

Article

What the Fall of Angels Tells Us about the Essence of Morality

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Abstract: The article describes two concepts of the sources of morality present in the evolutionist traditions (Evolution of Ethics and the Veneer Theory). Then, a modal argument against the evolutionist theory of morality is presented, based on the history of the fall of angels present in classical theism. This story is taken in the article as a possible example of the actions of individuals who operate outside of any evolutionary and social context, and of those whose ontic constitution excludes the possession of emotions. In this way, an attempt is made to present the essential features of anyone that is subject to moral evaluation, thus concluding that morality in its essence cannot be defined in biological and evolutionary terms.

Keywords: evolutionary ethics; fall of angels; modal argument; evil; morality



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1. Introduction

In contemporary debates on the origins of morality, evolutionists insist on the natural character of this phenomenon. According to them, the moral actions and the moral principles that emerged within human communities evolved from simple forms of altruism to cooperative actions because of the beneficial effect of avoiding inter-group conflict. Because of the higher value of cooperation over selfish behavior, morality allowed the group to avoid many problems and provided more resources to the community. In this paper, we attempt, *inter alia*, to show that, with this approach, morality is reduced to its social and biological functions, while the personal and first-person aspect essential for morality is omitted. It seems that, in the tradition of Christian theism, the concept of moral good and evil, and the idea of free will are important for the original and essential concept of morality. In order to illustrate the history of the notion of freedom that captures the essence of morality, in this paper we refer to the notion of the fall of angels, who, as free and rational beings, performed in their first act of will the act of turning away from God. This instance, present in classical Christian theism, reveals the essential features of morality by showing that morality can involve beings functioning outside of any evolutionary context. The essence of morality must therefore be defined in such a way that it can be realized by various possible beings capable of moral actions and subject to moral evaluation—both beings with and without a biological constitution. Thus, the study of the concept of morality, understood within the framework of “natural history”, is unable to reveal the essence of morality, since “natural history” is not the same as “history of freedom and free will”.

By the essence of morality, we understand the set of constitutive features of every moral act of any possible person (both biological and extra-biological). This assertion does not imply that detailed moral norms applicable to various types of individuals (biological and extra-biological) are identical. In terms of constitutive (essential) features, the concept of morality is unambiguous, that is, it applies in the same way to the activities of both human and non-human individuals. It seems intuitive that the concept of morality can be applied to the actions of non-human individuals, because we can think of them as beings acting in a way that is subject to moral evaluation. Since we are able to think of extra-biological individuals in terms of moral categories, we assume that our concepts

apply to them in the same sense as they do to us. If one wants to define the essence of morality in terms of biological adaptations, social conditions, or emotional reactions, one is excluding from the domain of morality possible entities (individuals) that are not biological (or even physical).

This article is structured as follows: in Section 2, we discuss the concept of the sources of morality based on evidence from evolutionary biology; in Section 3, we discuss the paradigmatic situation of a choice made by the will, which theism calls the “fall of angels”; and in Section 4, we discuss how to understand the nature of free will as the primary concept grounding morality, thus pointing out that the essential concept of morality applies to both biological and extra-biological beings.

2. Evolutionism and Sources of Morality

The theory of evolution concerning the origin of the world and life on Earth as well as the development of species also applies to the species that is the *Homo sapiens*. According to this theory, the capacities of this species are the result of changes occurring in the course of history aimed at its adaption to the environment and the possibility of successful reproduction. While this is not controversial with regard to capacities, such as upright posture or the opposable thumb, controversy arises when we ask whether the capacities traditionally called “spiritual”, such as abstract thinking, self-reflection, and use of language or morality, are also evolutionary achievements.

Already Charles Darwin (2009, p. 72) wrote:

The following proposition seems to me in a high degree probable—namely, that any animal whatever, endowed with well-marked social instincts, would inevitably acquire a moral sense or conscience, as soon as its intellectual powers had become as well developed, or nearly as well developed, as in man. For, firstly, the social instincts lead an animal to take pleasure in the society of its fellows, to feel a certain amount of sympathy with them, and to perform various services for them.

