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THE REALITY OF FREE WILL

1. PRELIMINARIES

Is free will real? Is there really free will? That of course depends on what "free will" is. And, on what "real" is. We will mostly talk about the first issue, namely, about the various senses of "free will." I will begin from the free will problem, and set out to explore how my view on it affects various senses of reality. This is clearly not the only way to proceed, but I think a fruitful one.

Free will in the sense that interests us here is the sort of freedom that is at issue in the free will debate. I will mostly focus here of the contemporary analytic free will debate, although there is a surprising degree of continuity throughout the 2000 years in which we have known about the free will problem. There is a near-universal agreement that the free will problem is about the sort of freedom related or required for some sense of moral responsibility. This is not to say that our only concern is with moral responsibility; indeed, I believe that I can say most of what I want to say about the free will problem through talking about meaning in life, and even if we bracket morality. Yet in order to focus our attention, the sort of free will related to moral responsibility is a good guide.

In order to understand our options, it is useful to think of "free will" in terms of control rather than of "the will" (in the way that interests philosophers of action), or the "scary" notion of FW. So, what we care about is the sort of human *control* that matters in our contexts, and whether we have it.

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I believe that it is useful to think of the free will problem as a combination of five distinct questions.

The Free Will Problem: The Five Questions

The first two questions are the more familiar ones but, as we shall see, the last three are also crucial. The questions are:

1. *Is there libertarian free will?* (Here would be included as sub-questions the issue of determinism, the question of the possible helpfulness of indeterminism, the question of whether libertarian free will is at all coherent, and so on.) Libertarians of course think that there is libertarian free will; compatibilists (typically) and denialists (or hard determinists or free will sceptics) disagree. This question is mostly metaphysical.

2. If libertarian free will does not exist, do we still have moral responsibility and related notions such as desert? This is, of course, the familiar *compatibility question*: is moral responsibility compatible with determinism or, better, is it compatible with the absence of libertarian free will irrespective of determinism? Compatibilism and denialism are opponents on the compatibility question. This question, in my opinion, is mostly ethical.

3. If we have no moral responsibility in light of the absence of libertarian free will, or if moral responsibility is at least seriously weakened by the absence of libertarian free will, is this *good or bad*? In other words, are we better off without (or with much less) valid attribution of free will and moral responsibility, so that we ought to welcome the absence of libertarian free will, or are we worse off? This question is both ethical and psychological.

4. Can common beliefs, attitudes and practices concerning free will, moral responsibility, desert and so on *change*? If they can, how radical can this change be and what forms can it take? This question is mostly psychological, sociological, and historical.

5. What can and what should we *do* about the replies to questions 1–4? Here would be included as sub-questions descriptive questions that concern the nature of folk belief and the possibility of radical change, and normative questions such as whether the continuation of widespread false belief can be tolerated.

THE NATURE OF THE DISAGREEMENT ON THE COMPATIBILITY QUESTION

It seems that, concerning the compatibility question, there is a further widespread agreement between compatibilists and denialists, which sometimes needs uncovering, and that has not been as widely recognized as it should be. This agreement is highly important, although it does not of course prevent denialists and compatibilists from fundamentally disagreeing on the compatibility question itself. The broad and considerable agreement concerns the *descriptive aspects* of the topic, the facts, or the reality, in a sense, while the disagreement is essentially about the *interpretation* of these largely agreed-upon facts. This can be readily seen from the traditional terms "soft determinism" and "hard determinism" (which originated with William James [1896] 1956). These can adequately stand in for compatibilism and denialism, although today both sides need not be committed to the universality of determinism, for indeterminism as such is of no particular interest to (and should not be thought to decisively benefit) compatibilism or denialism. It is a common error for beginning students of the free will problem to think that hard determinists believe in a different, "harder" sort of determinism than compatibilists, but this is as a rule false. Both are equally determinists, yet disagree on the interpretation, namely, on whether this rules out free will, moral responsibility, and concomitant notions.

