

# **AUGUSTINIAN PRIVATION THEORY OF EVIL: MATTERS ARISING**

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## **Introduction: The Problem of Evil as Prevalent**

Among the all the problems in philosophical inquiry, the problem of evil - a problem almost as old as philosophy itself - occupies such a central place that no one, not even the non-philosopher can escape being confronted by it. On the ordinary human experience, it is there as an enigma, but for the philosopher it is encountered on the semantic and logical level. This gives rise to the different perspectives or approaches from which this fundamental problem is treated. While the common man encounters and considers the problem practically in his day to day real-life experiences, the philosopher is confronted with the theoretical and logical issues involved in the statement of the problem. However these two perspectives of the problem are

never isolated. While the latter necessarily involves the former and is generated by it, the former alone does not exhaust the issues involved in the problem. Hence Langdon Gilkey rightly observes:

Persons are thinking and reflective as well as merely existing beings. They have unanswered puzzles in their minds as well as unrelieved estrangement in their souls. They have sceptical doubts about the truth they possess as well as despair about the meaning of the life that is theirs. They are curious about intellectual answers as well as hungry for a new mode of being or existing. And clearly these two levels, the existential and the intellectual - reflective, are interacting and interrelated all the time.<sup>1</sup>

For John Hick:

The problem of evil is an intellectual problem about agonizing realities, and probably no one who has not first agonized in their presence is qualified to think realistically about them in their absence; but nevertheless the agonizing and the thinking are distinct, and no amount of the one can do duty for the other.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, insofar as the problem confronts everyone, no one is excluded from finding or searching for a solution. Our choice of this topic is greatly influenced by the confrontation of the problem on both the existential and logical levels. It is thus an attempt to understand the puzzle as such.

For the purpose of this paper we have chosen Saint Augustine's account of the problem as our basis of reflection. The concern here is with the problem of evil as associated with Christian religion. This is so because, in itself, the problem has traditionally been associated with the truth claims of the Christian religion. Indeed the problem refers to what "many people regard as the clearest indication that there could not be a

God.”<sup>3</sup> The Augustinian account is founded on the Christian tradition that affirms divine omnipotence and benevolence while at the same time affirming that evil really exists. The problem is how to reconcile these propositions given that their rational credibility has been challenged. As such, the problem of evil for him (Augustine) is “the problem of understanding the reasons (or possible reasons) God has for permitting evil”.<sup>4</sup> This is also the background from which this problem is approached in this paper. A critical analysis and discussion of the main issues involved in Augustine's response to the problem is the main task here. Our attempt, it is hoped, will help towards a greater understanding of the problem which in turn will assist us to cope with it as much as possible either on the ordinary existential level or in its logical form. It is worthwhile to note that this study does not attempt, in any way, to resolve all the intricacies of the problem of evil and exhaust the variety of opinions. That would be beyond the scope of our inquiry and too much of a task to accomplish in this paper.

### **Issues involved in the problem of evil**

The problem of evil has, in its long history, been formulated in various ways and manners. Its origin lies in the ever persistent and enduring question of God in the whole course of philosophical development. A cursory look at the diverse expressions of the problem reveals that they all touch on essentially the same thing: the difficulty in reconciling the Christian understanding of God as perfectly good and powerful on the one hand and the experience of evil in the world on the other. This is what makes the problem an inescapable one.

The list of the meanings and kinds of evil in our world is

by no means exhaustive. However it is important to mention that our focus here is on moral evil which, more often than not, is concerned with and leads to other forms of evil in our world. What is the cause or origin of such defect which in turn inflicts some form of discomfort or suffering either on the subject itself or on others? This is what Augustine struggled with.

### **Background to Augustine's account**

The problem of evil was a lifelong preoccupation of Augustine (354-430) and the main lines of thought which he established have been followed by a majority of subsequent Christian thinkers. He wrote with an unbroken zeal about this problem and his whole intellectual resources were turned to practically everything about evil; regarding its nature, the privation theory; about its origin, the human free will and concerning its place in the world, the principle of plenitude and so on. Clear testimonies to this preoccupation are the many and great works he produced all of which in one way or another dwelt on evil. According to John Hick:

From his earliest to his latest writings Augustine was continually turning to the problem of evil. His characteristic teaching on the subject appears not only in the great works of his maturity, *The City of God*, *The Confessions*, and *The Enchiridion*, but also in a succession of earlier books going back to his controversies with the Manicheans.<sup>5</sup>

In its practical aspect, the problem was for him a stumbling block of immense proportions, effectively postponing his conversion to Christianity for some time. However, Augustine's intellectual background was subjected to certain religious and philosophical influences predominant in his time, especially the ascendancy of Scripture and Neo-Platonism. In

this connection L. H. Hackstaff remarked that: “Indeed, it is not too great an exaggeration to say that Neo-Platonism provided Augustine and the Christian Platonists who followed him with the theoretical substructure on which their theology was built.”<sup>6</sup>

In the same way A. G. Turnbull said:

To understand St. Augustine, one must be familiar with the language and ideas of Plotinus from whom he borrowed not only scattered thoughts, but the best part of his doctrine on the soul, on providence, on the transcendence of God, on evil as the negation of good and on freedom; and his theory of time and eternity.<sup>7</sup>

However, as E. Gilson commented: “that Plato has influenced Augustine, through Plotinus, is beyond discussion, but his doctrine cannot be reduced to those of either Plato or Plotinus [...]”<sup>8</sup> Thus, it is quite pertinent to bear in mind those influences on Augustine in order to fully understand his doctrine on the problem of evil.

### **Augustine's Approach to the Problem of evil**

Augustine's treatment of the problem of evil is so multifaceted that the theme is found often overlapping in his writings. However, in all his works, his treatise *De libero arbitrio voluntatis* (*On Free Choice of the Will*) appeals much more, especially on the problem of evil than his doctrinal treatises of later years. As L. H. Hackstaff said: [...] it may very well be argued that neither of these, nor any other of his works, better illustrates Augustine the philosopher, the Christian Platonist, the original thinker, the seeker after wisdom, than *De libero arbitrio voluntatis*<sup>9</sup>

Furthermore, R. Douglas Geivett contended that “[...] the treatise on free will represented Augustine's mature analysis and

earned for him the reputation that he enjoyed within the Church.”<sup>10</sup> As such, our citations in this paper will be mainly taken from this work.