Thus, he perceived morality as a phenomenon that arises as a result of the development of biological beings under two conditions: animals must have strong social instincts and, to some extent, develop intellectual abilities. According to him, such a development would lead to the emergence of moral sense or conscience. This does not mean, according to Darwin, that this moral sense would lead to the creation of the same moral rules as used by humans, but certainly animals of this type would have a sense of good and evil as well as a conscience (Darwin 2009, p. 73). Darwin included a description of different behaviors occurring among animals, which could be called social liking or attachment. The biological criteria for developing and strengthening such social attachments are the benefits of the pleasure that the animal experiences in the group and the greater ability of the group to defend itself from danger (Darwin 2009, p. 80). Darwin’s faithful disciple and advocate of the theory of evolution, Thomas Henry Huxley, was not inclined to look for the sources of moral sentiments in the process of evolution, or at least he noticed that, in nature, there are sources of both moral and immoral behavior. In a famous quote (Huxley 2009, p. 31), Huxley explained:

The propounders of what are called the “ethics of evolution”, when the “evolution of ethics” would usually better express the object of their speculations, adduce a number of more or less interesting facts and more or less sound arguments, in favour of the origin of the moral sentiments, in the same way as other natural phenomena, by a process of evolution. I have little doubt, for my own part, that they are on the right track; but as the immoral sentiments have no less been evolved, there is, so far, as much natural sanction for the one as the other. The thief and the murderer follow nature just as much as the philanthropist. Cosmic evolution may teach us how the good and the evil tendencies of man may have

come about; but, in itself, it is incompetent to furnish any better reason why what we call good is preferable to what we call evil than we had before.

Contemporary evolutionists fit within the framework of this opposition. For it is evident that in some species of animals there are behaviors that, because of some similarity, are described as morally good acts if they occur in the human world. This is not regarding evident behaviors, such as caring for their own offspring in many animal species, but about more sophisticated behaviors, such as what we call “cooperation” or “altruistic” behavior. The observation of such behavior in certain mammals led some researchers to conclude that what we judge as good in the human world, and therefore is subject to moral evaluation, is “rooted” in the biological world.

An advocate of this approach is [de Waal et al. \(2006\)](#), who criticizes Huxley’s approach, calling it the Veneer Theory. According to de Waal, the Veneer Theory—at least as interpreted by de Waal—is false, because, as it is not grounded on any facts, it treats morality as a choice, not the result of evolution. De Waal supports his position (*Evolution of Ethics*) with the theory of kin selection and reciprocal altruism. This approach is clearly optimistic, as it assumes that both humans and other higher animals display many similar “morally good” behaviors: they are focused on cooperation or defend relatives and friends against aggression. Therefore, according to him, morality is “a direct outgrowth of the social instincts we share with other animals” ([de Waal et al. 2006](#), p. 26).

Conversely, some biologists ([Williams 1988](#)) are inclined to follow a pessimistic vision that presents the natural world as a place filled with aggression, focused on the survival of the strongest, cruel, and heartless. Williams spares no examples of rape, incest, infanticide, and murder occurring in the animal world within the same species. When we apply our moral criteria to the cosmic evolutionary process, it is hard not to notice that it ought to be condemned ([Williams 1988](#), p. 384). The evolutionary process is selfish and hardly strengthens our universal moral expectations, only the principles of tribalism. In order for a man to become a moral agent, he should rather learn about the biological mechanisms of his actions, which is helpful in overcoming them ([Williams 1988](#), p. 401).

These two views on the nature of animals, and indirectly human nature, can be treated in a compatible and not disjunctive manner: in the animal world, there is potential for both cooperative actions and intraspecific aggression. If human actions are similar to the behavior of animals, or otherwise the mechanisms of our actions are genealogically present in the animal world, then conclusions about our biological nature should be neither optimistic nor pessimistic. We are capable of both cooperation and enormous aggression. Perhaps both positions presented above are too extreme and radical. Each of them, however, brings something very valuable to the understanding of man: on the one hand, it makes us aware of the relationship between man and nature (Waal), while on the other hand, the experience of good moral acts shows us that, in some sense, we are *not of this world*. Probably many contemporary followers of Huxley’s views as naturalists would disagree with this conclusion as too “mystical”. However, they describe a certain rift between the biological side of our nature and the gesture of the Good Samaritan. For this reason, they see morality as a phenomenon that is to some extent opposed to the biological world.

