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Araştırma Makalesi

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On Flew's Compatibilism and His Objections to Theistic Libertarianism

Abstract

Flew strongly defends a compatibilist thesis in the free will debate before going on to totally object to theistic libertarianism. His objections basically rely on his compatibilism embracing the notion of agent causation, which is not very common in compatibilist theses. Since he is a strong proponent of ordinary language philosophy, he also holds that linguistic analyses can certainly solve the free will problem as well as many other problems of philosophy. In doing so, he first uses the paradigm cases based on our common sense experience and then assumes the verity of principle of alternative possibilities. This study attempts to show, on the one hand, that there are some serious difficulties in both his justification of compatibilism and his objections to theistic libertarianism, and on the other hand, that he cannot easily defend both at the same time.

Keywords

Antony Flew, Compatibilism, Free-Will, Agent, Causation, Theistic Libertarianism, Paradigm Case Argument, Principle of Alternative Possibility.

1. Introduction

In a natural world presupposed to be dominated by causal determinism, the question of how the human being, a being that is part of the natural world, can be free, is one of the most rooted questions of philosophy and is often simply referred to as the question of free will. This question, by its very nature involves various approaches, including the questioning party's knowledge, philosophical perspective, philosophical method and religious beliefs, which when taken into consideration, bring different matters to bear on the question, leading it to be discussed from a different angle every time. The primary reason governing the perpetual recurrence of this question can be attributed to its broad appeal, wherein the matter of free will has not been a topic isolated to the theoretical field of philosophy alone, but also holds deeply personal and existential value for philosophers. This is why there is such a substantial wealth of literature, which is continuously enriched and expanded, on the problem of free will.

In this paper, I shall deal with this question within the framework of the linguistic approach adopted by Anthony Flew, a strong proponent and skillful scholar of Oxford Linguistic Philosophy (Brown 1996: 237-238), as well as an acclaimed philosopher in the philosophical and intellectual circles of the 20th century, owing to his writings on philosophy of religion. Philosophers who come from the analytical and linguistic tradition often focus on the problem itself, exploring the nature, soundness of the argument and the evidence supporting or refuting the claim. In this writing I will take a similar approach in evaluating Flew's approach to the problem, focusing on his method, claims, and objections and on the degree to which he was able to justify these, followed by clear explanations of my reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with him. However, because I also think that philosophical questions are not asked in vain and that to better understand and appreciate a philosopher's perspective, it is crucial to acknowledge the personal world view of the philosopher prior to discussing and evaluating a problem, I will first briefly try to describe what the problem of human freedom meant to Flew before addressing his claims.

1.1. Why is Human Freedom so Important for Flew?

In reviewing Flew's work, it becomes clearly evident that in addition to his book *Agency and Necessity* and other articles discussing the problem of human freedom directly, he also made direct and indirect references to the problem and discussed in it different ways in his various other works, such *as A Rational Animal* and *Atheistic Humanism*. He must have had important reasons for doing so. Arguably, the first reason may have been his desire for personal freedom. If he had not had this desire, it would be hard to understand and interpret the passionate tone when he stated "Nor are we, nor could we be puppets" (1978: 195) written in a humanistic and anti-Marxist voice refuting historicism. Moreover, as a philosopher, Flew seems to have had so-called technical reasons to dwell on this subject. He states very clearly that many scientific, philosophical and religious positions have a first-degree interest in the problem of human freedom, including Skinner's behaviorist psychology, Wilson's socio-biology, all physics from Newton to quantum physics, Libertarian political philosophy, the Marxist understanding of history, which argues that there are inevitable historical laws

in human affairs, atheistic determinism as well as classical theism, which defends the co-existence of an all-knowing, all powerful God and human freedom (1989a: 223-225).

For example, according to Flew, if the human being were not free, freedom as described by common sense, it would have been highly problematic in theory, although not impossible in practice, to build a foundation for human rights and social liberties (1989b: 69; 1993b: 293). Again, according to Flew, without assuming that freedom is deeply rooted in the human nature, it wouldn't be possible to distinguish human sciences, which are based on the idea of agency, from physical sciences, which are based on causality and natural determinism. If we were truly not free, says Flew, the distinction we have been making between these two groups of sciences would be rendered meaningless (1981: 346; 1985a: 89-90; 1989c: 99; 1978: 89,91; 1993b: 297). He adds, if human freedom were not assumed as a factual truth, the notions of knowledge and rationalism would also lose their meaning (1985b: 49-60; 1987b: 401-421; 1959: 377-382). Given that knowledge and rationalism assume a human being's ability to choose, in a world dominated by hard determinism, neither knowledge nor rationalism has any more value (1959: 379; 1985b: 51; 1993b: 119-120, 128).