The treatise *On the Free Choice of the Will* was composed by Augustine in the form of a dialogue between him and a friend named Evodius. It began appropriately with a request from Evodius: “Tell me, please, whether God is not the cause of evil.”<sup>11</sup> To this Augustine replied: “But if you know or believe that God is good (and it is not right to believe otherwise), God does not do evil.”<sup>12</sup> This initial response is ingeniously proleptic of Augustine's overall strategy for treating the problem of evil. From the beginning it is thus clear that a prior conviction and commitment to the goodness of God precludes Augustine's treatment of the problem of evil. This plays a crucial role in his theodicy. It cannot be overemphasized. Hence R. Douglas Geivett said: Augustine's theodicy can be understood only to the extent that one fully appreciates the importance he places on the possibility of demonstrating that a good God exists. This has not always been recognised by his readers.<sup>13</sup>

However this point has been subjected to conflicting interpretations as R. Douglas rightly acknowledged.<sup>14</sup> For the purpose of this study it is thus necessary to understand this theistic proof.

### **Analysis and Discussion of Matters Arising**

It is on some of the problems and objections associated with this Augustinian privation account that our critical analysis and discussion will be based. Precisely, our attention will be focused on the following issues:

- i. The identification of being with goodness

- ii. Privation nature of evil
- iii. Free Will defence
- iv. Best possible world.
- v. Evil as “no-thing” or “non-being”.
- vi. God's foreknowledge and Human Freedom.

We do not, in any way, intend to pursue all the intricate and complex nature of these issues nor exhaust the variety of opinions on them. They are open to further explorations from several perspectives and approaches. Our study in this paper is just one of such attempts.

### **i. Being and Goodness**

Among the objections against Augustine's account is the problem of identifying being with goodness which is one of the great philosophic conceptions that have inspired Western thought through the passage of several centuries. However, such thought, in spite of its historical influence and broad scope, is liable to and has been given different uses and interpretations. It suffices to note that Augustine does not ignore or belittle the terrible evil that is now part of the fabric of the universe, but rather seeks to understand it and fit it into his overall assessment that creation is good. If this world is the 'best', it is 'best' despite the corruption, suffering and sin that now exists.

For Augustine, the whole creation is good. Every being is good insofar as it has being.<sup>15</sup> This is the metaphysical bedrock (presupposition) underlying the privation theory. The main objections concerning this assertion are: If being is equated with goodness, is 'good' then pure or self-subsistent? Consequently, in what way can the world be said to be good in spite of the corruptibility in it? In other words, is this the “best possible

world” for God? Could He not have created a more perfect world than this? H. J. McCloskey expressed these issues as follows:

Can evil be self-subsistent? Can good be self-subsistent? A major point made by exponents of the privation theory is that evil is parasitic on good (being, existence), and cannot be self-subsistent. Evil cannot exist in isolation. This is rightly said to be true of evils such as pain, suffering, disease. For there to be pain there must be a being who is experiencing the pain; so too with disease and suffering... Further, one can no more have pure goodness, good existing alone, than one can have evil existing alone. What one finds are good things, good men, good actions; as with evil, evil things, evil men, evil actions, evil states of affairs. This does not imply that good and evil are not real phenomena. We think of colours, hardness, and other properties of physical objects as real features of things, yet they cannot be self-subsistent. So, too, with the lack of self-subsistence of good and evil.<sup>16</sup>

Now, in the light of the foregoing, how is Augustine's identification of being with goodness to be understood? If being is good, what status do we ascribe to good? Is good pure, self-subsistent in itself?

It is quite obvious and indisputable that the context of this underlying metaphysics of Augustine's account is Neo-Platonism. Within this philosophical tradition and background, being is defined in terms of the possession of a certain trait, be it excellence, or immutability, or whatever. In such mode of metaphysical discourse, being and the degree to which a thing has a particular attribute are not distinct notions (or realities). For example, in Plato's own case, metaphysical discourse and axiological discourse are not readily separable; in fact they are not even mentally distinguished: being is a matter of being excellent. If there is no excellence peculiar to a particular type of

thing, then there is little warrant in calling that sort of thing a being. Augustine's identification of being with goodness therefore becomes intelligible and is to be understood precisely within this metaphysical locution of equating being with good in a qualified sense. Understandably this kind of metaphysical discourse arose out of the above historical conditions and tradition which as John Hick argued “must be regarded as an independent philosophical position ... an inheritance from the Neo-Platonic vision of reality, in which the degrees of being and goodness together correspond to descending emanations of the ultimate divine One.”<sup>17</sup> But it must be noted that Augustine adapted rather than adopted this emanationists' view of the status of the created world.

Instead of degrees of creaturely participation in the divine reality there is for him (Augustine) an absolute gap between God and His creation. In terms of this radically theistic understanding of creation the identity of being and goodness cannot, or at any rate, ought not to have the same meaning as for Plotinus; and in so far as Augustine does seem to intend it in this way we can only say that he was still being unconsciously a Neo-Platonist at a point at which Neo-Platonism is incompatible with Christian teaching.<sup>18</sup>

For Augustine, there was no such thing as bare existence, mere being there as one of the occupants of space-time. He claimed that existence always and necessarily exhibits certain categorical attributes or characteristics that are intrinsically good and valuable. Of these the most fundamental, he held, are “measure, form and order.”<sup>19</sup> Accordingly, to exist is to have these good qualities. And everything has them in its own appropriate manner. He repeatedly stressed that if an entity lost all its goodness it would thereby cease to exist.<sup>20</sup> And yet the

degrees in which created entities approximate to the Good are clearly not degrees of bare existence. For Augustine, “bare existence in contrast to non-existence,” as John Hick rightly interpreted him, “is not a matter of degree,”<sup>21</sup> rather the degree to which the existing entities necessarily share in the basic categorical characteristics, in their own appropriate manner, indicates their place in the rising scale of goods. Thus Augustine affirmed wholeheartedly the goodness of creaturely being. However, the adequacy and sound reliability of such background is open to criticisms of all kinds, but this does not mean that it is utterly nonsensical and unintelligible.

It is often asked as a challenge to this perspective: in what sense is this **goodness** of being to be understood? Or as we said previously, in what way can the world be said to be good in spite of the corruptibility in it? How can something be in itself good and yet capable of being corrupted? John Hick characterised this Augustinian basic metaphysical standpoint as “aesthetic rather than ethical ” stressing further that such reasoning “proceeds unhesitatingly in terms of essences and substances rather than in terms of persons and personal relationships.”<sup>22</sup> This contention is particularly directed to the view that the goodness of creaturely being consists in its embodiment of the characteristics of measure, form and order as intrinsically good and valuable. This, in my view, falls short of a proper understanding and complete appreciation of Augustinian theodicy.

The goodness of being which plays a central role in such theodicy is best understood as both ontological and existential. This can be illustrated in terms of a gift and a call - that is, a gift received and simultaneously, a call to respond. The two belong together as two sides of the same coin. This structure of gift and

call does not fit into the Enlightenment view that considers this a process of self-positing and self-creation by human powers alone. However, it is conceived in terms like that of the goodness of creaturely being (human goodness) which is both gifted by God and yet realised by such being.