Both views on the genesis of morality have provoked a serious discussion. De Waal’s theory promoting the relationship between emotion and morality finds the basis of morality in the phenomenon of empathy, among other things. For this reason, philosophers who are closer to Kantian ethics will accuse him of “[tending] to favor an emotion-based or sentimentalist theory of morality” ([Korsgaard 2006](#), p. 100). If the perpetrator is to be a moral agent, he must have a certain type of awareness, but also a deeper level of intentionality. As noted by [Korsgaard \(2008\)](#), p. 111):

An agent who is capable of this form of assessment is capable of rejecting an action along with its purpose, not because there is something else she wants (or fears) even more, but simply because she judges that doing that sort of act for that purpose is wrong.

The condition of having awareness, of being capable of cogitation or reflection, is necessary for us to be able to speak of a moral agent. Moral acts can only be the result of conscious, reflective actions. We may wonder to what extent one can be an autonomous agent when one makes decisions guided by certain evolutionary, emotion-based mechanisms. Such an action may have effects that can be judged as good or bad, but the perpetrator carries out the action, at least partially, in an automatic manner. Perhaps, therefore, not every human action is fully autonomous.

The expression of human personal action is the ability to transcend desires, emotions, goals, or affective states. Motives, including emotional ones, may or may not be accepted by us. They may or may not be the cause of our actions. One may feel angry with a fellow tribesman and yet refrain from harming him or even behave in a friendly manner. If biological feelings were the basis of automatic actions, the beings who follow them would not perform moral actions because they would be determined. It seems that, in the animal world, we are concerned with behavior that is not autonomous.

It is worth emphasizing that empathy or aggression in themselves are not morally good or bad. Our capacity for empathy and aggression can lead to both morally good and morally bad acts. We can easily imagine empathic actions that are morally wrong and good, and so it is with aggressive actions—they can lead to both moral good and moral evil. In moral acts, such feelings can play a motivating function, but, for the essence of morality, feelings are an accidental element.

De Waal is also accused of using a language that is too anthropomorphic in the description of animal behavior and of creating a very simplistic and dichotomous division into the Veneer Theory and naturalistic theories (Wright 2006, pp. 83, 93). We also do not know how to understand the causal terms used by de Waal, for example, when he claims that morality is a direct consequence (“direct outgrowth”) of biological characteristics (Kitcher 2006, p. 124).

In our argument, we want to criticize the concept of the philosophizing evolutionist that accepts the Evolution of Ethics. He seems to adopt the following theses: (a) we have some potentialities for cooperative action, as some animals do; (b) these potentialities are innate, evolved, adaptive mechanisms; and (c) morality is completely *causally* dependent on these biological mechanisms, and it is an extension of these natural behaviors that transform into more sophisticated forms. Morality is something essentially biological; it is ultimately biological and arises out of necessity in an evolutionary way; it is created in social relations. We will argue against the last thesis (c), which we consider to be false. This argument also applies in part to the adherents of the Veneer Theory insofar as they define morality as something external to it, understood as a set of norms present in a given social group, but do not take into account the first-person foundation of morality. Even if they do not regard morality as a direct consequence of biological properties, they assume that it is ultimately the result of evolutionary development and concerns entities that are subject to the process of evolution.

3. The Fall of Angels

The theological doctrine of the fall of angels is found in one of the Christian creeds. For example, the catechism of the Catholic Church defines it as follows: this “‘fall’ consists in the free choice of these created spirits, who radically and irrevocably rejected God and his reign” (CCC 392).