Consider an example of a person who is trying to choose what to eat for lunch, the options being schnitzel or spaghetti. Both compatibilists and denialists will agree that there is a situation of choice here; as a rule, denialists do not deny choice. Both would further agree that a typical adult person could choose either schnitzel or spaghetti, in the sense that he would do so, if he preferred one or the other. The disagreement is that traditional compatibilists, at least since the time of Hume, claim that this is the sense of free will that matters, often adding that there is nothing more here that we could wish for. Denialists, by contrast, claim that this is not at all the sense of freedom that matters, but what matters is something like whether the person (assuming he chose schnitzel) could have in fact chosen otherwise, as he and the world were—i.e., with internal and external conditions held constant. But note that here again the compatibilists do not want to disagree that, indeed, if the person was exactly as he was and situated in exactly the same causal nexus, the schnitzel-choice would emerge. The compatibilist is not bothered by the causal determination of the schnitzel-choice; she only

insists that, as long as the person wants schnitzel and choses as he wanted, he is free in the required sense (and presumably responsible for that choice).

Of course, the debate on the compatibility question has become extremely sophisticated, and has gone much beyond the two contrasting interpretations of the "ability to do otherwise". Refined compatibilist interpretations of the requirements for freedom and responsibility have specified the conditions under which agents are indeed free and responsible beyond mere consistency between what they happen to desire and what they choose. This is a good idea, given that sometimes agents are clearly not free precisely because of what they desire, although they do go on to choose what they desire. If the schnitzel-chooser, on being informed that today there are excellent reasons to pass it over, would still insist on having it, he might be naturally suspected of not being free (assuming he does not wish to get sick). Likewise, in a paradigmatic case, a woman who, out of psychological compulsion, desires to wash her hands every few minutes, will not be deemed free even if she does indeed wish to do so, and goes on to.

Compatibilists have suggested various ideas, such as hierarchical models (e.g., FRANKFURT 1988), reasons-responsive ones (FISCHER and RAVIZZA 1998), or rational-abilities-based views (e.g., NELKIN 2011), as ways of explicating compatibilist freedom. Note that here again the denialists will not want to deny that the compatibilist distinctions capture *a* sense of freedom —denialists do not deny that we are better off without kleptomania, alcoholism, or other compulsions. It is only that while compatibilists think that matters more or less end there denialists insist that something important is missing. There are further, more demanding normative conditions for free will and moral responsibility, which (given the absence of libertarian free will, or indeed the impossibility of any robust sense of free will) cannot be met.

Another way in which we can see this is by looking at the notion of control, which is, as I said, a useful stand-in for free will, and this reflects usage throughout the free will debate. Compatibilists often speak about self-control and, by this, they mean things such as the ability, through reflection, to increase one's awareness of the choices available; to better evaluate the reasons one has for choosing this or that choice; to carry through with one's preferences, and the like (as in the accounts above by Frankfurt or by Fischer and Ravizza). Denialists, by contrast, think of the morally required self-control in a much more demanding way, as requiring self-creation, or ultimate control.

This would not rule out versions that think that free will does not make sense; the sense of "morally required" is just a way of saying that compatibilism is morally insufficient. According to Galen Strawson's Basic Argument, for example, "(1) Nothing can be *causa sui*—nothing can be the cause of itself. (2) In order to be truly morally responsible for one's actions one would have to be *causa sui*, at least in certain crucial mental respects. (3) Therefore nothing can be truly morally responsible" (STRAWSON 1994, 6). Waller likewise holds that "just deserts and moral responsibility require a godlike power—the existential power of choosing ourselves, the godlike power of making ourselves from scratch, the divine capacity to be an uncaused cause—that we do not have. Moral responsibility is an atavistic relic of a belief system we (as naturalists) have rejected, for good reason" (WALLER 2011, 40).