This is the reality that Martin Buber affirms: “I have been surrendered’ and know at the same time ‘it depends on me’ [...] I must take it upon myself to live both in one, and lived both are one.”<sup>23</sup> Karl Jaspers gives voice to the same paradox when he wrote: “I am responsible for myself because I will myself in the certainty of this original self-being - and yet I am only given to myself because this self-willing needs something more.”<sup>24</sup> Instead of the Cartesian “I think: therefore, I am,”<sup>25</sup> or versions of John MacMurray, “I do: therefore, I am,” the Augustinian goodness of creaturely being is best stated as: **I am good: therefore, I am.** This goodness is thus not external to human nature or an addendum but is an intrinsic possibility that allows or opens us to receive what we cannot attain by ourselves.

From this perspective, evil is rightly described as a denial, a lack, a privation of being and goodness.

## ii. Privation nature of evil

Based on the central theme of Augustine's theodicy, the identification of being with goodness, the point on the goodness of God and the created order become evident. Fundamentally, God's existence is posited as the necessary ground of eternal truths which Augustine sought to establish as “more excellent” than our minds that entertain them. Inasmuch as all eternal truths prove, in principle, to be superior to finite human minds, their source must be an immutable Mind. Augustine's argument is

represented, by R. Douglas Geivett, in the following form:

1. If there is something immutable and superior to reason, then God exists.
2. Truth is immutable and superior to reason.
3. Therefore, God exists.<sup>26</sup>

Augustine proposes that by this “sure though somewhat tenuous form of reasoning” one cannot deny that God exists; it is, he says, an “indubitable fact.”<sup>27</sup>

From this initial step in his theistic proof, Augustine proceeds to offer a demonstration that God is “Creator of all good things which He Himself transcends in excellence.”<sup>28</sup> He is both the perfectly good and the infinite beauty; and the eternal, immutable, and supremely real Being. He has created 'out of nothing' all that exists other than Himself. God is the ultimate of being and goodness, the ground of eternal truth; the eternal Form, through which “every temporal thing can receive its form,”<sup>29</sup> “Nothing can give itself form, since nothing can give to itself what it does not have.”<sup>30</sup> All contingent forms depend for their existence upon the eternal Form. In John Hick's words, “a universe of wonderful complexity reflects the Creator's goodness from many angles and in every possible shape and colour.”<sup>31</sup> From this argument that eternal Form is the provenance of all existing things, Augustine concluded that “all good things, whether great or small, can come only from God.”<sup>32</sup> This means, conversely, both that the form of a thing is a good and that only goods proceed from God. In other words, God is dissociated from the cause of evil. Where then is the source of evil to be located?

In accounting for the undoubted presence and power of evil, Augustine attributed all evil, both moral and natural, directly or indirectly to the free will of human persons or more appropriately, to the wrong choices of free rational beings. “A wicked will (*improba voluntas*), therefore, is the cause of all evil.”<sup>33</sup> “The cause of evil is the defection of the will of a being who is mutably good from the Good which is immutable. This happened first, in the case of angels, and afterwards, that of man.”<sup>34</sup> “Either the will is the first cause of sin, or else there is no first cause.”<sup>35</sup> By these, Augustine means that from the exercise of human free will come all distortions to created goods. Such distortions constitute evil.

From the foregoing, Augustine's understanding of evil is evident. For him, the whole creation is good (*omnis natura bonum est*).<sup>36</sup> Evil, then, is the corruption of good. Such a corruption is never total lest that in which the evil inheres ceases to exist altogether. Every being is good insofar as it has being. Evil is a parasite on being; it is not any kind of positive substance or force as such but consist rather in the going wrong of God's creation in some of its parts - it is essentially the malfunctioning of something that in itself is good. Augustine's most frequent phrase to define evil is *privatio boni*, 'privation of goods'; but more or less synonymously with *privatio* he use also *deprivatio*, *corruptio*, *amissio*, *vitium*, *defectus*, *indigentia*, and *negatio*. However it should be noted, as John Hick commented:

Prior to Augustine a privative view of evil appears in Christian literature in Origen, *De Principiis*, ii.9,2, and *Commentary of St John*, ii.13; Athanasius, *Contra Gentes*, chap. 7 and *De Incarnatione*, iv, 5; Basil the Great, *Hexameron*, homily 2, para. 4; and Gregory of Nyssa, *the Great Catechism*, chap. 7.<sup>37</sup>

What distinguishes privation in Augustine is that such is not a simple lack of goodness or a less exalted form of being in a well-ordered scale. Evil for him cannot be said to exist as a separate entity. It is on the contrary, the absence of proper being in a creature. “Evil has no positive nature; but the loss of good (*ammissio boni*) has received the name 'evil'.”<sup>38</sup> Evil is negative, a lack, a loss, a privation.

What, after all, is anything we call evil except the privation of good? In animal bodies, for instance, sickness and wounds are nothing but the privation of health. When a cure is effected, the evils which were present (i.e. the sickness and the wounds) do not retreat and go elsewhere. Rather, they simply do not exist anymore. For such evil is not a substance; the wound or the disease is a defect of the bodily substance which, as a substance, is good.<sup>39</sup>

In relation to measure, form and order (*modus, species ordo*) as constituting a creature's goodness, Augustine says evil is:

nothing but the corruption of natural measure, form or order. What is called an evil nature is a corrupt nature. If it were not corrupt it would be good. But when it is corrupted, so far as it remains a natural thing, it is good. It is bad only so far as it is corrupted.<sup>40</sup>

This view of evil as corruption of good is an adaptation of Plotinus' thought and an outright rejection of the Manichaean dualistic claim that evil exists in its own right as one of the original constituents of the universe. Evil is not a “thing” at all. Quite the opposite, it is a “no-thing”, an absence of being. Disease in animals is an absence of health. Vice in humans is an absence of virtue. When a disease is cured, this does not mean that it has gone somewhere else. I do not overcome my vice by giving it to another. My lack of virtue is not a “demon” which must be cast out. It is a gap in my moral life that needs to be

filled.<sup>41</sup>

What is evident from these passages is that, as Augustine argued, the decrease in the goodness or corruption of the nature of some entity means that the thing in question has, to that extent, become evil. Evil is absence-of-goodness that prevails when anything has defected from the mode of being that is proper to it in God's creative intention. Augustine accordingly, stresses what John Hick interpreted as the “secondary and dependent as well as the negative and privative character”<sup>42</sup> of evil.