We refer to the story of the fall of angels, treating it as the basis for a modal argument that can reveal certain features of a moral being, and thus essential elements of morality. A theist treats this story as real. A non-theist can treat it as a kind of thought experiment, since even a non-theist can imagine the situation of the “fall of angels”—a special action of extra-biological entities that would be morally evaluated and would be labeled evil. The imaginability (comprehensibility) of the situation and the coherence of the story would form the basis for recognizing its possibility. We are aware that there is a discussion about the methodological correctness of arguments based on comprehensibility and imaginability

(van Inwagen 1998; Yablo 1993). Perhaps, as suggested by Inwagen, we should limit the scope of modal concepts to everyday situations that are weakly counterfactual, and adopt modal skepticism on metaphysical issues. Moreover, the *onus probandi* of proving that the situation of the “fall of angels” is impossible lies on the part of its critic. Thus, we deem legitimate the use of this example as an argument against the concept of morality that is used by the philosophizing evolutionist. It seems that we should be able to apply the category of morality to beings that are better developed than humans, or even exist in a more perfect way, as is the case with hypothetical pure spirits.

The problem of the sin of angels, purely spiritual beings, is philosophically interesting for many reasons. It touches upon the problem of the cause of evil and the first evil that appears in the created world. Furthermore, it touches upon the issue of the motives that could have guided the perpetrator of the first morally evil act—a perpetrator who had high cognitive skills, was created good, and did not experience any carnal passions that could disturb cognitive and, consequently, volitional processes.

In Christian theism, there are various ways of representing and analyzing the fall of angels. From a theological point of view, the theodicy problem is significant: if God made the fallen angel perfectly good, then the angel had no motivation to do evil. However, since he did it, perhaps God did not create it fully good. If he made him perfectly happy, then the angel had no reason to change this state, and, if not, then God would be at least partially responsible for his wrong choice. For this reason, considerations regarding the cause of the wrong choice and its actual subject-matter have become a significant part of theological considerations that make use of important elements of the philosophical concept of will and the theory of action.

We will focus primarily on presenting the concept of St Anselm of Canterbury, St Thomas Aquinas, and Blessed John Duns Scotus. We will treat them as hypothetical descriptions of the actions of extra-biological entities that choose moral evil. If their choice belongs to the category of moral actions, it must realize the necessary features of morality; therefore, the analysis of this choice should reveal these essential features.

Anselm (1998a, chp./sct. 3.11), in his considerations on the nature of the will (*voluntas*), distinguishes: (1) the will as the power of the soul; (2) the will as its dispositions or inclinations—*affectio commodi* and *affectio iustitiae*; and (3) the will as its act, that is, used as a tool and manifested in a particular willing. Anselm (1998a, chp./sct. 3.11) explains how he understands the inclinations of the will as follows:

[S]o the tool for willing has two abilities which I term affectivities: one is for willing what is advantageous, the second for willing what is right. To be sure, the will’s tool wills only what is either advantageous or right. For whatever else it wills, it does so in view of its usefulness or rightness, and even if it is mistaken, it deems itself to be willing what one does in relation to these two aims. Indeed when disposed to will their own advantage, people always will their gratification and a state of happiness. Whereas when disposed to will uprightness, they will their uprightness and a state of uprightness or justness. And in fact they will something on the grounds of its advantage, as when they will to plough or toil to insure the means to preserve their livelihood or health, which they regard as advantages. But they are disposed to will on the grounds of uprightness, for instance, when they will to learn by hard work to know rightly, that is, to live justly.

Anselm draws attention to the relationship between justice and righteousness—what is right and proper is just—and the benefits of happiness. *Affectiones* are interpreted as inclinations towards various subjects or types of motivation (King 2010, pp. 360–64) or—as Katherin Rogers (2001, p. 66) writes using Harry Frankfurt’s terminology—respectively, as first and second order desires. According to Rogers, the desire is always aimed at benefit or happiness, albeit either rightly or wrongly, and wanting justice is wanting benefits rightly. Rogers therefore regards the desire for happiness as universal, contained both in *affectio commodi* and, consequently, in *affectio iustitiae*. Such an interpretation, not devoid of textual

foundations, does not radically oppose the inclination of the will, which allows us to avoid some of the difficulties that arise from it. However, it should be emphasized that according to Anselm, *affectio iustitiae*, being a desire to be righteous for its own sake, has the value of selflessness. As Anselm (1998b, chp. 12) writes:

When the just man wills what he ought, he preserves rectitude of will for no other reason than to preserve it.