I cannot review here the manifold arguments that denialists have presented against compatibilists on the compatibility question and the opposing moves of their opponents. But the common feature is that denialists put the bar much *higher* than compatibilists, and think that free will and moral responsibility (if it were at all possible) would require that agents jump over that bar, while this is conceptually or practically impossible. Denialists put the bar where libertarians do but, unlike libertarians, are pessimistic that agents can jump as high. Compatibilists, by contrast, put the bar for free will and moral responsibility much *lower* and hence, for them, most people most of the time (i.e., normal adults under typical conditions) can clear it, and be considered sufficiently free and morally responsible.

Both sides agree about the descriptive aspects, but due to their contrasting interpretations and differing standards for free will and moral responsibility (the high versus low bar) disagree about the reality of free will and what depends upon it. For compatibilists, the reality (that both sides agree we live in) is one where free will and moral responsibility are real, while for denialists, in that same reality the much higher appropriate standards for free will and moral responsibility are not met, and they lack reality.

With this background, I can now proceed to explain the senses of free will or control that, I believe, are relevant in the free will context, and then see which sense of free will can be real, and in what sense.

2. REAL COMPATIBILIST FREEDOM

The first sort of free will that is real is the compatibilist variety, the way people can be, to various degrees in different contexts, free or in control, in ways that matter. This sense does not depend on libertarian free will. But even someone like me who is sympathetic to the "ultimate perspective" and to the importance of the *absence* of LFW, i.e., who gives considerable credence to incompatibilism and (given the absence of LFW) to denialism—cannot really deny that this sort of control is real and matters. This can be readily seen in a few ways.

First, *in some contexts*, as in my schnitzel-versus-spaghetti example, it is difficult to see what *more* one could want. If you prefer schnitzel on the day, you are free to go for it, and if spaghetti, then the later—what more could one want? There is a bit "more" here to want, but all that seems incorporated here is manifestly compatibilist. We *do* want reasons-responsiveness, and it *would* be unfree to be compelled to eat schnitzel when there are strong reasons all-considered to avoid it. Perhaps we might even say that we want second-order preferences, possibly having to do with openness to reflection, say, on dieting, or even vegetarianism. But all that is the standard compatibilist fare. This same sort of move can be extended, again in the standard compatibilist ways, to *paradigm examples of unfreedom*—the poor woman who is compelled to wash her hands dozens of times every hour significantly lacks free will, while if she is cured of this through therapy, she becomes free in a natural and highly important sense. The salience of this point can be readily recognized through a rather vulgar point: people are willing to pay a great deal of money for, for example, therapy, in order to be liberated and have their control enhanced in such major ways.

But, denialists will counter, even if we grant that this captures *some* sense of control, which is even important, how does any of this translate to the moral level, and can plausibly be spoken of in terms of moral responsibility? Here we must again put on our compatibilist hat, and try to make sense of the moral relevance of compatibilist-level (i.e., "low bar") control. One way would be to see what happens when normal people grow up. Babies do not have much control over their behavior, although even a typical one-year-old can intentionally do things that he knows that his parents would not like him to do, or even try to manipulate them into some actions. With time, the level of control, responsiveness to communicated reasons, the relation between reasons and control over one's behavior, and so on (i.e., compatibilist

criteria) grow. If a one-year-old baby cries to his parents, waking them in the middle of the night, because he is thirsty and wants a bottle of milk, it will be monstrous to hold him accountable, blame or punish him. The same behavior of a 17-year-old adolescent would be insufferable, and it makes perfect sense for the parents to hold their sufficiently old child accountable, demand that he ceases, blame him if does not, and even punish him. He should stand up, go to the refrigerator himself, and get the milk, rather than wake up his parents for this purpose.

Similarly, it makes sense for the parents to evaluate whether the 17-year-old, who recently got his driver's license, should be given the keys to the family car. Does he show the required level of control? Is he sufficiently responsible? A decade earlier, clearly the answers were negative. But his abilities for control have greatly increased. Can he be trusted, then? If he is given the keys but it turns out that he does not, then chiding him (and moderate punishment) seems acceptable—as it, of course ,would not make sense for a baby or a toddler, or even a young child. We typically grow, becoming beings with greater control and enhanced potential for responsible and accountable behavior. There may be, in special circumstances, an appeal to justifications and excuses, whether complete or partial, for not being held to account for one's choices and actions. But the basic form of mature adult functioning is that of being in control, behaving responsibly, asking to be trusted as a responsible agent, being willing to be held accountable and even punished, and requiring in turn to be rewarded when deserving to be so, on the compatibilist level, based upon one's control-based actions.