1.2. Where does Flew Stand? Compatibilism vs. Libertarianism

As can be understood, the acceptance of human freedom is a foundational matter for Flew and his philosophy. However, despite this, Flew does not take a libertarian approach to the question of free will. Instead, he adopts a compatibilist position, which argues that determinism and human freedom can coexist, where he distinctly rejects libertarianism and hard determinism in equal measure. Flew's understanding of libertarianism involves the idea that as a free agent, a human being has an uncaused cause for his actions, and therefore he is completely exempt from the causal determination of the natural world (1989a: 224). The idea of hard determinism, which he rejects, argues that all actions of a human being are the compulsory and inevitable result of a pervasive causality in nature, and that's why the human being, a natural being, cannot be conceived as an agent (1985a: 96; 1989b: 78; 1987a: 61). From the rejection of these approaches in the free will argument, Flew can be seen as clearly positioning himself against the incompatibilist view, which perceives freedom and determinism as necessarily excluding each other (1985a: 100).

This gives us a definite idea about where Flew stands in the free will debate. However, Flew does not stop there but makes two more specific claims: 1) Our language practices are able to show us that compatibilism is true, in other words, it can show that even in a world that is causally determined, we can be free. 2) It is not possible to defend both the existence of a God as defined in classical theism and the notion of a libertarian free will.

While Flew's second claim has been discussed in writings on the philosophy of religion (Purtill 1977; Depoe 2005), the first claim has largely been ignored or never discussed in detail. Although in my opinion, the first claim is more important then the second for three reasons: 1) Since the second claim is a negation, Flew can leave the burden of proof to the theist and merely point out the problems of the notion of a theistic libertarian free will. As the first claim, however, is an affirmation, he does not have the same tactical advantage here; in other words, he is left to bear the burden of

proof himself. 2) Flew's second claim is in fact based on his first. If the unsoundness of his first claim can be showed, his second claim would also be weakened. Otherwise stated, if Flew fails to show the trueness of compatibilism, his objections against libertarianism, particularly theistic libertarianism, would be rendered dubious. 3) Flew makes use of Paradigm Cases (PCs) to support his first and second claims, and he bases his arguments on the Principle of Alternative Possibilities (PAP), where it is asserted "a person is morally responsible for what he did only if he could have done otherwise" (Frankfurt 1969: 829-839; 1988: 1-10; Inwagen 2002: 162), therefore taking an 'untraditional approach' (Markosian 2012: 384) and defending the notion of a compatibilist agent causation, where the person is the cause behind his actions (Flew 1987a: 158-159; 1978: 89).

I believe that Flew's objections against theistic libertarianism are disputable and that there are problems with his justification of compatibilism, on which he primarily bases his objections. The use of Paradigm Cases (PCs) to warrant his claims is insufficient, and even if PAP is proven true or false, in either case problems arise in his simultaneous defense of both the claims stated above. In this paper, I will first focus on how Flew justifies both of his claims and in the conclusion, I will discuss these claims and evaluate each of them individually. First, let's look at how he justifies compatibilism.

2. Flew's Justification of Compatibilism

With regards to the free will debate, Flew believes that determining the right question to ask is the highest priority. For him, it is wrong for philosophers dealing with this problem to first ask whether humans act or do not act with a free will, as asking such a question already posits the existence of or the possibility of a 'free will', and thereby presents an argument in favor of libertarianism. On the contrary, the correct question to ask should be whether or not the human being is free (1987a: 51-52). This question no longer highlights the free will but rather the notion of an agent. This distinction gains even greater significance when you consider that Flew avoids the term 'self' when referring to the 'human agent' (1987a: 49).

The main reason behind Flew making all these distinctions is his complete refusal of the notion of a dualist nature found in humans, as described in the Platonic and Cartesian traditions, and the preference he has to associate himself with the monist view of the human found in the Aristotelian tradition (1978: 1-2, 123-124, 222). This, of course, does not mean that Flew agrees with Aristotle's ideas completely. But, like Aristotle, he does reject the idea of an immaterial substance within the self and attempts to describe the idea of the agent without making use of substance dualism. According to Flew, humans are flesh and bones (1989c: 101) and any discussion on free will should start right there.