Thus, every rational being strives for happiness, but this happiness may have a different axiological values. Even if happiness is associated with the desire for justice as the ultimate goal, it is not a motive for just action. He also emphasizes that the propensity of the will to justice is characterized by a certain self-reference—it inclines to righteousness and, at the same time, it itself is moral righteousness.

Anselm describes the fall of angels using categories present in his concept of will. According to him, the angel fell because he followed *affectio commodi* and abandoned *affectio iustitiae*. Anselm (1998c, chp. 4) states that “the devil certainly could not have sinned by willing justice”.

Following the will to desire justice or righteousness guarantees right and proper action, and the only cause of moral evil can be the will to gain happiness and advantage. Thus, an action worthy of praise flows from *affectio iustitiae*, while an action that deserves reproach is the consequence of succumbing to *affectio commodi*, when *affectio iustitiae* suggests a different action. Anselm, therefore, permits a conflict of both inclinations of the will when the desire for benefits is disordered, that is, it is opposed to what is right and righteous.

The fallen angel, choosing happiness in a disorderly manner, committed a moral evil, and therefore did not persist in justice and, as a consequence, lost his inclination towards it. The fallen angels’ apostasy is final, and their inclination towards righteousness is not restored (Anselm 1998c, chp. 27).

In Anselm, we find the view of a libertarian will that looks for the causes of evil in the will itself. When Anselm ponders the ultimate reason for the angels’ apostasy, he replies that it is their own will:

Why does he will what he ought not?—[the student asks his master]. No cause precedes this will except that he can will (*non nisi quia voluit*). (Anselm 1998c, chp. 27)

Anselm emphasizes that it was the will that was the efficient cause of its act, an act that the subject should not have. The will, then, is capable of self-determination and, because of this capacity, can do moral evil. Anselm’s doctrine is not only a psychological description of the action of the will, which is internally conflicting—it primarily draws attention to the conditions that must be met for the perpetrator to be subject to moral evaluation. As aptly noted by Tobias Hoffmann (2020, p. 15), “Anselm shows that Lucifer meets all the requirements for being a moral agent, and in doing so he clarifies the necessary conditions for moral responsibility in general”. First of all, he shows how two subjects that have identical cognitive conditions can make completely different moral choices.

Medieval thinkers wondered what the evil angel wanted in his fall. Anselm’s answer was complex. The devil wanted to be like God, but in a disorderly manner. However, according to the Anselmian concept of being able to think about God, one cannot think, of God, that something resembles Him (*nihil illi simile cogitari possit*). A cognitive subject, such as the devil, must have known that it is impossible not only to become like God, but even to think about it. Anselm (1998c, chp. 4) responds to this argument by explaining the nature of this similarity:

Even if he did not will to be wholly equal to God, but something less than God against the will of God, by that very fact he inordinately willed to be like God, because he willed something by his own will, as subject to no one. It is for God alone thus to will something by his own will such that he follows no higher will.

Therefore, putting one's will above God's will can be interpreted as an attempt to become God and therefore to become like Him, albeit wrongly. For, according to Anselm, God establishes the right order (*rectus ordo*), so any willing that is inconsistent with the goal intended by God is wrong.

Analyzing the subject of the devil's desire, Aquinas in *Summa Theologiae* (Aquinas 1962, I, q. 63, a. 1, resp.) admits that an angel may desire equality with God, yet not through equality as such, but through likeness, and specifically understood. For likeness can be of two kinds—according or not to what something is naturally disposed to. According to Aquinas, in the case of the fallen angel, the desire to become like God consisted in that, as the final goal, he desired either the happiness that he could attain by his own nature, diverting his desire from supernatural happiness, which is obtained by God's grace, or the happiness which flows from grace, but achieved by the strength of one's own nature, and not given by God's order. In both cases, the angel wanted to achieve ultimate happiness through his own efforts, which is possible only for God, so in this sense he wanted to be like God. The consequence of this desire was the desire for power over others, which is also a sign of being like God. Thomas distinguishes between two meanings of the expression "to be equal to God"—being identical and being similar. The identity of God and of any creature is contradictory, so the desire can only be for a specifically understood likeness.