A second way in which we can see the possibility and reality of speaking of compatibilist moral responsibility is to think of a certain type of example, which I will call "parking examples". In a certain workplace parking is difficult, particularly close to the main building. The senior management has some parking places reserved individually, but the rest have to struggle for a place every morning. A few parking places near the entrance have been reserved for disabled drivers, and they are in constant use. However, one of the junior managers, who is not entitled to a place of his own, regularly parks in the spaces reserved for the disabled. As a result, it often happens that a disabled driver cannot find a parking place in the vicinity of the building, and he or she has to struggle to get from a distant parking space to the entrance.

I trust that we can all agree that the arrangement whereby some parking places near the entrance are reserved for the disabled is fair and reasonable,

and that there is no justification for the junior manager's conduct. The question is whether we can view him as morally responsible, blame, and threaten to punish him. We assume that he is an adult who does not suffer from any of the dramatic mental difficulties that excuse responsibility even for compatibilists. He can, for example, perfectly well understand the situation, is responsive to reasons, is not a psychopath, and has no particular compulsion for illicit parking spaces. It is merely that parking near the entrance is a large benefit, which he happily helps himself to when he can, if he can get away with it. I see no good reason to put the bar of moral responsibility so artificially high that people (like our illicit parker) can *never* be seen as sufficiently morally responsible, blameworthy and justly punishable. If we join him and a disabled person who confronts him in a conversation about the parking space, I find it hard to see how he can defend himself. Determinism (or absence of libertarian free will irrespective of determinism) seems irrelevant, at the time of the challenge. "I cannot help parking here," he will say, "that is the sort of person I am, haven't you heard about determinism?" "But what's stopping you from moving your car? Why won't you do the right thing, park your car elsewhere and let me park here?" asks the disabled employee. It is hard to see anything that the illicit parker can say that will seem minimally convincing. Matters are up to him at the present time, and he cannot disown his agency or refuse the moral responsibility—and the blame due to him if he persists. Everything he says appears as sheer hypocrisy.

   If the junior manager continues to park in the disabled places, his behavior is shameful, and inexcusable. He might benefit by having this pointed out to him, and hopefully will begin to feel guilty when parking, and become a better person. In any case, he should stop behaving as he does and, if he does not, can be properly blamed and, if need be, punished. If, after proper and repeated warning, he is heavily fined, or his name is made public, then that seems an acceptable punishment. He is, and widely benefits, from being a member in what I have called (SMILANSKY 2000) the Community of Responsibility, and membership has its requirements. It is not unjust to moderately punish him in order to get him to stop parking in the disabled spaces; and arguably even irrespective of future consequences, so that he does not end up gaining through his conscious, willful, persistent and inconsiderate wrongdoing.

   To close this section, we need to attend to particular strength of compatibilism in the subjectivity of the moment of choice and action. Recall the

parking situation. Let us speak from the first-person perspective, in the name of the repeat offender. This is how he should see things: by trying to escape from my own responsibility at the time of choosing and doing, I am treating myself with disrespect not only in the sense that I am deceptive but also in the Kantian sense that I view myself as an object and not as a subject. Being a person, an agent, whatever is about to happen that I am planning to do is, from the perspective of choosing, up to me. I am not passive: I do have some measure of control over what I do. At the moment of acting, I have enough control; I can stop behaving nastily.

The denialist's absolute rejection of compatibilist moral responsibility, blame and punishment, seems no better than the absolutists on the other side, who do not recognize how often blame and punishment can be unjust. We need a more nuanced account that recognizes the psychological, social and moral complexities. Putting the bar too high, as denialists do, would allow people to deny the *reality of control or free will in the compatibilist senses*, in ways that are morally salient.