There can be no evil where there is no good [...] Nothing evil exists *in itself*, but only as an evil aspect of some actual entity [...] Evils, therefore, have their source in the good, and unless they are parasitic on something good, they are not anything at all.<sup>43</sup>

A proper interpretation of this view is that, as John Hick rightly said:

Evil is thus fundamentally self-defeating and absurd; for to the extent that it succeeds it can only destroy that upon which it lives. Accordingly a totally evil entity could not possibly exist; so far as anything has being it is good, and if it had no goodness it could not be at all.<sup>44</sup>

Augustine would definitely agree completely with this interpretation. For he emphasized that “If the good is so far diminished as to be utterly consumed, just as there is no good left so there is no existence left.”<sup>45</sup>

### iii. Free Will Defence

On further reflection, it needs to be emphasized that Augustine agrees with the common sense notion that evil is not properly attributed to **every** lack in a being but only to that lack of measure, form or order that **should** be present in a particular nature. In proportion as things are better measured, formed, and ordered they reach a higher level of goodness; but this does not mean that beings with less measure, form and order thereby suffer evil.<sup>46</sup> It is only when there is an **absence** of the measure,

form or order that is **due** to the nature of a being that evil is present. A thing is evil to the extent that it lacks some particular good that is appropriate to it. Evil indeed is defined as “not being in accord with nature” and therefore is found formally only in beings with the freedom to act against nature.<sup>47</sup>

From this Augustine attributed all evil, both moral and natural, directly or indirectly to the wrong choices of free rational beings. “A wicked will is the cause of all evil.”<sup>48</sup> In another work, he emphatically declared: “The cause of evil is the defection of the will of a being who is mutably good from the Good which is immutable. This happened first in the case of angels and, afterwards, that of man.”<sup>49</sup> It consisted, not in choosing positive evil (for there is no positive evil to choose), but in turning away from the higher good, namely God, to a lower good. In *The City of God* Augustine declared further: “For when the will abandons what is above itself, and turns to what is lower, it becomes evil - not because that is evil to which it turns, but because the turning itself is wicked.”<sup>50</sup> According to Augustine, the human will itself, is created by God and is therefore, a created good. It is itself a good because “[...] no righteous act could be performed except by free choice of the will, and [...] God gave it for this reason.”<sup>51</sup>

This Augustine's Free-Will account depends on a subtle distinction between the having of human free will and the exercise of human free will. While the former obtains through divine agency the latter comes about through human agency. Apart from the deductive argument for the goodness of human free will from the fact of its being from God, Augustine further asseverated that there are good inductive grounds for judging that free will is a good. According to him, “even men who lead the most evil lives agree that they cannot live rightly” apart from having free will.<sup>52</sup> Thus freedom, a life for the direction of which the individual is personally and directly responsible, is indispensable for any moral behaviour.

From freedom of the will follows the possibility that it

can be abused. Human free will, itself a created good, is susceptible to deficiency because, being free, it can be directed away from the good. In other words, the will is corruptible. Evil therefore, comes about when such a will is directed away from the good - the movement from immutable to transient goods.<sup>53</sup> When the search for happiness, proper in and of itself, is directed at temporal things rather than eternal things, the unhappy mis-directedness of this search is symptomatic of an abuse of free will, and the result is an evil.<sup>54</sup> This movement of the free will is voluntary rather than compulsory since the will is free; therefore, the exercise of free will is not from God.

To further strengthen this personal moral accountability and responsibility, Augustine denied that the movement of the will to lesser goods is natural to it. This would imply necessity in the performance of evil. “We conclude, therefore, that the movement which, for the sake of pleasure, turns the will from the Creator to the creature belongs to the will itself.”<sup>55</sup> As such, the turning away from the natural order was free, not necessary.<sup>56</sup> According to Augustine therefore, the human 'falling away from God' was not like the falling of stone, controlled by forces outside itself.<sup>57</sup> It was a self-controlled choice of oneself over God. He described the first fall as a sin of pride and not of weakness.<sup>58</sup> The effect was disastrous. The more the created being pretended to be greater, the less it became. It desired to be more than it should be and became less than it could have been.<sup>59</sup>

The corruptibility and the eventual corruption of created things are, for Augustine, but the natural effects of having come from nothing.<sup>60</sup> They come from nothing and the only two alternatives are to be corruptible or not-to-be at all.<sup>61</sup> God was free to create or not create, but he was not free to create incorruptible beings. This would be equivalent to having God create God, another nature supreme in being. But to have two “supreme” beings is contradictory and therefore impossible. God made created beings good but they were goods less than God because they **had to be** corruptible.

Augustine was not disturbed intellectually by such corruption that comes as part of nature. He argued that only imperfection deserves blame and the only reason why an imperfection is called evil is because it is opposed to the very nature of that which it is an imperfection of. This implies then that even though created things may be susceptible of corruption, such a corruption is not in their very nature. They are created good though less than God. Evil results in the free misdirectedness of the created good from the natural order.

#### iv. Best Possible World

Closely related to this primordial goodness of creaturely being is the question of the best possible world. It is often asked: could God not have created a more perfect world than this? A version of this argument is well expressed by H. J. McCloskey:

'Why did not God, if all-perfect, create a better world?' Even if it were true that this world is wholly good in the sense that everything in it is good, we can still properly ask why God did not do better by way of avoiding the kinds of privations he did not avoid.<sup>63</sup>

It may be asked here: in what terms is the 'best possible world' to be understood and described? This procedure is characteristic of Leibniz, for, as he pointed out, it is sometimes the case that we use words or combinations of words to express an idea, and we assume that since we can understand the individual words in the combination or recall using or someone else having used these words, the words must be meaningful and the idea or ideas they express not contradictory. But

[...] we cannot use a definition in an argument without first making sure that it is a real definition, or that it contains no contradiction [...] We often think of impossible chimeras, for example, of the highest degree of swiftness, of the greatest number [...] It is therefore in this sense that we can say that there are true and false ideas according as the thing which is in question is possible or not.<sup>64</sup>

John Hick stressed the same point in this way:

It is conceivable that there are centaurs and mermaids on Mars or elsewhere: but to affirm this merely because it is conceivable, and because it must be the case if every possible kind of being is to exist, would be to have turned the corner from rational speculation into uncontrolled fantasy.<sup>65</sup>

How then is the 'best possible world' to be understood? What makes such world best possible? Does it refer to the state of affairs or the kinds of beings which would populate such possible world?

