Tischner 1998b, p. 38).

To be sure, Tischner states that it is not the demonism which was studied by theology. Still, writing that the demonic is intelligent, that it strikes selected persons and places, he allows for its personal character. Not only the Nazi death camps were an embodiment of demonic evil, but also the structures of the totalitarian communist state with its gulags. It manifested itself there in the conviction that in the name of the highest values, represented by the communist powers, one ought to sacrifice the closest values. Tischner recalls the case of 13-year-old Pronia Kolibin, who denounced his mother for stealing some grain to feed her starving children. He wrote: „Manichean reversal also affects the concept of heroism. (...) One must have courage to do evil so that good could come from evil” (Tischner 1998b, p. 53).

VII. Evil and freedom or a piece of theodicy

So, there are three manifestations of evil: axiological evil, agathological evil and structural evil. However, let us ask: why evil? How to justify its action? We enter here on the grounds of Theodicy, which was not given much place in Tischner's writings. His answer is not new. It goes back to old arguments known from the long tradition. One cannot encounter another without presupposing possible evil. He refers here to the tradition of knowing through the negative. „In drama good and evil do not stand far apart from each other, as they do in the kingdom of concepts, but they intertwine at one common time, in one common space and in one and the same man. Thus intertwined, they create an essential perspective on the history of man. That which silence is for sound and light for colour, good and evil is for a face” (Tischner 1998a, p. 84). If sound is impossible without silence, is evil possible without good?

Thinking is not awakened as a result of the simple sight of what is. It also does not arise as a result of the intuition that something is not, or that something is composed of being and non-being. Thinking is not a simple reflection of the state of things. The specific concern of thinking that rouses it from slumber is the „conjunction of properties” that characterize human tragedy (Tischner 1982a, p. 491).

In such instances, Tischner often referred to Hegel's thesis that spirit finds its truth only when it looks the negative in the face and tarries with it. But with one reservation: in the place of the Hegelian negative, Tischner puts the concept of the tragic.

First of all, freedom is tragic. Here, we come across the second answer to why evil? In the philosophy of drama, freedom is an ability to choose between good and evil. „Evil, threatening and enticing, all by itself presupposes some room for freedom in man. The more evil entices and threatens, the clearer it reminds that man has some room for choice, some freedom. So, evil's unintentional gift is the experience of freedom, freedom put to the test” (Tischner 1998a, p. 178). Defining freedom as a manner of existence of Good, according to Tischner, we have to accept the possibility of evil as a condition of freedom. Is then the experience of freedom an unintentional gift of evil, or rather is the possibility of evil the necessary condition of freedom?

No matter how we would answer this hard question, one thing seems doubtless: there is no Theodicy to answer the question «why evil?» when we face the evil which does not threaten and tempt but smites. Such an experience seems to invalidate Tischner's distinction between evil and calamity. The calamities that ruined Job were not evil, as Tischner understood it, because they did not have their agent. Thus, they were not of a dialogic character (interpersonal evil). Still, Job had an argument with God, who did not cause the evil indeed, but still allowed it. In the perspective of Theodicy, and therefore in relation to God, calamities are evil, too.

Tischner dedicated three short texts to Job's experience. Two of them are introductions to the theatrical stagings of *The Book of Job* in Czesław Miłosz's translation (1982) and Karol Wojtyła's theatre play *Job* (1991). Arguments he referred to in those two texts are traditional and completely unsatisfactory. In the first one, he said „*The Book of Job* is a book about the faithfulness of man subjected to an ordeal” (Tischner 2004, p. 58). „In the second one, that suffering, though unfathomable, creates situations in which man's faith matures” (Tischner 2004, p. 61).

Only the third text from *The Debate Over the Existence of Man* contains drama. Tried by evil (in Tischner's language: calamity), Job is a monad without windows. He is different, other for others, insulated. Such has he become for God as well. On the part of his «friends», he is divided by evil: a suspicion that he has sinned. „True otherness comes from evil, from participating in evil.” So Job has become a closed monad. Friends strive to console him, „But the more consolations they offer, the deeper his other-

ness becomes" (Tischner 1998b, p. 224). For that reason, Tischner defines evil as «anti-gravitation». Evil repulses all and everyone (Tischner 1998b, p. 225). But Job has an argument not only with friends. Firstly, he has it with Another.