It is important to point out here that although Flew was especially emphasis adamant about holding to this distinction here, he still did not avoid using the term 'free will' in his writings, save for in *Agency and Necessity*, due to its common use in philosophy. This is why it should be kept in mind that whenever Flew has chosen to use

the term within the framework of his own compatibilism, he does not intend it to mean an immaterial faculty in humans called will, following his tutor Ryle (1949: 62-63). Looking at it from this perspective, the statement, 'the human being is an agent because he has a free will' would mean the acceptance of an immaterial self, which as Flew made clear, is false. However there is nothing wrong in saying, 'Because the human being is an agent, she has a free will'. In fact, for Flew, the term "agent" is sufficient by itself, adding adjectives such as 'free' or 'choosing' to the notion of an agent is redundant. Flew feels that even the most meticulous professional philosophers, such as Locke, ignore this redundancy, although our linguistic practices already contain the ideas of 'being free' and 'being able to choose' in the word 'agent' (1987a: 132).

As a result, Flew thinks that our linguistic practice also assumes that the agent has the option to do otherwise. Therefore, Flew, along with most philosophers, seems to agree with the trueness of PAP, at least on a linguistic level. In other words, the assumption that a person is neither free nor responsible for what he has done if he could not have done otherwise is valid both for libertarianism and for Flew's compatibilism. That being said, Flew asserts that our language practices not only point to ideas such as agency, freedom, choosing and action as well as to the legitimacy of PAP, but also to the existence of a physical necessity and causality. Flew's ultimate claim emerges as a consequence of these: If our language practice demonstrates all these to be true, then the best position from which to argue in the free will debate is that of compatibilism.

2.1. The Use of Paradigm Cases for Justification of Compatibilism

Flew relies heavily on paradigm cases (PCs) to justify his claim that our language practices support compatibilism. Throughout his papers he regularly uses two cases, one involving persons threatened by aggressors, and the other, two young people, Murdo and Mairi, who are about to get married to one another. Flew employs the first PC to base the notion of freedom on the analysis of the term agent and the experience of being able to do otherwise, and the second PC to explain freedom based on the notion of action.

2.1.1. Threat Cases: Agency, Being Able to do Otherwise and Freedom as Lack of External Compulsion

Flew uses two different threat cases. In the first one, he asks you to imagine a person sitting in front of a desk with a document on it. This person is asked to "make a choice" between signing and not signing a document while someone from the mafia is pointing a gun at the person's head. The gun holder tells him that he's making him an irresistible offer, but of course, he still has the option of not signing it. The only catch is that if he doesn't sign, pieces of his own brain will be appearing on the document instead of his signature (1990: 35). In this case, the person signs the document, just like most people would do. In the second version, a robber threatens a bank manager with his life and asks him to unlock the safe and hand him the money inside. The manager involuntarily does what he was told (1993a: 9; 1973: 234).

Flew thinks that in both situations, we can still state that the people under coercion did what was asked of them with their free will, although involuntarily. There is nothing more natural than stating that as long as a person has the option to do

otherwise; he has acted with his free will. In the current cases, although the threatened people were forced into doing something, it doesn't mean they didn't make a choice. Often in such situations, we find ourselves saying "They didn't have a choice" or "You couldn't have expected them to act otherwise". However by these statements, we mean that the people made the most reasonable choice, or that they had a valid reason for the actions they committed while under threat (1989b: 73). Otherwise, when we consider the fundamental meanings of these statements, we know clearly that these people could actually have done otherwise or that they had other alternatives for action (1985b: 55).

The reason why some people may think the opposite is because they are confused about the prescriptive and descriptive use of the word "expect". This linguistic confusion, says Flew, causes us to miss out on the essence of being an agent. For him, if we can resolve this confusion and grasp the true meaning of what it means to be an agent, then we would have to agree that although the agents in both cases were under coercion, they were still committing an act and making a choice, therefore they were free in the very descriptive sense of the word. If this fundamental descriptive meaning did not exist for the word, which points out to the fact that we could do otherwise, the prescriptive meaning of the word, which is used for making excuses, would also not have existed (1989b: 73; 1985a: 95; 1991: 55). Therefore, says Flew, even when Luther stated, "Here I stand, I can no other. So help me God" he implicitly accepts that as an agent he could do otherwise (1973: 235; 1987a: 65).

As observed, in both of PCs presented by Flew, the keyword is "agent". In these cases, the situation of people under compulsion are different from the situations where, for instance, a person is thrown out of a window with the use of brute force or that of a person shot in the back of the head without any prior warning. The main difference between the latter and the former cases is that the latter involves victims, not agents. Agency requires active and dynamic participation, whereas victimhood only requires being affected by another agent's act. Neither the person thrown out of the window nor the person shot in the head commit an act. In each condition, what happens to them hinders their agency (1973: 234); in the second condition the person does not only cease to be an agent but also ceases being alive (1985b: 55; 1985a: 94).