There are several diverse opinions and views with regard to the meaning of the nature and constituents of such 'best possible world.'<sup>66</sup> Even Christian theists who hold that an all-perfect creator must create the best possible world and that he did precisely this in creating this world, have argued that the best world would be one of richness and variety than that populated solely by the best kind of being.<sup>67</sup> In whatever way it is conceived, explained or argued, the notion of 'best possible world' is self-defeating and lacks definite meaning or relation. For even those who assume or conclude that the present world is the best possible must admit that

[...] while the world contains an immense abundance of species, so that we are not at all inclined to complain of nature's poverty, yet it still does not by any means contain every possible form of life. [...] Perhaps there are also to be found there other forms of life and organizations of matter that are beyond the scope of man's imagination.<sup>68</sup>

The notion of the best possible world is therefore, like that of the fastest possible speed - for 'whatever thing he has made, God could make a better one,' and so on indefinitely. To demand that God, to be above reproach, must make the best of all possible worlds is to demand him to make what is not feasible, and to give existence to something absurd.<sup>69</sup>

From the foregoing line of reasoning, it can be affirmed without fear of any contradiction that the notion of the 'best possible world' is rather an empty, elusive or blanket expression or term, devoid of all meaningful relation and reference. It is a sheer *apriori* speculation, entirely unrelated to human experience. It is therefore not worth asking: why did not God, if all-perfect, create a more perfect or better world? Suffice it to reiterate here the theme of the goodness of creaturely being in terms of gift and a call that is fully a gift received and simultaneously a call to respond. This is a fundamental situation of free dependence of dependent freedom. It takes cognisance of historicity and becoming and as such it is reconcilable with the problem of evil.

But then, can evil be seen from this perspective as a necessary consequence of finitude which occurs in any created universe as some critics implied? Must any universe which God create be marked by possibility of some privation of good? On the strength of the privation theory can we say, in the words of P. M Farrell, that, "Evil is involved in the very concept and definition of contingent being. Evil, [...] is a necessary consequence of contingency"<sup>70</sup>?

On this point, the important distinction between a privation of good and a mere absence of good must be well noted. For Augustine, the universe which God created is one in which every being has all the characteristic qualities and properties proper to beings of its type and has them to the extent proper to beings of its type. Hence he insisted, following the Biblical account in Genesis, that the created order as a whole and of every item in it, as it came from the hand of God, was good.<sup>71</sup> Therefore, there is nothing in the mere existence of finite beings that makes the occurrence of evil (as a privation) inevitable.

However, it must be acknowledged that Augustine and Thomas Aquinas taught that some physical evils are inevitable in the finite order created by God. But in their teaching the inevitability of these evils follows, not from the nature of evil as

privation, but from the sort of universe that God desired to create, namely one in which all possible grades of being and goodness are realised. It is thus the principle of plenitude, not the privation theory of the nature of evil that entails the existence of physical evils.<sup>72</sup>

**v. Evil as “no-thing” or “non-being”**

Also relevant among the criticisms against Augustine's privation theory is the contention that such theodicy is tantamount to or at least reducible to the thesis that evil is illusory and unreal. H. J. McCloskey, arguing along these lines wrote:

Some theists seek a solution by denying the reality of evil or by describing it as a 'privation' or absence of good. They hope thereby to explain it away as not needing a solution. This, in the case of most of the evils which require explanation, seems to amount to little more than an attempt to sidestep the problem simply by changing the name of that which is to be explained. It can be exposed for what it is simply by describing some of the evils which have to be explained.<sup>73</sup>

J. L. Mackie also ascribed a certain amount of disingenuousness to those supporting the privation account: they want to declare evil real or illusory depending on the requirements of the moment.<sup>74</sup> Thus it is often argued that the privation theory is a cruel hoax that mocks and trivialises the wretchedness of those who endure pain and suffering caused by genuinely horrible evils. Other critics note that even if the privation theory is not reducible to the thesis that evil is purely illusory, such a theory is still an affront to one's moral sensibilities, since evil has to be something real and positive in its own right, given the fact that it often exhibits considerable power, vividness, and even violence. Wallace I. Matson claimed: “Really, the 'evil is nonbeing' ploy is a play on words, an unfunny joke. It is a sign of progress, both in philosophical acumen and essential humaneness that little is heard along these lines nowadays.”<sup>75</sup> According to most critics of the privation theory,

evil, in its own right, must be defined as something very real and positive, and on the grounds that evil is often experienced as something lively, forceful and possessed of deadly power.

At this point in our critical analysis, we may ask: how is this criticism applied to Augustine's theodicy? To what an extent can it be truly argued or admitted that evil for Augustine, at least on the basis of his privation theory, is illusory and unreal? In other words, how is evil to be understood as 'no-thing' or 'non-being' given the eloquent evidence of our human experience? Can the privation theory be equated justifiably with the thesis of the illusory nature of evil as often contended by its critics?

In the first place, it is worthwhile to note that the Augustinian thesis does not ignore or belittle the terrible evil that is now part of the fabric of the universe.<sup>76</sup> Although it is true that moral evil, the defection of free beings, was the central problem for Augustine, he did not make light the so-called natural evils of corruption, death, and suffering that seem to plague daily existence. He was distressed by them as much as was any other human, but he found their existence much less mysterious than the existence of sin (moral evil). He was not disturbed intellectually by such corruption that comes as part of nature. He argued that only imperfection deserves blame and the only reason why an imperfection is called evil is because it is opposed to the very nature of that of which it is an imperfection. It does not make sense, he argued, to blame what is as it ought to be.<sup>77</sup> Augustine knew well enough that evil is indeed lively, vivid, obscenely powerful. Several times he described evil as what harms [*quod nocet*];<sup>78</sup> yet he repeatedly insisted that only what is good is capable of causing harm.

The criticism that the privation theory reduces evil as unreal and illusory is, as G. Stanley Kane expounds:

[...] engendered by a failure to see precisely what question the privation theory is an attempt to answer. Its proponents offer it as an account of the *nature* of evil. As such, the theory deals with

something that is clearly recognized to be a real part of human life and experience. To assimilate the theory of evil as privation to the denial of the reality of evil is to confuse a theory of *what* evil is with a denial *that* it is. [...] Certainly Augustine, with the vivid sense of sin and evil that he possessed, had no intention of denying their real existence.

[...] The theory holds that when something evil occurs, what constitutes it as evil is that there is an absence of something good or valuable or worthwhile that under normal circumstances would be present. This claim may or may not be adequate as an account of the nature of evil, but it does not entail that evil does not occur.

[...] the thesis they wish to overthrow is not that evil is real but that it has a positive nature of its own, that it exists in its own right independently of the existence of anything else. As the privation of some property or quality that normally belongs to a thing by nature, evil cannot exist except in something that has a characteristic set of properties and qualities. Privation is an Aristotelian notion and is part of Aristotelian ontology. Just as qualities and properties, according to Aristotle, cannot exist except as the qualities and properties *of* some substance, some determinate particular thing, so also privation, the lack of such qualities or properties, cannot exist except in a substance. As Augustine puts it, evils are always 'accidents' in substances, and they 'cannot exist except from and in natures.'