3. THE REALITY OF SHALLOWNESS AND TRAGEDY: THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE ABSENCE OF LFW

Alongside the partial, limited reality of compatibilist control and its moral and human significance, lies the ultimate perspective, the reality of the shallowness of compatibilism, the implications of the fact that LFW and all that it was supposed to deliver are a fantasy. Note that this means *understanding the importance of the reality of not having something that it is arguably impossible to have* (if robust LFW is indeed incoherent).

I have explicated elsewhere at length the limitations and shallowness of the compatibilist level reality, for all its importance (e.g., SMILANSKY 2000, Part II; SMILANSKY 2003; SMILANSKY 2012). Let us briefly think about punishment, and then more briefly about value. Consider a person who is paying a very high price as a result of his choices, for example by serving many years in prison in a way that ruins his life: he is deprived of the best years of his life, spends them in horrible surroundings, and the experience will stop him from being happy even after he is released. Assume that this person is in prison for committing a real offense. All compatibilist conditions have been fully satisfied—he is a model of the deserving wrongdoer, according to compatibilism. This means that he is an adult, cognitively competent and mentally stable. He did the deed for which he is in prison,

intentionally, purposefully, and after due reflection. He has no justification or excuse (setting aside here the incompatibilist threat from the free will problem). There are even no mitigating circumstances in his case, as philosophical compatibilists (and the courts) would evaluate matters.

Nevertheless, he is ultimately a victim of the circumstances forming him, of what he became as a result of factors ultimately beyond his control. He, and all he consequently does, is an unfolding of the given. From the ultimate perspective, his life and the causes forming it and being unfolded through it are a trap. The challenge facing the compatibilist is directly ethical: the very people whom the compatibilist describes as free, morally responsible, and deserving blame and punishment for committing a given criminal act are seen to be, in fact, trapped. They are literally the victims of circumstances. Moreover, they are trapped by us. We are all familiar with utilitarian arguments sacrificing some for the greater good of others. But compatibilism is a position within the free will debate, which values free will-based justice. The basic moral idea is that a person must not be punished unless she has permitted this through her free actions: "Justice simply consists of principles to be observed in adjusting the competing claims of human beings (i) which treat all alike as persons by attaching special significance to human voluntary action and (ii) forbid the use of one human being for the benefit of others except in return for his voluntary actions against them" (HART 1970, 22). Once we take the broad perspective and see that in fact there is a trap here, then it becomes much more difficult to give this fact no weight; the victimization begins to seem quite similar to the notorious one permitted (or required) by utilitarianism. In other words, society knowingly and willfully follows a path where certain people will be sacrificed for the sake of the general good (or some such goal). Due to our epistemic limitations, we cannot predict well who will end up a criminal of this sort, but this will have been determined. And yet, we follow through and punish those who end up in this state.

This is not to deny all validity to compatibilism; I have defended a modest version of it and its importance above. But the question here is whether the compatibilist can continue to deny the deep moral problem involved in punishing people on the basis of their compatibilist free will, moral responsibility, and desert, once we see the compatibilistically free criminal as being, all along, in the trap, our trap.

That the trap works through rather than bypasses people's voluntary actions (suitably enhanced according to compatibilist requirements) cannot

be the only thing that matters. The idea that it is fine for the person to be punished, since he has forfeited the constraint against harm through his voluntary actions, is seen in a much darker light once we see the role that this person plays as, simply, his being in the trap. From one perspective, he deliberates, takes his chances, chooses, and is then punished for his choices. It is not as though he is punished when he did nothing, or when he showed only good will; he is not (say) framed by the police and falsely accused of a crime he did not commit. But on a deeper view, what we see is merely a person who is *doomed*. Under such and such circumstances, he will do such and such things, and end up very badly off, blamed and severely punished.

