

RESEARCH ON BOETHIUS'S VIEWS ON THE NATURE OF GOOD AND EVIL

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Abstract

This inquiry delves into the nuanced perspectives of Boethius on the existence of evil, placing a particular emphasis on its ontological dimensions within the overarching framework of absolute good. The primary focus of this analysis centers around Boethius's seminal works, *The Consolation of Philosophy* and *Hebdomads* which serve as the key repositories of his philosophical reflections. In the former, Boethius conducts a profound exploration of the problem of evil and good, with a specific focus on the ontological realm. The latter work, *Hebdomads* contributes a metaphysical foundation for a more profound comprehension of these philosophical concepts. This study bifurcates the thematic exploration into two core aspects: the ontological–metaphysical dimension, scrutinizing the concepts of good and bad beyond the realm of human action, and the ethical–moral dimension, acknowledging its importance for a comprehensive understanding of the metaphysical. This dualistic approach enriches the hermeneutic perspective, facilitating a more holistic understanding of Boethius's intricate thoughts on the nature of good and evil. The synthesis of these levels not only illuminates Boethius's intellectual journey but also contributes to the broader discourse on the philosophical exploration of ontological dimensions within the context of absolute good.

KEYWORDS: absolute good, Boethius, evil, One

Introduction

In this paper, I aim to explore the ontological and ethical nature of evil within the framework of absolute good, with a specific focus on Boethius's philo-

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sophical discourse. I pose a fundamental question: Is evil an independent, ontological entity, or is it merely a negation of the good in relation to the One? Additionally, I examine how these concepts are manifested in human actions on the ethical plane. Central to this exploration is Boethius's delineation of good and evil, as articulated through his two seminal works: *The Consolation of Philosophy* and *The Hebdomads*.

Boethius, facing a death sentence, contemplates the problem of good and evil from both ethical and ontological perspectives. *The Hebdomads* offers a metaphysical framework for interpreting these notions. Boethius, a pivotal figure connecting classical antiquity and medieval thought, grappled with the intricate question of the essence of evil and its interplay with the absolute good. His insights, deeply rooted in the intellectual legacies of Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, and Plotinus, present a distinctive outlook that sets his philosophy apart.

To better grasp Boethius's understanding of good and evil, it is crucial to delve into some facts from his life. Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius was born around 477 in Rome and died in 524. He faced significant ups and downs that profoundly influenced his philosophical thinking, particularly his conception of good and evil. After a successful public service career, accolades, and respect, Boethius fell out of favor with King Theodoric, leading to accusations of treason and incarceration. These events prompted profound reflections on justice, fate, and human freedom. In prison, awaiting execution, Boethius penned his most renowned work, *The Consolation of Philosophy* (*De Consolatione Philosophiae*), contemplating the nature of evil, injustice, fate, divine providence, and free will. Boethius's incarceration, coupled with the cruelty he endured, deeply informed his philosophical musings. Condemned to death, he spent his final days pondering the problems of evil and suffering, his death emblematic of the unjust suffering of the righteous.¹

To contextualize Boethius's perspectives on good and evil, an examination of the conceptualizations of good and evil by his intellectual forebears becomes imperative.

1. *How did Boethius's precursors contemplate the nature of evil?*

A thorough exploration of Boethius's contemplations on good and evil requires delving into the perspectives of his intellectual predecessors. The subsequent discussion will delineate key insights on evil from four influ-

1 Chadwick, Henry. 1981. "Romans and Goths" in *Boethius The consolations of music, logic, theology, and philosophy*, 1–6. Oxford: Oxford University press.

ential figures: Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, and Augustine, acknowledging the breadth of their contributions beyond specific dialogues like *Republic* and *Timaeus*.

1.1. Plato

Plato, a foundational figure in philosophy, addresses the complexities of evil across various dialogues. In *Timaeus*, he proposes that the fusion of the mortal and immortal soul renders susceptibility to pleasure, a catalyst for evil, countered by an aversion to the perceived good. Plato underscores the soul's dichotomy, distinguishing the immortal part linked to the realm of Forms from the mortal part prone to irrational impulses, facilitating malevolent actions (Plato *Tim.* 69c–70a; 1999, 179–181)

Moreover, Plato's allegorical discourse in *The Republic* (Plato, *Resp.* 508b; 1979, 170), epitomized by the sun analogy, accentuates the primacy of the Idea of the Good. This transcendent idea serves as the source of existence and knowledge, akin to the illuminating role of the sun, representing a metaphysical foundation from which all other Ideas emanate.