There is a sense, then, in which the theory recognizes evil as negative - in fact, both negative and relative - but not as nonexistent.<sup>79</sup>

Arguing along the same line, Donald A. Cress asserted:

Thus, in declaring evil to be non-being, Augustine is neither metaphysically obtuse nor morally perverse about his account of the nature of evil. Far from holding that evil is illusory, Augustine's account acknowledges that evil clearly is very powerful and very real, and provides an explanation

for these features. Augustine's privation theory asserts that the reality and power of evil are not in virtue of evil's consisting of sheer non-being, but in its residing in a defective and disordered good.<sup>80</sup>

Closely related to this objection is another criticism that the privation theory is deficient on the ground that it fails to console those who are suffering or that it does not help mitigate evil. In answer, G. Stanley Kane rightly emphasized that:

Just as it is no part of the intention of the privation theorists to deny the reality of evil, so also it is not part of their intention in offering the theory to reduce or alleviate suffering. The problem they are confronting is a *theoretical* one, that of explaining the nature of evil. It is not a *practical* problem of reducing or alleviating the suffering in the world. They are seeking to *understand* the facts, not (at least in this part of their work) to change them. Of course the privation theory does not alleviate suffering in the slightest, nor does any theory of the nature of evil. The privationists were never so obtuse as to think that their theory could relieve suffering, so it is quite surprising that the critic should regard it as an argument against them that it doesn't.<sup>81</sup>

In addition, Donald A. Cress noted that: "Even if a theodicy could and should console those who suffer, it can hardly be expected that each component of the theodicy must singly bear the burden of providing consolation to those enduring pain and suffering."<sup>82</sup>

#### vi. **God's Foreknowledge and Human Freedom**

The last issue which we would like to grapple with in Augustine's theodicy is that of the compatibility between God's foreknowledge and human freedom. It is usually argued that to hold on to God's foreknowledge and at the same time acknowledge human freedom is contradictory and inconsistent.

This objection is about the compatibility of human freedom with God's foreknowledge, namely that God's foreknowledge makes real freedom impossible since all that God foreknows must come to pass, unless there is some deficiency in God's foreknowledge. If these two propositions “that [1] God has foreknowledge of all future events, and that [2] we do not sin by necessity but by free will,” are ultimately inconsistent, then it seems that one must choose between “the blasphemous denial of God's foreknowledge or, [...] the admission that we sin by necessity, not by will.”<sup>83</sup>

On the contrary, Augustine insisted that the fact that an action is willed and is thus a free act is compatible with its being an object of divine foreknowledge. His conception of our human freedom, as John Hick commented, is “identical with that of a number of contemporary philosophers who define a free act as one that is not externally compelled but that flows from the nature and will of the agent.”<sup>84</sup> Augustine explained that the appearance of inconsistency between divine foreknowledge and human freedom is due to a shift in meaning of the term “necessary”. If God foreknows all future states of affairs, then it is right to maintain that those states of affairs must occur. This must be so because God can never be wrong about what he knows. But if the objects of God's knowledge include free acts, then by definition these acts cannot be necessary. Indeed, as free acts they are not necessary in the same sense that they are necessary as objects of God's knowledge. Let us not be afraid, he said, lest “we do not do by will that which we do by will, because He whose foreknowledge is infallible, foreknew that we would do it.”<sup>85</sup>

Again,

[...] it does not follow that, though there is for God a certain order of all causes, there must therefore be nothing depending on the free exercise of our own free wills, for our wills themselves are included in that order of causes which is certain to God, and is embraced by His foreknowledge, for human wills

are also causes of human actions; and He who foreknew all the causes of things would certainly among those causes not have been ignorant of our wills.<sup>86</sup>

In addition, Augustine offered a *reductio ad absurdum* response to the common objection to free will. “How could it be that nothing happens otherwise than as God foreknew, if He foreknows that something is going to be willed when nothing is going to be willed?”<sup>87</sup> He argued that God's foreknowledge, far from removing freedom, guarantees that humans will have the power to exercise freedom in the future.

...when [God] has foreknowledge of our will, it is going to be the will that He has foreknown. Therefore, the will is going to be a will because God has foreknowledge of it. Nor can it be a will if it is not in our power. Therefore, God also has knowledge of our power over it. So the power is not taken from me by His foreknowledge; but because of His foreknowledge, the power to will will more certainly be present in me, since God, whose foreknowledge does not err, has foreknown that I shall have the power.<sup>88</sup>

Hence no genuine contradiction between divine foreknowledge and human freedom can be demonstrated, Augustine concluded. Both are compatible. That freedom could be abused, and the fact that it has been abused, in no way diminishes the omniscience of God, which includes foreknowledge. And just as God's foreknowledge does not attenuate real human freedom, so it does not mitigate human responsibility when such freedom is exercised.<sup>89</sup> Human creatures are therefore obliged to worship the Creator for the manifest order and goodness of his creation, which includes free moral persons who are able to do evil.<sup>90</sup>

The above lines of thought and argument presented by Augustine to account for evil are succinctly expressed in the words of Norman Geisler and Winfred Corduan:

An absolutely good God created a finitely good universe containing good creatures who freely

choose the lesser good of themselves to the higher good of God, thus corrupting creation. God nevertheless is able to use the evil of the parts for the greater good of the whole according to His own good purposes.<sup>91</sup>

Thus, for Augustine, no genuine contradiction between divine foreknowledge and human freedom can be demonstrated. The appearance of inconsistency, he explained, is due to a shift in meaning of the term “necessary.” Indeed, free acts are not necessary in the same sense that they are necessary as objects of God's foreknowledge. It may however be added here that evil, in the privation theory, is not an inevitable and unavoidable feature of creaturely existence rather than a surd in a good creation. To regard evil as a necessity in this way runs counter to our experience of responsibility, blame and guilt for sin and evil. Thus, although we do experience evil as a “general condition from which we all suffer,” we need to correlate this with our “universal experience of an awareness of guilt and responsibility.”<sup>92</sup>

In addition to this, the compatibility of God's foreknowledge and Human Freedom can be illustrated as John Hick expounded:

Freedom exists only in its actual exercise, and a being who may never be created cannot exercise freedom and cannot have a divinely foreseeable future. What we must therefore say - according to this argument - is that God creates free beings, and having done so He can at once foresee their future obedience or disobedience. However, having once created them God does not go back upon His own creative act; He respects His creatures' freedom and responsibility even when He now sees that they are going to misuse it. This might meet the particular difficulty under consideration.<sup>93</sup>

What this means therefore is that God foreknows our future acts as possible. God knows the actual as actual and the possible as possible. For that which cannot happen without us cannot be known without us. Perfect knowledge is knowledge of

actual as actual and possible as possible. Thus God's foreknowledge in this case cannot be said to bring such evil acts about. Rather, such acts are made actual only by the exercise of our freedom even though they may have a divinely foreseeable future.