Flew makes the following conclusions based on these cases: Our linguistic practices show that in terms of our actions, it is possible to be under compulsion, to have an option to do otherwise, and to be free at the same time. In other words, those who commit an act under compulsion or threat are still committing an act just like those who commit it with their free will (1990: 35). But it is important to remember here that when Flew talks about compulsion, he talks of a compulsion exerted by other people, an external compulsion on the agent (1989b: 71; 1985a: 94). It appears that for Flew, as demonstrated in the threat cases, an external compulsion to the agent does not eliminate the free will of the agent, as long as the agent remains an agent. On the other hand, as in the case of the man who had been thrown out of the window, any external compulsion by other people that takes away the agency of an agent rids the person under compulsion of a free will. When Flew describes free will as 'lack of any external compulsion', only the latter situation fits his description of this kind of compulsion.

2.1.2. Marriage and Murder Cases: Action, Being Able to do Otherwise, Internal Causes, and Freedom

Flew's second set of PCs are somewhat different from the first. This time he uses PCs while he attempts to explain what it means to 'act freely' and 'to be able to do otherwise' by analyzing the relationship between our actions and their reasons, instead of directly analyzing the meaning of the term agency. Let's assume, says Flew, that there are two ordinary young people, Murdo and Mairi. They have no conflicts between them and there is no societal or familial pressure on them. Murdo believes that he is free to ask the woman he loves to marry him and so proceeds to choose Mairi, asking her hand in marriage. The wedding takes place and the two young people get married (1955: 149-150).

According to Flew, there is nothing more natural to say that Murdo married Mairi with his own free will and that he could have done otherwise. However, this is never the same as saying there were no reasons that determined what Murdo did, his acts and choices were uncaused, and therefore in principle, unpredicted (Those who knew Murdo and Mairi may have very well known that they were going to get married). What Flew means instead is that Murdo could have done otherwise, that he had other alternatives within the framework of his current state of mind, physical condition and his accumulation of knowledge (1955: 149-150). For example, if Murdo's endocrine glands were not in their current condition, perhaps Murdo would not have thought about marrying Mairi and therefore not have asked her. We therefore need to accept the condition of Murdo's endocrine glands as the physiological cause behind his action. This statement, however, does not contradict the statement that Murdo acted out of his own free will. While although his endocrine glands were the physiological cause behind his act, it is not reasonable to think of them as the only cause behind it, and we don't interpret it as such in our linguistic practice either (1955: 152).

It is not reasonable because in accepting one cause as the sufficient cause of an act means rejecting the possibility of alternative explanations that do not necessarily exclude each other. It is not reasonable in our language practice either, because then we would have to state that not Murdo but his endocrine glands made a decision to get married, which is obviously a metaphorical statement. It appears that for two reasons, Flew thinks that this statement cannot have a literal meaning: First, making a decision is an act that requires consciousness, whereas endocrine glands are not consciously acting agents, as humans are. Secondly, the glands are not external causes that coerce a person into acting out of his free will, but rather they are internal causes that are part of the human, without which the constitution of the human would be incomplete (1955: 153).

Flew does two things by accepting Murdo's endocrine glands as the internal cause of his action. First, he agrees that the opposite of volitional is not non-volitional but the lack of external compulsion or pressure (1989a: 225-226), and second, he claims that because our desires are not external causes, the internal compulsion they exert on us cannot eliminate volitional action (1987a: 122). In other words, our desires and motives do not serve as external physical necessities on our actions as asserted by hard determinism; they do not coerce us into anything.

But how can we know this? Flew makes use of linguistic analyses again to justify his claim, presenting us with another PC, which could be titled 'Who is the Murderer?' Let's assume that you are a detective; a murder is committed and you know that there are many people who have entertained the desire to kill; in other words, many who could potentially be a murderer. However based on your experience, you also know that a person is actually a murderer if and only if this person turns that desire of killing into the act of killing, otherwise everyone would be a murderer. Flew's line of reasoning goes simply as follows: (i) Everyone has certain desires or motives to be a murderer. (ii) Nobody except the actual killer is the murderer. (iii) Therefore desires and motives are not in and of themselves the ultimate necessitating cause of our actions (1987a: 62).