What holds for punishment also holds for almost everything else in life. From the ultimate perspective, *all one's efforts, sacrifices, and attainments would ultimately not be to one's credit, but merely an "unfolding of the given"*. This has severe deflationary implications for one's value and meaning, for self-respect and the appreciation of others.

4. A FUNDAMENTALLY DUALISTIC/PLURALISTIC REALITY AND ITS CHALLENGES

Our situation is inherently risky in two ways: the risks following from the dissonance of the compatibilist and hard determinist truths, and the independent risk that people will fully grasp and internalize the implications of the absence of libertarian free will. As we shall see in the next section, these risks are currently met, and need to be met, through illusion, which hides from us the ultimate hard determinist perspective, thus allowing the shallow but compatibilistically justified life of responsibility to continue and flourish, as well as safeguarding us from the deep, existential sense of limitation, injustice and tragedy that is an inherent element in human life.

As we saw, compatibilism is partly justified, often salient, and in any case must form the backbone of our moral life, for denialism is inherently "leveling" and cannot adequately distinguish and motivate. Nevertheless, compatibilism is *vulnerable* and fragile, and dangerously so. It is a widespread topic for conversation among philosophers teaching the free will problem, how hard it is to convince many of our students of compatibilism: the abandonment of libertarian beliefs typically leads to a free fall into the denial of free will and moral responsibility.

Bona fide compatibilism (rather than, say, a utilitarian sort of con-sequentialism) seems to depend upon *stopping our inquiries before they*

reach dangerous points for compatibilism. And that sort of philosophical holding back is dubious. As Bernard Williams put it, "To the extent that the institution of blame works coherently, it does so because it attempts less than morality would like it to do… [it] takes the agent together with his character, and does not raise questions about his freedom to have chosen some other character" (1985, 194).

This philosophical weakness of compatibilism translates into practical difficulties and dangers. The ethical importance of the paradigm of free will and responsibility as a basis for desert, blame and punishment should be taken very seriously, but the ultimate hard determinist perspective threatens to present it as a farce, a mere game without foundation—or a masquerade for consequentialist manipulation. Similarly, with the crucial idea of a personal sense of value and appreciation that can be gained through our free actions: this is neither likely to be adequately maintained by individuals in their self-estimates, nor warmly and consistently projected by others and society. The compatibilist order, even though it is partly justified, is naturally fragile.

5. ILLUSION AS A REALITY-CREATOR

The philosophical limitations of compatibilism lend themselves directly to the recognition of the important role of illusion.

As I have argued in detail in the past (SMILANSKY 2000; SMILANSKY 2022), the illusion of libertarian free will is probably optimal, all considered, in doing the work. If people were to become aware of the absence of libertarian free will and of its implications, there is reason for great doubt as to whether they would then descend to and rest with the "second best" of compatibilism. The ultimate level perspective is not difficult to understand, nor are the inherent shallowness of value and moral justification, under compatibilism. There are major dangers that a great decline in moral seriousness, leading to much cynicism and even nihilism, coupled by recourse to a harsh consequentialist "management of people" approach, would be the result. We have no reason to feel that this would work, and much reason to fear that it would be inhuman. The same holds for our senses of value and self-respect and similar views of others. *The reality is that we cannot afford to live with the truth; we cannot afford to live with full awareness and internalization of reality.* The risks of awareness of course add to

the complexity, and, given the unpleasant nature of ideas such as positive illusions, enhance the tragedy.

We need, then, to muddle through. As long as libertarian beliefs can be publically sustained, conservatism is advised. The "bubble" of libertarian forms of belief, self-understanding and reaction shelters the partly-justified compatibilist life of responsibility, hence enabling the affirmation of agency and respect for persons, on the compatibilist level. These beliefs also safeguard us from an awareness of the depths of the injustice and tragedy involved in applying the overall-indispensable compatibilist Community of Responsibility, and in the inherent shallowness and insufficiency of compatibilist level value and (self-and-other) appreciation.