Plato posits that knowledge equates to virtue, attributing morally reprehensible actions to ignorance rather than a deliberate embrace of malevolence. In this context, societal responsibility becomes pivotal, with Plato advocating for a conducive environment and comprehensive education as prerequisites for cultivating an understanding of the good in individuals.

Plato's Allegories of the Line and the Cave (Plato, *Resp.* 509d–518b; 1979, 171–178) succinctly encapsulate his philosophy on knowledge and reality. The Line's four stages highlight unchangeable ideas, notably the Idea of the Good, guiding all towards their ultimate purpose. In the Cave, uneducated individuals perceive shadows as reality, symbolizing deceptive illusions. Liberation represents a shift from sensory illusions to the true reality of ideas or forms. The returning philosopher faces resistance, emphasizing the challenge of transcending illusions and the importance of philosophical education.

Plato contends that knowledge is intrinsic to the soul, invoking the theory of anamnesis or recollection. Learning, in this view, is recalling the soul's inherent wisdom from its existence in the world of ideas. The pursuit of "Being" and the "brightest point of being" aligns with Plato's Forms, with the "Good" as the ultimate purpose and source of illumination. The soul's orientation shapes its aspirations towards reason, courage, or sensory pleasures, influencing its understanding of good and evil.

1.2. Aristotle

In *Metaphysics*, Aristotle explores the essence of being, causes, and principles of reality. Although evil isn't a focal point in Aristotle's metaphysics, his perspective can be comprehended within the framework of opposites, deficiency, and potential. Potentiality refers to the capacity for something to become or act, and act is the realization of potentiality — the fulfillment of purpose (Aristotle, *Met.* IX, 1046a–1046b4; 1984, 1651–1652). Aristotle views entities as striving towards full expression, and 'evil' is seen as a failure to actualize potentiality or a deficiency in goodness.

Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* delves into happiness, virtue, and the good life. Aristotle posits that every action has an end or purpose (*telos*), with the highest good being bliss or *eudaimonia* — deep and lasting well-being arising from virtuous actions (Aristotle, *NE* I., 1095b17–1098a20; 1984, 1731–1735). Bliss is achieved through lifelong virtue, a mean between excess and deficiency. Evil, then, results from choices that deviate from this mean and fail to align with virtues constituting a good life.

Aristotle acknowledges external conditions like health, wealth, and friendships as prerequisites for virtuous living. He discusses moral goodness as a mean between extremes, with evil arising from choices not aligned with virtue. Aristotle explores the possibility that external circumstances or weakness of the will (*akrasia*) can lead to evil actions (Aristotle, *NE* VII. 1145b–1147b19; 1984, 1809–1813). While recognizing these factors, his main focus is on evil as the result of choices not in line with rational deliberation and virtuous living, framing evil as moral errors or failures in character within his ethical framework.

1.3. Plotinus

Plotinus, the founder of Neoplatonism, addresses the problem of evil in *The Enneads* (I. 8). Evil, according to Plotinus, is not a substance but a lack or privation of good, residing in indeterminacy, disorder, or disharmony. Matter, devoid of form and quality until shaped by the Good's reflections, is particularly evil for Plotinus, serving as a "shadow" to true beings. Evil exists as a potentiality realized through deviation from the Good's harmony and order.

Plotinus rejects Plato's notion of irrational souls being inherently evil, attributing evil in the soul to its mixture with the body. The soul's descent into the material world exposes it to imperfections and disorder, leading to perceived evil actions or states. Plotinus distinguishes two types of evil: accidental, arising from external circumstances or relationships with matter,

and complete or substantial evil, associated with matter itself, entirely lacking in good (Plotinus, *Enneads*, 2006, I.8.3; L7, C8)

In Plotinus's view, accidental evil stems from beings failing to fully realize their nature or good, while substantial evil is inherent in matter, representing the utmost privation of good. Matter, removed from the Good and the One, is not morally evil but symbolizes the extreme lack of good. Plotinus explores the necessity of evil as an opposite to the good, arguing that the Good is being, and evil is non-being. Degrees of evil, reflecting deviations from the ideal of the good, culminate in matter, influencing later Christian theology, especially in the works of St. Augustine and other Christian thinkers.

1.4. Augustine

In *Confessions*² Augustine delves into the nature and origin of evil, posing questions about its root and existence. He questions why we fear and guard against something that might not exist and explores the troubling nature of unfounded fear. Augustine reflects on the goodness inherent in all things, emphasizing that if all were devoid of good, they would not exist. This leads him to conclude that evil cannot be a being, as anything existing is inherently good (Augustine 1999, 89; 7, 12, 6).