Nevertheless, Flew does not at this point deny that a strong desire that urges a person to do something can exert a serious compulsion and pressure on him. He only rejects the notion that such a compulsion completely eliminates all the possibilities to do otherwise (1987a: 65; 1989a: 268). According to Flew, our life experience is full of cases demonstrating that the desire to do something does not guarantee that we do it and that we can do otherwise despite our desires. Therefore, it is clearly false to degrade the human being into a desire creature, a puppet where desire pulls the strings, and to deny that a human is an agent who acts on his own will (1989a, 268). If our experience shows us that our desires do not coerce us into doing things that they motivate us for, the only reasonable conclusion is that human beings with desires are nevertheless agents despite the existence of these desires, and they can do differently than what they have done (1987a: 75).

Flew is aware that some will object to his reasoning on the grounds that the reason we do not do a desired act is because we are under the influence of another desire that is stronger then the first. He, however, finds this objection seriously flawed for two reasons. First, this objection in its essence is simply another version of the idea expressed in different terms that a person always carries out what he desires. Therefore, it is not a proof but a tautology, and the burden of proof is on the objector (1987a: 63). Secondly, this objection seems to take the end result as a criterion when it comes to identifying which desire is stronger than the others. Therefore, it is merely a "since-it-is-trivially-true-it-must-be-importantly-true maneuver" (1989a: 268). Flew thus believes that the objection is not strong enough to falsify the claim that a person can always avoid an action no matter how much he desires it. Although there is no such thing as the agent choosing her 'original desires' because making a choice requires the existence of both an agent and the options she can choose from, it is still possible for an agent to make choices amongst her desires to a certain extent, choices that over time become habits as they are regularly selected over others. Therefore, the human being is not a helpless creature of desire (1989a: 269).

This result is not altered when we consider that human beings have conscious as well as unconscious desires. Flew expresses his view on this in *A Rational Animal*: It is wrong for the notion of compulsion to be expanded to a degree whereby it can even be determined by unconscious desires and forces, since the idea of unconscious desires and thoughts do not allow the responsibility to be transferred to anyone else but the person himself (1978: 191-192). This situation differs greatly from being psychologically

coerced into doing something while under the hypnotic power of someone else. While the latter involves an external compulsion, the former involves an internal one.

It is also evident from the use of the word "inevitable" that internal compulsions like desires, passions and wants are not irresistible and inevitable (1994a: 24). In our linguistic practice, we do not employ the word "inevitable" to indicate helplessness when referring to the wishes of agents. For example, in the case of an attack, the person attacked can describe it as an "inevitable event", but we know that it wasn't so for the one who committed the attack, as we naturally assume that the aggressor always had the option of abandoning the act of attacking. Evidently, there is a significant distinction between calling the actions of agents "inevitable" versus calling physical events "inevitable". In physical events, the question of "inevitable according to whom" is meaningless, while as seen in the example about the attack, it is possible to ask this question with regards to actions committed by agents. It is this possibility that allows us to use the word "inevitable" in our language, with regards to human action. Moreover, even the ability to ponder the problem involving the reconciliation of the notion of inevitability and human action would arise only if we are agents and have the option to do otherwise (1989a: 261-262; Helm 1997: 155).

Why then do some fail to see this distinction? Flew's answer to this is that there is confusion about the two meanings of the word 'cause', and consequently, of determinism itself. For him, the word 'cause' describes physical necessity and impossibility when used in the context of physical events. However, when the same word is used for human actions, it means something entirely different, as the human being has certain motives and causes for his actions. Flew adopts the language of Hume here and calls them 'moral causes', and asserts that since determination by moral causes is very different in nature than determination by physical causes, these two types of determinations would render different results. He explains that when you want to describe the behavior of a person with physical causes, you admit that the person did not choose this behavior or at least he was under a determination that he could not hinder. Whereas if you state that someone is under the determination by moral causes, you assume that this person could do differently that what he is doing (1994a: 23-24; 1985a: 96-97; 1991: 60-61; 1981: 359-351). From a linguistic perspective, moral causes are not the necessitating causes of a behavior; they only bring about certain inclinations (1993a: 10; 1994a: 24). As opposed to physical causes, they do not always produce the same end result, and sometimes the same motive can produce not only different but opposite results (1987a: 57).

Here Flew makes use of another PC to justify his claim. For instance, we hear that an adversary of ours has suffered a misfortune. It is possible that hearing this may cause us to celebrate, to feel sad or to pity this person (1987a: 56-57, 122; 1993b: 297). However, this never means that we agree that the effects of moral causes are determined by chance. Chance always means that something takes place without design. But when we act volitionally, we act on design, not chance (1987a: 70). Therefore when we state that an event has a moral, not a physical cause, we do not mean that it has happened by chance. Just as in events that are the results of physical causes, those that are the results of moral causes do not leave space for chance (1987a: 69).