With this, we conclude our critical analysis and discussion of Augustine's theodicy. As already emphasised, there are diverse and complex issues involved in the treatment of this approach to the intricate problem of evil itself. We have just selected some salient points for the purpose of our reflective study in this paper. The attempt here is not exhaustive of the whole field of study. Further areas are still open for subsequent research and exploration in response to the inescapable problem of evil.

## **Conclusion**

From what has been said so far, it is clear that the problem of evil is of such an inevitable nature to which no one can claim any immunity. It exists and confronts everyone in diverse ways and intensity. The Augustinian theodicy is one of the myriads of attempts to grapple with the problem both in the existential setting as well as on its intellectual and logical level. This effort has provided a frame work in seeking to understand and explain the nature of evil. In accounting for the origin of evil, Augustine argued that it is an imperfection that is contrary to the nature of the being in question. Since only free beings can thwart nature, it is in their free acts that evil find its home. Within the background and context in which it is based, such privative view of the status of evil has been shown to be sound, consistent and valid in its own terms. However, it must be admitted that this is only a side of the coin rather than to be taken as the whole picture. The fact of evil is such that it continues to suppress and surpass our intellectual domination and existential capacity irrespective of our view of its status or ontology. It is an enigma which overwhelms us. Indeed, evil is as perplexing as it is ubiquitous.

But while, in reference to Gabriel Marcel's distinction between a problem and a mystery,<sup>94</sup> I concur that evil is more of a mystery with hidden meaning and purpose than a mere problem which can just be put to rest with any solution whatsoever, I reject Gabriel Marcel's proposed embargo on critical reflection on evil. Attempts to grapple with the 'mystery' of evil is evidently a pressing obligation from which we cannot escape. With consistent attempts and as man's understanding and knowledge grows, we hopefully, will continually advance further into this 'mystery' of evil which so far has remained a paradox.

It was usual, not long ago, to ascribe epidemics to evil forces or the curse of God. But today, we know better. There is even today a mechanism that provides some form of explanation for natural events such as earthquakes, droughts, storms and the like. People once firmly believed that the earth was flat, that disease demons could be driven out by loud noises, and that in dreams our souls actually visited spots distant in time and space. These beliefs, at one time so securely held, have now been almost universally discarded. Could this be the case with the variety of viewpoints on the 'mystery' of evil?

The privation account of evil, as we have seen, is in itself a complete metaphysical theory, an independent philosophical position. The attempt in this paper should be sufficient to alert anyone for whom the question is an open one that Augustine struggled more with the problem of evil (at least, moral evil) than any other philosopher. For him, it was an issue beyond mere rhetoric. The privation theory offered by him has remained of principal significance concerning the problem of evil. However, this is not to deny the fact that man today is still confronted with difficulties and certain exigencies as regards evil. Thus, in the words of A. N. Whitehead we can sincerely admit that:

Philosophy begins in wonder. And, at the end, when philosophic thought has done its best, the wonder remains. There have been added, however, some grasp of the immensity of things, some purification of emotion by understanding.<sup>95</sup>

J. Pieper affirmed this as well that:

Philosophy never claimed (in the beginnings) to be a superior form of knowledge but, on the contrary, a form of humility, and restrained, and conscious of this restraint and humility in relation to knowledge.<sup>96</sup>

With Shakespeare, we will always have to admit that “there are more things in heaven and on earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy.”<sup>97</sup> And as Kant said: “It is precisely in knowing its limits that philosophy consists.”<sup>98</sup>

This is my final submission on the problem of evil.

#### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Langdon Gilkey, *Message and Existence: An Introduction to Christian Theology* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979), p. 14 quoting from R. Douglas Geivett, *Evil and the Evidence for God* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993), p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> John Hick, *Evil and the God of Love* 2nd ed. (London and Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press, 1977), p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Brian Davies, *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 16.

<sup>4</sup> R. Douglas Geivett, *Evil and the Evidence for God* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993), p. 10.

<sup>5</sup> John Hick, *Evil and the God of Love*, p. 37.

<sup>6</sup> Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will*, trans. by Anna S. Benjamin and L. H. Hackstaff (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company Inc., 1964), p. xxvii. All quotations from Augustine's *De libero arbitrio voluntatis* are taken from this edition.

<sup>7</sup> A. G. Turnbull, *The Essence of Plotinus* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1934), p. 249.

<sup>8</sup> Etienne Gilson, *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1955), p. 80.

<sup>9</sup> Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will*, p. xxix.

<sup>10</sup> R. Douglas Geivett, *Evil and the Evidence for God*, p. 11.

<sup>11</sup> Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will*, 1.1.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> R. Douglas Geivett, *Evil and the Evidence for God*, p. 12.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., See the Footnote no. 5 on page 240.

- 15 Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will*, 2.20; Augustine, *Enchiridion*, iv. 12, trans. Albert C. Outler, in *Augustine: Confessions and Enchiridion* (London: S. C. M. Press Ltd.; and Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1955).
- 16 H. J. McCloskey, *God and Evil* (Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1974), p. 39.
- 17 John Hick, *op. cit.*, p. 171.
- 18 *Ibid.*, pp. 49-50.
- 19 Augustine, *On the Nature of the Good*, iv. Cf vi. by John H. S. Burleigh in *Augustine: Earlier Writings* (London: S. C. M. Press Ltd., and Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1953). Cf Plotinus, *Enneads*, I.7, 2.
- 20 Augustine, *Confessions*, vii.12.
- 21 John Hick, *Evil and the God of Love*, pp. 51-52.
- 22 *Ibid.*, p. 53.
- 23 Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. Walter Kaufman (New York: Scribner's, 1970), p. 144.
- 24 Karl Jaspers, *Philosophy* vol. VII, trans. E. B. Ashton (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970), p. 42.
- 25 John MacMurray, *The Self as Agent* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), p. 84.
- 26 R. Douglas Geivett, *Evil and the Evidence for God*, p.13.
- 27 Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will*, *op. cit.*, 2.15.
- 28 *Ibid.*, 1.2.
- 29 *Ibid.*, 2.16.
- 30 *Ibid.*, 2.17.
- 31 John Hick, *Evil and the God of Love*, p. 45.
- 32 Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will*, ., 2.17.
- 33 *Ibid.*, 3.17.
- 34 Augustine, *Enchiridion*, viii.23, trans. Albert C. Outler in *Augustine: Confessions and Enchiridion* (London: S. C. M. Press Ltd. and Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1955).
- 35 Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will*, 3.17.
- 36 See *Ibid.*, 2.20; *Enchiridion*, iv.12;
- 37 John Hick, *Evil and the God of Love*, p. 47
- 38 Augustine, *The City of God*, bk. xi, chap. 9 trans. Marcus Dods, George Wilson, and J. J. Smith (New York: Random House, Inc., 1950).
- 39 Augustine, *Enchiridion*, iii. 11. Cf. *On Free Choice of the Will*, 3.13. *The City of God* XI.9 and 22.
- 40 Augustine, *On the Nature of the Good*, iv. Cf vi. by John H. S. Burleigh in *Augustine: Earlier Writings* (London: S. C. M. Press Ltd., and Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1953).
- 41 Augustine, *Enchiridion*, iii. 11.
- 42 John Hick, *Evil and the God of Love*, p. 48.