Augustine's inquiry into evil is deeply personal, arising from his introspection on sins and weaknesses. His questions delve into the existence and nature of evil, contemplating whether it is a substantive entity or merely an absence or lack of good. This aligns with his later concept of evil as an absence of good (*privatio boni*). Augustine's assertion that fear is evil implies a psychological or internal aspect of evil.

These inquiries address the age-old problem of evil, challenging theologians and philosophers. Augustine grapples with the coexistence of evil in a world created by a perfectly good God. His eventual answer attributes evil to the free will of creatures deviating from God's will, aiming for lesser goods. In this framework, evil is a consequence of human freedom, not a direct creation of God. Anything that exists embodies some degree of goodness, as its existence is inherently good.

In *The City of God*, Augustine also discusses the concept of evil and good. "Vice cannot be in the highest good, and cannot be but in some good.

2 "What is its root, and what its seed? Or hath it no being? Why then fear we and avoid what is not? Or if we fear it idly, then is that very fear evil, whereby the soul is thus idly goaded and racked. Yea, and so much a greater evil, as we have nothing to fear, and yet do fear. Therefore either is that evil which we fear, or else evil is, that we fear. Whence is it then? seeing God, the Good, hath created all these things good. He indeed, the greater and chiefest Good, hath created these lesser goods; still both Creator and created, all are good" (Augustine 1999, 84; 7,5,10).

Things solely good, therefore, can in some circumstances exist; things solely evil, never; for even those natures which are vitiated by an evil will, so far indeed as they are vitiated, are evil, but in so far as they are natures they are good” (Augustine, 2006, XII, 3). In the quoted passage, he points out that “vice” cannot exist in the highest good but can only exist in some good. This means that things that are solely good can exist independently, but things that are solely evil can never exist. Even those natures that are vitiated by an evil will, as much as they are vitiated, are evil, but as much as they are natures, they are good. This approach emphasizes Augustine’s philosophy of dualism, where evil is not equal to good but is secondary and dependent on it. Evil appears as a corruption or degeneration of what is inherently good.

2. *Moral–Ethical Understanding of Evil in Boethius’s Thought: Navigating Personal Suffering, Fortune’s Fluctuations, and Free Will*

The consideration of his evil destiny in the *Consolation of Philosophy* of Boethius begins with the question: “If there be a God, from whence proceed so many evils ? And if there be no God, from whence comethany good?” (Boethius, I. prosa IV; 1968, 151). Boethius, grappling with the imminent threat of unjust execution embarks on a profound inquiry into the nature of good and evil, contemplating the involvement of Divine Providence in the face of existential challenges. The age–old dilemma of reconciling a benevolent God with a world rife with injustice unfolds through a dialogue with Lady Philosophy, revealing Boethius’s intellectual journey.

2.1. Personal Suffering: A Philosophical Exploration

Boethius initiates his contemplation with an intimate reflection on personal suffering, bemoaning unjust accusations and the betrayal of presumed friends. In navigating societal judgments amid adversity, he underscores the prevalent misconception that misfortune is a deserved punishment. Lady Philosophy assumes the role of a sagacious guide, delving into the profound philosophical implications of these injustices. This injustice serves as a starting point for his broader philosophical reflections. This can be interpreted from the following quote: “I cannot abide to think of them ; only this will I say, the last burden of adversity is that when they which are in misery are accused of any crime, they are thought to deserve whatsoever they suffer” (Boethius I. prosa IV; 1968, 155). The sentiment expressed in this quote captures a poignant aspect of human suffering and judgment. When individuals are already in a state of misfortune or adversity, they often face additional

societal judgment or condemnation. The assumption becomes that their suffering is a result of some moral failing or deserved punishment, even if that's far from the truth. Boethius grapples with this very issue. As a man who experienced great fortune and then profound misfortune due to false accusations, he personally knew the sting of such judgments. Boethius's introspective exploration lays the foundation for a more profound understanding of the human experience and its intersection with the moral–ethical fabric of the universe.

2.1.2 The Transient Nature of Fortune: Reevaluating Values

Lady Philosophy introduces Boethius to the ephemeral nature of fortune, emphasizing the transient quality of wealth, power, and honor. Critiquing Boethius's perceived error, she contends that the true source of happiness lies internally, rooted in virtues such as wisdom and inner peace — qualities independent of external circumstances (Boethius II. *prosa* I; 1968, 175–179). This revelation prompts a reconsideration of values and a shift toward an inward, virtue-based understanding of genuine fulfillment.