Flew explains the reason behind why moral causes have different effects than physical causes by making a distinction between moral causes as "moving" and physical causes as "motion". 'Movings' are movements that can be started or ended by human beings, whereas 'motions' are movements that the human being has no control over (1987a: 133; 1985a: 91; 1981: 355; 1989c: 102). Flew perceives motions as the proof of the existence of physical compulsion, and movings as proof of a type of personal power within human beings. For him, similar to the way the determinism claim is based on our experience of physical necessity, the claim that we are agents with a free will is based on our experience of this personal power (1989b: 71; 1987a: 130).

Flew's goal here is to demonstrate to us that both agent causation and event causation are supported by our language practice and life experiences. According to him, even though their initial conditions are different, the results are the same in these two types of causations. Because once actions and events take place, their practical results inevitably occur. They only differ in terms of beginning causes. Since saying that an agent is caused for the event before it happens does not render the event inevitable and obligatory, but only gives an inclination to the agent to commit a certain act, it is not the same as saying that the event was caused before it happened (1987a: 57, 121, 122, 159). In the end, both causations are true since they are confirmed by our experience.

At this point, it is important to note that when the word 'experience' is used, Flew is referring to an ordinary experience as a bodily creature and not to a purely cognitive, internal experience in the Humean use of the word (1987a: 117-119). According to Flew, due to Hume's Cartesian assumptions that perceive experience as an internal and private experience of an immaterial subject imprisoned behind a veil of perception and therefore hold that reality can never be *directly* known independent of the mind (1994b: 101,104; 1987a: 67-68,128-129), Hume failed to see that notions such as agency or physical or factual necessity are derived from our own experience as bodied beings (1987a: 136-137; 1994b: 109). For Hume, the experiences of willful acting, being an agent and physical necessity are only internal and private impressions (1987a: 130-131). In a Humean universe consisting of such internal impressions, there are no actual correspondences for the notions of physical necessity and impossibilities, or the notion of an agent, be it human or divine (1987a: 126).

That's why it is essential in Flew's compatibilism to accept that human beings are not only observers but also actors in this world. According to this, what allows us to know causality, and consequently physical necessity, as a reality as opposed to sequential impressions, is our life experience as an actor, an agent in this natural world, independent of our mind (1997: 111, 137-139; 1994b: 105-109). Therefore in various writings Flew presents four arguments, similar in their essence, which are built upon this kind of notion of experience and support the existence of agency, freedom and compulsion. His arguments can be roughly summarized as such:

If we weren't already free agents (and therefore not be in a position to know that universal hard determinism, or the refusal of freedom, is false) we wouldn't be able to understand that agency, freedom, choice, physical necessity or all other related terms, let alone have these words (1990: 35-36; 1989b: 69; 1994b: 110; 1993b: 294; 1991: 55).

(2) If these words were not based on universal experiences that everyone is familiar with under normal circumstances, it wouldn't have been possible to define them (1987a: 133). (3) Such words would not have been explained or coined if people didn't exist who enjoyed or suffered because of the experiences that these words describe (1987a: 133). (4) If we weren't agents with personal powers or never experienced what it is to have alternatives and did not have nomological propositions, then we would have never had the notion of counterfactual conditionality. However, we do have the idea that allows us to state, "If this hadn't happened, then that would have happened." Therefore, the ideas of being able to do otherwise, agency, physical necessity and causality must have an actual object. For Flew, it is incumbent upon those who are not convinced by these arguments to express how these ideas and terms found their place in language (1987a: 133-135; 1991:56).

3. Flew's Objection to Theistic Libertarianism

The theistic libertarianism that Flew objects to is a claim that asserts that agent herself is the uncaused cause of her all actions, even in a world dominated by the omnipotent and omniscient God described in classical theism. This claim is similar to the common understanding of free will in the libertarian approach in its essence, where it perceives the human being as the sufficient condition of his action, and the causal conditions of the action as necessary conditions instead of sufficient ones (Reichenbach 1982: 50). However, as a natural result of his own compatibilism, Flew objects to a libertarian understanding of the free will in general, and to the claim that the theistic description of God can be reconciled with the libertarian understanding of the free will, in particular. Here I will group Flew's objections to theistic libertarianism under three titles in order to show and evaluate them in detail: 1) Linguistic and Epistemological Problem, 2) The Problem of Consistency, 3) False-Assumption Problem.

