

# The problems of evil and consciousness

There are two apparently insoluble problems in modern philosophy: (a) The problem of evil. (b) The hard problem of consciousness. I say apparently insoluble because the failure to solve the problems is due to academic philosophers clinging to out-dated concepts.

(a) The problem of evil.

This problem may be simply stated thus:

- (1) The creator God is omnipotent and perfectly good.
- (2) Horrific evil exists in the world.
- (3) An omnipotent and perfectly good God would not have created horrific evil.
- (4) Therefore there is no omnipotent and perfectly good God.

Academic philosophers, following Roman Catholic dogma, assume that God created the world "in detail". He said to himself, "I shall create a good individual called Jesus, an evil individual called Hitler, and all the splendid variety of nasty diseases suffered by human beings and other animals."

In the light of modern cosmological knowledge, the idea that there was a God who created the world in detail is nonsensical. Would an intelligent Creator start off the process of creation with a mighty explosion (the Big Bang)?

We can only speculate about what happened 15 billion years ago, but the hypothesis of Pandeism fits the facts better than either Theism or Atheism. Pandeism speculates that a Divine Being transformed itself into the Universe. There is no assumption that this Divine being was omnipotent. There was no creation "in detail", but there seems to have been a sort of computer program which set in motion the process of evolution.

(b) The hard problem of consciousness.

We all have an idea of what consciousness is, but no neuroscientist has been able to explain how the chemical and electrical processes in the brain are able to produce consciousness. This is the “hard problem”. David Chalmers formulated the hard problem thus:

“It is undeniable that some organisms are subjects of experience. But the question of how it is that these systems are subjects of experience is perplexing. Why is it that when our cognitive systems engage in visual and auditory information-processing, we have visual or auditory experience: the quality of deep blue, the sensation of middle C? How can we explain why there is something it is like to entertain a mental image, or to experience an emotion? It is widely agreed that experience arises from a physical basis, but we have no good explanation of why and how it so arises. Why should physical processing give rise to a rich inner life at all? It seems objectively unreasonable that it should, and yet it does.”

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hard\\_problem\\_of\\_consciousness#Formulation\\_of\\_the\\_problem](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hard_problem_of_consciousness#Formulation_of_the_problem)

Thomas Nagel wrote a paper entitled “What is it like to be a bat?”, which gives us a useful insight into the problem:

“Nagel uses the metaphor of bats to clarify the distinction between subjective and objective concepts. Bats are mammals, so they are assumed to have conscious experience. Nagel used bats for his argument because of their highly evolved and active use of a biological sensory apparatus that is significantly different from that of many other organisms. Bats use echolocation to navigate and perceive objects. This method of perception is similar to the human sense of vision. Both sonar and vision are regarded as perceptual experiences. While it is possible to imagine what it would be

like to fly, navigate by sonar, hang upside down and eat insects like a bat, that is not the same as a bat's perspective. Nagel claims that even if humans were able to metamorphose gradually into bats, their brains would not have been wired as a bat's from birth; therefore, they would only be able to experience the life and behaviors of a bat, rather than the mindset. Such is the difference between subjective and objective points of view."

One possible solution to the hard problem of consciousness is the idea of panpsychism:

"Panpsychism is the view that some form of consciousness is a fundamental and ubiquitous feature of nature. But, unlike idealism, panpsychism denies that consciousness exhausts fundamental reality." (The Routledge Handbook of Consciousness).

It is important to point out that panpsychism is NOT saying that a rock is conscious in the same way that a human being is conscious, although it may be that the particles composing the rock may have some kind of consciousness at the quantum level.

The hypothesis of panpsychism fits easily with that of pandeism, as one may imagine that the consciousness of the Divine Being which transformed itself into the Universe now permeates that Universe.