2.1.3 Human Action and Free Will: Moral Weight and Alignment with the Good

Boethius delves into the intricacies of human action and free will within the context of aligning with the good or deviating from it. Recognizing free will as fundamental to human nature, he imbues actions with moral weight (Boethius IV. *prosa* II; 1968, 305). Aligning with the good, Boethius asserts, entails living in harmony with reason and virtue. In his nuanced perspective, evil is not an external force but a deficiency resulting from choices against reason and one's true nature. Actions deemed as evil stem from ignorance or misalignment, fostering inner turmoil and a sense of disconnection. Boethius's exploration of evil encapsulates personal reflections, metaphysical inquiries, and moral–ethical dimensions, weaving together a multifaceted understanding of the ethical and ontological nature of evil within his philosophical thought.

This refined analysis delves into the intricacies of Boethius's contemplation, moving beyond a mere examination of concepts to illuminate the richness of his intellectual journey.

3. *Metaphysical Understanding of Evil*

Boethius's exploration of evil in the metaphysical realm mirrors the complexity found in his ethical examination. To delve into his conception of evil, it is crucial to juxtapose his ideas on good and evil in *Consolation of Philosophy* with his thoughts on the Good as presented in the *Hebdomads*.

In the *Hebdomads*, Boethius grapples with a fundamental question regarding the goodness of substances that are not good substantially. This inquiry reflects Neoplatonic influence, where the Good is perceived as the ultimate source and goal of all beings, although not all beings embody the Good itself.

The Ninth Proposition of *the Hebdomads* delves into the nature of goodness in things. Boethius argues that everything naturally aspires to the good, signifying the end of all desire and action. While not claiming that substances are the ultimate Good itself, he contends that everything possesses some share in goodness or an inherent orientation toward the good.

The assertion, “Therefore, things which tend to good are good” (Boethius, *Hebd.* line 60–61; 1968, 43) implies that the very pursuit of the good indicates an intrinsic goodness within the seeker. Substances are not the Good itself in essence, but their nature is inclined towards it. In this inclination or movement toward the Good, they exhibit their own form of goodness. This perspective aligns with the notion that good is an ontological priority, and being itself is intrinsically oriented towards it. Evil, accordingly, is viewed as a deviation from this natural inclination towards the good — a failure to attain the good that a being inherently seeks.

Boethius further explores the nature of goodness in beings and their participation in the Good. He claims that if beings are good by participation, then they are not inherently good, pointing to a distinction between the ultimate Good and individual beings participating in it. Boethius concludes that beings are good in substance because their existence is good. This assertion leads to a nuanced perspective: beings are substantial goods, similar to the First Good, but attributing divine status to created beings is deemed impious within Christian theology.

Boethius walks a theological tightrope, affirming the goodness of all created things as a reflection of the divine while maintaining the transcendence and uniqueness of God's goodness. To claim that any created being is substantially good in the same way as God would blur the Creator–creation distinction, a tenet central to the Christian doctrine. Thus, Boethius labels such a conclusion as impious, emphasizing the need to respect the divine nature of God.

Furthermore, Boethius explores the hypothetical scenario where beings do not originate from the First Good. “But if their Being is good, things which

exist are good through the fact that they exist, and their absolute Being is the same as that of the Good. Therefore they are substantial goods since they do not merely participate in goodness. But if their absolute Being is good, there is no doubt but that, since they are substantial goods, they are like the First Good and therefore they will have to be that Good" (Boethius, *Hebd.* line 73–80; 1968, 45).

In this context, he posits that their substance would differ from their existence or essence. This inquiry aligns with the Neoplatonic principle that the source of all goodness is the One or the First Good. Boethius suggests that the goodness of beings is intrinsically linked to their origin from the First Good. Without emanating from this source, their substance and existence would be fundamentally different, devoid of the inherent participation in goodness. This reinforces the notion that the perceived goodness in the world stems not from accidental attributes but from a fundamental characteristic originating from beings' participation in the ultimate Good. This participation shapes their substance and ensures that their existence is inherently oriented toward goodness.