3.1. Linguistic and Epistemological Problem

First, Flew asserts that the libertarian definition of the 'free will' as 'an uncaused cause' is a hypothetical and arbitrary description that ignores the common understanding of the word in daily language, namely, 'a person not committing an act under any compulsion' (1989a: 223-225). For Flew, such a description cannot be reasonably deducted from the regular meanings of the words 'choice' and 'action' (1973: 237). When the meaning of these words in colloquial language is examined, it is clearly seen that their central emphasis is on having alternative options, not the notion of an uncaused cause. This is the main starting point of agreement for different schools of thought for those that oppose the existence of free will and those that support it. That is why libertarianism begins its argument from the wrong place (1989a: 224). This objection Flew has does not differentiate between theistic and atheistic libertarianism. For him, not only theist, but also atheistic libertarianism - as in the case of Sartre- builds arguments on such an arbitrary definition and assumes an incompatibility between human freedom and libertarianism from the very beginning, thereby creating a begging question (1978: 78).

Although a libertarian can object to Flew's stated approach by saying that the idea of having an alternative would necessitate the idea of the uncaused cause of libertarianism. However, Flew's response to this objection is very clear: There is no need to assume an uncaused cause; compatibilism can provide us with the same idea (1989a: 263). Moreover, Flew asserts, even if our linguistic practice supported the hypothetical libertarian definition of the free will as uncaused cause, it would be difficult to answer exactly and satisfactorily, in a libertarian sense, how a choice has been made or an act has been committed. In other words, even if we really had a libertarian free will, we wouldn't be in a position to acknowledge it (1973: 237).

3.2. The Problem of Consistency

Flew claims that God, as described in theism, is not compatible with a libertarian understanding of freedom due to the qualities of absolute power and absolute knowledge ascribed to him. First, he refers to the absolute power of God. As Aquinas also agrees, says Flew, the teaching of creation in theism describes an omnipotent God who is not only the beginning cause of the universe but also the sustaining cause of it and everything within it. Differing from deism, classical theism assumes that if God did not exist and did not hold the universe in existence, everything would collapse (1955: 148; 1987a: 85; 1993b: 63). An uncaused cause himself, God is the ultimate ontological cause of all beings, and without his determining, nothing can come into being nor continue its existence (1987a: 84-87; Helm 1997: 147).

It seems that from here, Flew thus reasons that if this is the situation, then God is the 'sufficient condition' behind all our motions and our movings, meaning God is the ultimate cause of everything that the beings he created do. However, this also means that God is the only cause and creator of all ideas, choices and actions (1993b: 60; 1955: 145; 1978: 107) and even the sins of human beings (1987a: 84). Therefore, accepting the existence of an omnipotent God of theism and at the same time claiming human liberty as described in libertarianism leads to an obvious contradiction (1973: 242; Helm 1997: 147). At this point, it is futile for theists to succumb to the notion of an omnipotent God to eliminate this contradiction, as even God does not do the reasonably impossible (1973: 231).

Moreover, for Flew, the theistic teaching does not only include the idea of the all-powerful God being the sustaining cause but also the all-knowing God, who knows what will happen in the future. Since a libertarian understanding of free will assumes, to protect the agent's autonomy, that an agent's future choices are unknown, it is in conflict with the claim that God has such foreknowledge (1973: 233). God's foreknowledge determines how a human being will act. Making reference to God's wisdom and thinking that he would give human beings a libertarian free will, too, is false. Because only if you could describe two Gods, one all-powerful and the other all-knowing, then would the absolute knowledge the one has keep human action from being compulsory. In this case, since two Gods would have to be different in nature, one would create human beings' characters while the other would know them. However, in the case of theism, since both these qualities are found in the one same God, His wisdom is inseparable from and relies on his power and his knowledge (1987a: 77).

That's why in Flew's mind it is reasonable to think that the qualities found in the God of theism, omnipotence and omniscience, lead theism to fatalism. In fatalism, the outcomes of events are inevitable and there is nothing that a person can do to change it. The teaching of fatalism, or predestination, is neither reasonably nor morally compatible with the libertarian claim of the free will (1987a: 78). Flew attempts to explain his claim by using some PCs in human affairs. For him, since there isn't a sufficient example in the human world to explain this relationship, he uses the examples of a puppeteer and a hypnotist to make his point, which he finds to be the closest examples.