- 43 Augustine, *Enchiridion*, iv. 13-14.
- 44 John Hick, *Evil and the God of Love*, p. 48.
- 45 Augustine, *On the Nature of the Good*, xvii. Cf. vi, ix, and xiii; *Enchiridion* xii; *Confessions* vii.12; *City of God* xii.3.
- 46 Augustine, *On the Nature of the Good*, iii-iv.
- 47 Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will* 3.17.
- 48 Ibid.
- 49 Augustine, *Enchiridion*, viii.23.
- 50 Augustine, *City of God*, xii.6. Cf. xii.7,8 and 9; *On the Nature of the Good*, xxxiv, xxxvi, and xx; *Confessions*, vii.16.1
- 51 Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will*, 2.18.
- 52 Ibid.
- 53 Ibid., 2.20.
- 54 Ibid., 2.19.
- 55 Ibid., 3.1.
- 56 Cf. Ibid., 3.22.
- 57 Cf. Ibid., 3.1.
- 58 Cf. *Confessions*, ii.6.14.
- 59 Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will*, 3.25.
- 60 Augustine, *On the Nature of the Good*, i..
- 61 Cf. Augustine, *City of God*, xii. 5.
- 62 Cf. Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will*, 3.14 and 15.
- 63 H. J. McCloskey, *God and Evil*, p. 31.
- 64 G. W. Leibniz, *Leibniz Selections*, ed. Philip P. Wiener (New York: Scriber's, 1951), pp.286, 324.
- 65 John Hick, *Evil and the God of Love*, pp. 80-81.
- 66 For example cf. Alvin Plantinga, *God, Freedom and Evil* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), p. 36. and also *The Nature of Necessity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 45.
- 67 Cf. Augustine, *City of God*, xi.16, 22; Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles* II, trans. Anton Pegis (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1955), 45n5; *Summa Theologiae* I,q.47,a.1. and Leibniz quoted in A. O. Love joy, *The Great Chain of Being* (New York: Harper & Row, 1936), p.179.
- 68 John Hick, *Evil and the God of Love*, pp. 79-80.
- 69 C. Journet, *The Meaning of Evil*, trans M. Barry, (London: Geoffrey Chapman,1963), pp. 117-118.
- 70 P. M. Farrell, "Evil and Omnipotence," in *Mind*, LXVII (1958), p. 401.
- 71 Augustine, *Confessions*, vii. 12: xiii.28-32; *City of God*, xi.22; *Enchiridion*, x.
- 72 Cf. *City of God*, xi.22; xii.4-5; *On the Nature of the Good*, ix; *Summa Theologiae*, I,19,9; I,48,2; *Summa Contra Gentiles*,III, 71,3-7.
- 73 N. Pike (ed.), *God and Evil* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1964), p. 65.

- 74 J. L. Mackie, "Evil and Omnipotence" in *Mind*, 44 (1955), p. 200.
- 75 Wallace I. Matson, *The Existence of God*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1965), p. 143.
- 76 Cf. Augustine, *Confessions*, vii.5.7. trans. Albert C. Outler in *Augustine : Confessions and Enchiridion* (London: S. C. M. Press Ltd.,; and Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1955).
- 77 Cf. Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will*, 3.14.
- 78 Cf. Augustine, *On the Nature of the Good*, iv-ix.
- 79 G. Stanley Kane, "Evil and Privation" in *International Journal for Philosophy and Religion*, pp. 44 - 45. As an exception G. S. Kane cited Austin Farrer, *Love Almighty and Ills Unlimited* (London: William Collins Sons and Co., 1962), Ch. 2.
- 80 Donald A. Cress, "Augustine's Privation Account of Evil - A Defense," in *Augustinian Studies* vol. 20 (1989), p. 113.
- 81 G. Stanley Kane, "Evil and Privation" in *International Journal for Philosophy and Religion*,, p. 46.
- 82 Donald A. Cress, "Augustine's Privation Account of Evil - A Defense,"., p. 114.
- 83 Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will*, 3.3.
- 84 John Hick, *Evil and the God of Love*, p. 68. Cf. for example, Anthony Flew, 'Divine Omnipotence and Human Freedom' in *New Essays in Philosophical Theology*, ed. Flew and MacIntyre, (London: S. C. M. Press Ltd., 1955).
- 85 Augustine, *City of God*, v.9. see also xii.1, 22, 27; xiv.11, 27.
- 86 *Ibid.*, v.9. See also *On Free Choice of the Will*, 3.6-10.
- 87 *Ibid.*, 3.3.
- 88 *Ibid.*
- 89 *Ibid.*, 3.4.
- 90 *Ibid.*, 3.5.
- 91 Norman L. Geisler and Winfred Corduan, *Philosophy of Religion*, 2nd. ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1988), p. 325.
- 92 Langdon Gilkey, *Message and Existence* (New York: Seabury Press, 1981), p. 123.
- 93 John Hick, *Evil and the God of Love*, p. 179.
- 94 Gabriel Marcel, *The Philosophy of Existence*, trans. Manya Harari (London: The Harvill Press, 1948), p. 8-9. Therein, after defining a mystery as "a problem which encroaches upon its own data, invading them, as it were, and thereby transcending itself as a simple problem," he says, "there is no hope of establishing an exact frontier between problem and mystery. For in reflecting upon a mystery we tend inevitably to degrade it to the level of a problem. This is particularly clear in the case of the problem of evil."
- 95 A. N. Whitehead, *Modes of Thought*, (New York: Free Press, 1968), pp. 168-169.

<sup>96</sup> J. Pieper, "The Philosophical Act", in *Leisure, the Basis of Culture*, (New York: Mentor-Omega, 1963), pp. 103 & 107.

<sup>97</sup> William A. Luijpen, *Existential Phenomenology* vol. twelve of Duquesne Studies: Philosophical Series, (Pittsburgh, Pa.: Duquesne University Press, 1960), p. x.

<sup>98</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 727/B755. trans. Norman Kemp Smith, (London: Macmillan Education Ltd., 1929).