Examining the third proposition in *Hebdomads*, Boethius emphasizes that participation occurs when something already exists, and a being exists when it has received being. Furthermore, if all things do not emanate from the supreme good, then their "existence" is separate from the "existence of the good". Boethius resolves this by concluding that things are good because they exist, but they are not similar to the supreme good, which is pure good, i.e., the *primum bonum*. This reasoning by Boethius has sparked a debate on being through participation. Some authors argue for discarding the concept of participating in God and interpreting it metaphorically, asserting that creatures are good because they have their cause in God, and goodness is *per substantiam*, not *per participationem*.

H. Chadwick, however, contests that all things are good in themselves, deeming it blasphemous. He argues that "the goodness in creatures is neither substance nor accident but is related to their essence, which tends towards God, who is good. If their relation to God is eliminated, goodness becomes a contingent characteristic" (Chadwick 1981, 207).

In *Consolation of Philosophy IV*, Boethius extends the discourse on good and evil. He posits that evil, in itself, is nothing. Boethius contends that all existence derives from and is sustained by goodness, synonymous with being and unity. Consequently, anything that exists is inherently good, and to fall from goodness is to lose the essence of being.

Following this line of reasoning, when individuals commit evil, they forfeit their true nature. Despite retaining their human form, their wicked actions signify a departure from the nature of humanity, which is fundamentally good. Thus, they cease to be what they were, aligned with the good, and

though they may still resemble humans, their actions have caused them to lose the essence of their humanity.

When Boethius asserts that evil does not exist in the true sense of the word, he acknowledges its existence in the world, presenting a paradox resolved by understanding evil as an apparent reality — an imperfection or a failure of beings to achieve their true good nature. In this context, when he states that evil people do not exist, he is not denying their physical or empirical reality. Instead, he addresses their ontological status: they are deficient in their being because they have distanced themselves from the Good. While their innate inclination toward the Good persists, their ability to realize it is hindered by bad choices and moral impotence. This reflects a Platonic view where forms, representing the true nature of things, are perfect and good, and any deviation is a lack of good rather than the presence of an independent evil.

This issue remains a subject of debate among philosophers and theologians as they grapple with the coexistence of evil in a world supposedly created by a supremely Good being.

Boethius extends the examination of evil to Divine Providence (Boethius, IV prosa 6; 1968, 353) in his philosophical treatise *Consolation of Philosophy*, where he confronts the problem of evil in a world governed by a benevolent and all-knowing God. The existence of evil poses a profound paradox in a universe overseen by Divine Providence and where God is the epitome of goodness. Boethius considers that, from the perspective of Divine Providence, what appears as evil may serve a greater good beyond human understanding.

Providence, conceived as the divine reason ordering every event in the universe, operates even when the immediate reasons for certain events, such as acts of evil, are hidden from human perception. Evil acts may be viewed as allowed for the sake of free will or as part of a larger cosmic tapestry contributing to the greater good. Boethius reconciles the existence of evil with Divine Providence by asserting that, while evil exists, it has no positive nature of its own — it is only a privation of good. Evil, in this view, has no real power except as a deficiency or a failure to achieve good. This aligns with the Neoplatonic understanding where all things emanate from the One or the Good and strive to return to it. Evil, therefore, is a deviation from the intended course set by Divine Providence but cannot thwart the ultimate good that Providence intends.

Boethius draws from Neoplatonic thought, conceptualizing evil not as a substantive entity but as a privation or lack of good. In this perspective, evil is the absence of good, akin to how darkness is the absence of light. Reality, within the Neoplatonic framework, is hierarchical, with the One or the Good at the pinnacle. Beings closer to this source possess greater reality

and goodness, while those further away exhibit less perfection and are more susceptible to evil.

Boethius grapples with the idea of a providential God overseeing everything, including the occurrences of evil. He emphasizes the need to adhere to the law of the golden mean so that the human spirit does not go astray. Boethius contends that every fate not correcting a person necessarily punishes them to become good. Beings in this world are not inherently evil but have temporarily deviated from their path due to cognitive error. In Boethius's worldview, nothing is left to mere chance, and even deviations from the rules of order transition into another state. Thus, evil individuals may inadvertently contribute to the greater good through the course of fate.

Boethius insists that the human spirit cannot fully comprehend the entire divine order and its arrangement but must trust that God arranges everything, leading to good (Boethius, IV prosa V: 1968, 337).

His notion that if a man perceives this divine order, he can realize that there is no evil on earth underscores the idea that evil, as perceived by humans, is often a result of limited understanding. Boethius rejects the concept of inherent evil, aligning with the Socratic idea that no one does evil willingly but out of ignorance.