Furthermore, John Duns Scotus, when asking if an angel could have desired equality with God, uses, in addition to the notions of the Anselmian tradition (*affectio commodi*, *affectio iustitiae*), two other concepts: desire and love of friendship. According to him, the will has two acts—the act of loving something with a friendly love and the act of desiring something loved—and the object of each of them can be the whole being, because, just as every being can be loved with the love of friendship, so can every being be desired for an object that is loved. From this, Scotus (2001, *Ordinatio* II, d. 6, q. 1, n. 10) draws the conclusion that an angel can love himself with the love of friendship and can covet all desirable good for himself, and, since being equal to God is a certain good desirable in itself, the angel may covet it for himself. Scotus assumes here that being equal to God is not something self-contradictory, because then it would not be possible for it to become an object of the will. Let us note that he does not analyze the problem of the non-contradiction of the angelic state of being, which is equal to being God, but the expression "being equal to God". It is non-contradictory in itself and can therefore be the object of a lustful love. Scotus, however, does not limit himself to saying that, if equality with God was possible for an angel, he could desire it for himself—according to him, impossible things may also become the object of the will (2001, *Ordinatio* II, d. 6, q. 1, n. 11).

The desire of a depraved (sinful) will can, therefore, according to Scotus, refer to the impossible. Duns strengthens his position by analyzing the concept of hate. As he writes, those damned by their will hate God forever. What, then, is hate? According to Aristotle (2007, vol. 1382a, 15, p. 128), hatred is the desire for the hated object not to exist. Therefore, the damned want God not to exist. According to Scotus (2001, *Ordinatio* II, d. 6, q. 1, n. 12–13), this is impossible and inconsistent in itself (because God is a necessary being); the impossibility of such an object of desire does not therefore preclude the sinful will from desiring it. Since the sinful will may wish God not to exist, it may also wish that such perfection as appertains to God be in some other being—be it the angel or something else. Thus, a fallen angel may want for himself perfection equal to that of God.

The following conclusions can be drawn from the above analyses. It seems that the key element of morally good behavior in Scotus's ethics is the principle of order, expressed, among other things, in the inclination of the will to justice. When the will is guided by this inclination, the action of the moral subject is right, because justice related to what is right and righteous is preserved. Scotus follows Augustine's definition of perversion as a kind of reversal of order: the perverse will loves the means that should lead to God as ends, i.e., as goods in themselves, and treats God as a means leading to another end. The devil's will would be the expression of a final reversal and disorder in which the perverse desire of the

will is expressed not only in the inversion of means and ends, but also in going beyond the limits of what is possible through the desire for the impossible.

Such perversion is absolute, for the impossibility of God's non-existence is an absolute impossibility—while other beings may be impossible only due to specific circumstances, non-existence is absolutely contrary to God's nature. In a sense, the absolutely perverse will, by crossing the boundaries of what is possible, reverses the order of being and good. Although it seems that the desire for God's non-existence is simply impossible, in the case of a sinful, bad will, it becomes possible. The devilish will, through an act of perverse willing, carries out, on a volitional (not metaphysical, when it is not possible) level, a reversal of the ontic order, desiring the non-existence of Being that is Being in the strongest sense. It also reverses the order in the will, abandoning the act of love, which it ought to have for the highest being, for the act of hatred.