Job bears Another in himself. He bears Him as his essential suffering. At the bottom of the pain of the body, under the cover woven out of wounds, at the origin of calamities that have been encountered, there spreads He – the One who is so Other, as other are human pains and suffering. (...) Another is «other», though He is in him, in Job. He is his own calamity, his own personal curse. Another has invaded the monad and closed its windows. The monad is not so much «without windows» as with «shut windows». Another is pain, which does not allow one to have oneself. One cannot live without Another, but with Another it is impossible to live, either (Tischner 1998b, p. 226).

Seeking an answer to the question «why evil?», we come across the limit of the phenomenal. „Why does Another show himself in the diversity of pain? Why doesn't He let one who is for-oneseelf reconcile with oneself and be oneself? Why is Another against Job and forces Job to be a being-against-oneseelf? To these questions there is no answer (Tischner 1998b, p. 226). Wrote Tischner. Job lives on the border between revenge and silence. On the one hand, revenge is possible, the wife encourages: „curse God and die”. On the other, silence: „The monad's windows have shut. Silence has fallen. Only from time to time the silence is completed by a moan, some sadness of the sight, some hopelessness of paths being grown over with grass, where someone used to come to knock at the window” (Tischner 1998b, p. 243).

Is there any other possibility? A possibility not only to open the monad's shut windows, but also to overcome the temptation of modern Manichaeism? The Debate Over the Existence of Man, as the title says, is for Tischner not really a debate whether after „God's death” man still exists, but a debate how to free oneself from the demon's power. For instance Kant believed that, to do it, «good will» and the cooperation of the human community are enough. Tischner claimed that grace is necessary for man. Surely, the demon's power is not broken by such things as derision, „man's death”, or „sickness onto death”.

Derision is, in the moral sphere, a manifestation of that freedom the principle of which has become the negative. Derision is a special kind of harmful laughter, which does not destroy being in its existence but in its value. But for derision to be real derision, it has to be universal. Neither in Socrates nor in Nietzsche was

derision universal. Such derision, carried to the end, would not stop before any sacredness. (...) One who derides tempts to defile the highest values. He suggests defeat in the highest fight, offering instead a pride coming from a unique trial of forces (Tischner 1992, p. 154).

Then, „man's death” will, according to Tischner, lead to a conviction that what man did was not done by him, for he never existed. Man's death is a kind of game.

All that looks as if it were real, but nothing is real. In particular, there is no man: «man is dead», consumed by what he himself invented. And since «man is dead», dead are Hell and Heaven as well. There are none of those for whom these have been prepared” (Tischner 1998b, p. 64).

How then was man's death brought about, since he could be annihilated neither by Dante's hell, nor Descartes's malign genius, nor Kant's exceptions to the general rule, nor the Great Inquisitor, nor other demons of the present day? Man, according to Tischner, annihilated himself alone, when he discovered that he is not able to be good. Finally, the Kierkegaardian „sickness unto death” means lack of all hope and a lack of the basis for hope. „Sickness unto death” is the hopelessness of impossible death. Evil man as such realises that he has no right to be, and yet he exists.

VIII. Grace

However, none of these attitudes give one the hope to free oneself from the demon's power. Tischner is primarily interested in overcoming evil. If evil is bound up with fate, then good is bound up with grace. „Grace binds a person to a person with the bonds of participation in good” (Tischner 1991, p. 101). Tischner did not reduce the concept of grace to religious contexts. Grace has the structure of a gift, it is good given by a person to a person. The gift of grace is a disinterested gift and it is directed towards freedom. According to Tischner, man is a being who, above all, needs grace and is able to receive it. And grace is a „cure for evil”, which has penetrated into the depth of man. The word „cure”, as any other term used for grace (revelation, salvation), reveals evil as an „illness”, blindness or damnation. „Good is graceful, evil knows not grace. Grace explains what seems inexplicable: but how in the world of evil, within the logic of mutuality understood as revenge, can good appear?” (Tischner 1998b, p. 220).

Grace also has the structure of hope. Already in his early book *The World of Human Hope*, there appeared a motif that accompanied him all his life, and indeed can be seen as the most important one. Tischner claims there that hope and grace are identical. „When the core of my essence is endangered, my hope seeks the fundamentals of trust in the origin of my being” (Tischner 1992, p. 297). Within the horizon of hope the existence of evil turns out to be an illusion of existence.

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