His claim that the human spirit cannot comprehend the entire divine order reflects humility and an acknowledgment of the limitations of human knowledge. Boethius believes that, although humans may not fully understand the divine plan, they should trust that the divine order is just and leads to good. This perspective aligns with the Christian doctrine of providence. Overall, in his work, Boethius endeavors to provide consolation to those facing injustice and suffering, offering the perspective that there is a higher order fundamentally good and just, even if that order cannot always be clearly seen or understood from a human perspective.

Conclusion

In this comprehensive exploration of Boethius's conception of good and evil, I have delved into two interconnected levels: the ethical–moral and the metaphysical–ontological. At the ethical–moral level, Boethius engages with the dynamics of human action, emphasizing the significance of moral choices and individual autonomy. The concept of evil, within this context, becomes entwined with human suffering and injustice arising from morally questionable actions. Simultaneously, the practical–experiential dimension elucidates the consequences of these actions, emphasizing the pivotal role of individual choices in shaping destiny. Boethius contends that while confronting injustice and suffering, our moral choices ultimately define our relationship to good and evil. This study affirms Boethius's conviction in

the potency of individual moral discernment to overcome the allure of evil, guiding us toward the good despite life's inevitable challenges.

Venturing into the metaphysical–ontological dimension, Boethius explores the nature of evil in a more abstract realm. Here, he posits that beings inherently aspire to the good, implying an intrinsic orientation towards goodness that defines their essence. Boethius further expounds on how entities are deemed good through participation or substance, initiating a profound discussion on the very nature of existence and its intricate relationship with the good.

This expanded conclusion synthesizes the practical implications of Boethius's thought with his metaphysical inquiry, presenting a holistic view of his philosophical stance on the nature of good and evil. Boethius's understanding, shaped by his personal experiences and classical philosophy studies, especially those of Plato and Aristotle, reflects his beliefs in the transcendental nature of good and the derivation of evil from ignorance. His impact extends into medieval philosophy, where his notions deeply influenced Christian theological and philosophical thought.

In this exploration, Boethius's distinctive thought on good and evil stands apart from predecessors such as Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, and Plotinus. While incorporating elements from these philosophical giants, Boethius synthesizes their ideas, demonstrating a unique perspective on the dilemmas of good and evil, particularly within the realms of human freedom and responsibility. His synthesis of Platonic ideals, Aristotelian logic, Augustinian concepts of will, and Plotinian mystical philosophy gives rise to a nuanced philosophical position. Boethius's work serves as a bridge between classical antiquity thought and medieval Christian philosophy, positioning him as a pivotal figure in the history of Western thought.

In essence, Boethius's personal triumphs and tragedies not only molded his philosophical ideas but also bestowed upon the world a timeless treatise addressing perennial questions of human existence, destiny, and the intricate nature of evil. His enduring influence lies not merely in his synthesis of philosophical traditions but also in his profound insights that continue to resonate across the annals of Western philosophical thought.

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*Sažetak***ISTRAŽIVANJE BOETIJEVIH POGLEDA O NARAVI
DOBRA I ZLA**

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Ovo istraživanje ispituje slojevite perspektive Boetija o postojanju zla, s posebnim naglaskom na njegove ontološke dimenzije unutar općeg okvira apsolutnog dobra. Glavni fokus analize usredotočen je na Boetijeva ključna djela pod naslovom *Utjeha filozofije* i *Hebdomade*, koja služe kao glavni izvori njegovih filozofskih promišljanja. U prvom djelu Boetije provodi detaljno istraživanje problema zla i dobra, s posebnim naglaskom na ontološko područje. Drugo djelo, *Hebdomade*, pridonosi metafizičkom temelju za dublje razumijevanje tih filozofskih pojmova. Ovo istraživanje tematski ima dvije dimenzije: ontološko–metafizičku, koja analizira pojmove dobra i zla izvan područja ljudskog djelovanja, te etičko–moralnu, priznajući njezinu važnost za sveobuhvatno razumijevanje metafizičkog. Ovaj dualistički pristup obogaćuje hermeneutičku perspektivu, olakšavajući sveobuhvatno razumijevanje Boetijevih kompleksnih misli o naravi dobra i zla. Sinteza ovih razina ne samo da osvjetljava Boetijevo intelektualno putovanje već i doprinosi širem diskursu o filozofskom istraživanju ontoloških dimenzija u kontekstu apsolutnog dobra.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI: apsolutno dobro, Boetije, zlo, Jedno

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