Ultimately, Scotus interprets the fall of angels as a series of acts of will, the first of which was their immoderate love for themselves, and the last and greatest sin the hatred of God—for as long as God existed, the evil angel could not have what he wanted. As he says, it can be assumed that the evil angel wanted a certain good for himself, namely superiority to others. Either he had a disordered nilling (*nolle*)—he did not want happiness for himself to a lesser degree than it exists in God himself—or he did not want to wait for happiness any longer, or he did not want to achieve it by merit, but by himself. As a consequence, he had a nilling of being subordinate to God, and finally a nilling of the existence of God (Scotus 2001, *Ordinatio* II, d. 6, q. 1, n. 63).

4. Primary Concept of Morality

The following conclusions from the above descriptions of the activities of extra-biological persons are of interest to our considerations. Creatures that are not subject to biological conditions and biological evolution can be moral agents, and their actions are subject to moral evaluation in terms of good and evil. The necessary conditions for being a moral being are intellectual cognition and free will.

Free will is a power capable of self-determination and the production of various types of volitional acts, e.g., willing, nilling, love, and hate, both of the first and second order. These acts are understood as acts of an autonomous subject. It is the perpetrator who is their author in a significant sense, that is, who generates them independently of any causes other than himself. The will by which he can implement them is indeterministic, because the quality of the perpetrator's volitional acts is determined neither by external causes nor by his cognitive resources. Therefore, two spiritual entities (the fallen angel and the good angel) are able to issue opposite acts having the same knowledge. The choice made by the fallen angel is an internal action; therefore, the choice itself originally, not external actions, is subject to moral evaluation.

Perhaps, as Anselm or John Duns Scotus wanted, two inclinations must belong to free will: inclination to happiness and inclination to justice. It is worth emphasizing that this intuition is, philosophically, extremely valuable: freedom of the will cannot be realized in a valuable way, only at the level of a natural drive that leads to happiness, but only at the level of just will that controls this drive. Free will is capable of acting justly, but it does not necessarily have to do so.

With regard to research on morality carried out from an evolutionary perspective, it should be emphasized that the situation of the fall of angels represents a moral evil whose accomplishment is in no way related to the possession of emotions; it takes place outside the context of such concepts, as aggression or empathy. Moreover, in their case, moral evil takes place outside any social context. The volitional acts of the fallen angel are directed towards God, but it is difficult to talk about a social group in this context, because they are individuals from different ontic levels. The angel's choice does not cause any effect that would affect God—the angel's decision realizes an intrinsic value in the person who made the decision. Thus, the essence of morality is realized in the relation between the very act of will and what this act should rightly carry out. The act of will is moral as long

as, irrespective of anything else (affects, external motives, and biological mechanisms), it chooses or rejects that which is right.

Apart from the fact that the angel is in a certain relationship with God through his volitional acts, the decision faced by the angel does not in any sense aim at the good or the bad of the group as such. The decision also does not fulfill any biological goals—the concepts of adaptation or survival do not constitute criteria for assessing the moral value of this decision. Morality, then, cannot be reduced to such phenomena as survival, evolution, and development of the group as such.

Since we assume that the fundamental meaning of morality must be the same with respect to human and angelic individuals (or any created non-human individual), the conditions for being a moral subject should be the same for every being subject to moral evaluation. The analysis of the paradigmatic choice, which was the fall of the angel, shows the necessary conditions for being a moral subject, and consequently allows the specification of the original concept of morality. The essential concept of morality must apply to both biological and non-biological beings, and is therefore a transbiological concept.

5. Conclusions

The modal argument, based on the possibility of the existence of such entities as angels, was intended to show that morality cannot, perforce, be defined in evolutionary terms, since it can also apply to the being and activities of extra-biological individuals. In order for such individuals to be subject to moral evaluation, the definition of morality cannot include biological and evolutionary concepts. Otherwise, (hypothetical) spirit beings would not be able to identify themselves as moral beings, think of themselves in moral terms, or act morally.

In human moral action, it is possible to pursue biological and evolutionary goals; however, it does not follow that the essence of morality can be reduced to the mechanisms of realizing these goals. The philosophical concept of morality cannot exclude the possibility of a moral evaluation of any possible entities capable of moral actions. Morality must be something that can be realized by every moral creature, both biological and non-biological; the essence of morality is therefore the conformity of the act of the will itself with what is morally right or wrong.

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