People who believe that free will matters greatly believe that *agency and control are inherently morally salient*, in a way that does not depend on whether taking agency seriously is (say) utility-maximizing. The concern is about whether people deserve blame or praise, not only whether blaming or praising them maximizes good consequences. And this is central to respecting persons, as compared to managing and manipulating them. When concern for free will is deficient in a society, our humanity is *pro tanto* threatened. There is a danger that people will treat one another in large measure as though they are mere carriers of features or "symptoms" that are to be dealt with, rather than treating one another as agents capable of reasoned choice and responsibility, who should be responded to and treated according to their choices and actions. Appreciation, gratitude, self-respect, acceptance of responsibility, are all desert-based notions—backward-looking responses to our past efforts and achievements rather than mere forward-looking manipulative means. Yet there are good reasons to fear that this structure is partly constructed and maintained by illusion.

That is the human condition—our being creatures who typically have a large measure of local compatibilist control, who ought to be treated as responsible agents, who are allowed to live out the consequences of our choices—but we are at the same time determined beings, operating as we were molded, and this often generates severe injustice and great limitations in value and meaning. We are also creatures who require illusion in order to make this unstable system work in practice and, moreover, in order to avoid what Nietzsche called "the awfulness of truth".

This crucial role of illusion is, in turn, also demeaning and indeed tragic, making life in no small part sordid and disappointing, if we are aware of the truth. But such is life.

So, in conclusion, we must—both morally and prudentially—take seriously the reality of (limited, local) compatibilist control, and of its limited implications in terms of moral responsibility. We must also take seriously the reality of the absence of ultimate control or robust LFW. If LFW is incoherent, then we need to take seriously the absence of something which doesn't make sense. This, again, isn't a mistake, although it is an existential paradox, for it greatly matters that we cannot have it. And, at least as philosophers wishing to really understand reality, we need to recognize *the inherent role of illusion in creating reality, in creating our moral and personal selves*. First, we need to recognize the usefulness of illusion as safeguarding the compatibilist level beliefs, reactions and practices. In that sense, illusion is crucial in making our humanity real, insofar as it is dependent on taking seriously compatibilist agency and its value. Secondly, we need to recognize illusion's crucial role in helping us to avoid the reality of the Dark Side, of what looking at the absence of LFW would mean in terms of moral tragedy and the deep shallowness of value, meaning, self-respect, and appreciation.[1]

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THE REALITY OF FREE WILL

Summary

Is free will real? Is there really free will? That of course depends on what "free will" is. And, on what "real" is. I begin from the free will problem as it appears in the contemporary free will debate, and set out to explore how my view on it affects various senses of reality. The picture that emerges is complex, pluralistic, multi-faceted, and paradoxical. In some sense free will is real, in another sense it is not, and both greatly matter. The sense that is unreal creates a reality of shallowness and tragedy. Finally, both ethically and pragmatically, we require illusion in order to create reality, in creating our moral and personal selves.

Keywords: free will; reality; illusion; Illusionism; moral paradoxes.

REALNOŚĆ WOLNEJ WOLI

Streszczenie

Czy wolna wola istnieje realnie? I czy istnieje realna wolna wola? Odpowiedzi oczywiście zależą od tego, czym jest wolna wola, a także, czym jest realność. Wychodzę od problemu wolnej woli w jego współczesnym sformułowaniu, aby zbadać, w jaki sposób mój pogląd wpływa na różne rozumienia realności. Wyłaniający się obraz jest złożony, pluralistyczny, wieloaspektowy i paradoksalny. Wolna wola jest w pewnym sensie realna, w innym zaś nie, oba ujęcia są zaś niezwykle doniosłe. Poczucie nierealności tworzy rzeczywistość bezsensu i dramatu. W rezultacie zarówno względy etyczne, jak i praktyczne sprawiają, że potrzebujemy złudzenia wolnej woli, by tworzyć rzeczywistość, a także nasze moralne i osobiste jaźnie.

Słowa kluczowe: wolna wola; realność; złudzenie; iluzjonizm; paradoksy moralne.