He first asks us to think about the relationship between a puppet and a puppeteer. In this relationship, given that every movement of the puppet is manipulated by the puppeteer, just as it would be absurd to hold the puppets responsible for their actions, it would be equally as absurd to hold a human being responsible for his actions against the God of theism. However, Flew thinks that this analogy is not completely satisfactory in explaining the misery of the relationship between the God of theism and human beings. Since puppets do not have feelings and don't feel pain, no puppeteer can be held responsible for a moral crime. Whereas in the relationship between God and humans, it is different. Human beings have feelings and are capable of feeling pain (1993b: 60; 1955: 145). Therefore, not only is the teaching of predestination inconsistent with the libertarian understanding of free will, but also the awarding of human beings with heaven or punishing them with hell is unfair, immoral and arbitrary (1994a: 30). Moreover, for him, in addition to the arbitrariness of this reward system, the use of the words 'awarding' or 'punishing' are also meaningless, because if the said teaching is true, these words cannot have an actual meaning (1955: 166).

Flew's second case involves a hypnotized person who had been put under hypnosis by the suggestions given by a hypnotist. Here, both the hypnotized and the hypnotist are humans. However, even this analogy is not sufficient in explaining the misery of the relationship between God and human beings for two reasons. First, when a human being is hypnotized by another, not everyone involved is under hypnosis; there is always someone who knows the difference between being under the influence of hypnosis and not. Whereas when God is involved, all human beings are under hypnosis. Second, in situations where a human being is under the hypnotic control of another, the responsibility of the person hypnotized is not completely eliminated because we can always explain to the hypnosis candidate what it means to be hypnotized and ask their consent beforehand. Again, when an all-powerful God is concerned, it is different. The question of consent can't be applied here because we are not in a position to know we have been hypnotized (1993b: 59; 1955: 145, 161,162).

As these analogies show, the teaching of predestination or fatalism does not only prevent human beings from being an uncaused cause, as suggested by libertarianism, but from being a cause altogether (1989a: 224). Moreover, in such a teaching, God appears as a super-agent, who not only prohibits human beings from being a cause, but also eliminates her ability to do otherwise and therefore of becoming an agent, a being responsible for her actions (1994a: 29; 1993b: 60). In the teaching of predestination, with his unlimited power and knowledge, God is the sufficient condition of human action. However, theistic libertarianism perceives God not as the sufficient but the

necessary condition only. Therefore, contrary to the assumption, it is not possible for these two to be reconciled.

3.3. The Problem of False Assumption

According to Flew, in addition to the problem of consistency, another problem with theistic libertarianism involves one of its foundational assumptions. Theistic libertarianism assumes that since God is a rational being, it is a rational necessity that he creates a world in which the human being can do good or bad, right or wrong. It is because being free to choose between good and bad but unable to choose bad would be a contradiction and anything that is self-contradictory is not in God's power (1993b: 59; 1973: 231; 1955: 145, 153). Naturally, this assumption is based on a second one: A human being has free will if and only if he can commit acts that are described as right or wrong, or good or bad.

Flew doesn't seem to directly object to the second and more foundational assumption. This idea already assumes the trueness of PAP, which is accepted by Flew's own compatibilism as well. Moreover, for him, the said assumption does not include the idea that wrong choices actually have to be made, but rather it only points to the possibility of choosing the wrong (1973: 232). That being said, Flew explicitly and directly refutes the first assumption, asserting that it is the very idea alone that leads theistic libertarianism in the wrong direction. Because for him, it must be possible for a God with absolute power and goodness to create a world wherein the human being never commits the wrong or bad action but always prefers the right and the good, while still remaining free (1973: 233; 1955: 149, 152, 155).

Further, such a world is better than one wherein both the good and the bad actions can be committed. And since a theist perceives God as absolutely powerful and good, he should agree that such a God can, and should even, create this kind of improved world. Otherwise, while claiming human freedom, he would take away God's own freedom by perceiving God as being obliged to create a very specific kind of world. Doing this, theistic libertarianism also limits God's goodness. Because if God is absolutely good, as theistic libertarians think, he should prefer a world that is better for the human being as opposed to one that is less good. If he doesn't do that, he is either not absolutely powerful or not absolutely good (Kondoleon 1983: 1-4; Yardan 2001: 110-111).

4. An Evaluation and Conclusion

As can be seen, Flew attempts to solve the problem of free will and determinism by using a compatibilist explanation, and based on that, he objects to theistic libertarianism, claiming that it is a meaningless, inconsistent thesis based on false assumptions. As I had emphasized earlier in the beginning of this paper, since Flew's objections on theistic libertarianism depend on the trust he places in the soundness of his compatibilism, the real question is how successful is he at justifying his own compatibilism. Because if his compatibilism can be shown to be not as sound as he supposes, then his objections to theistic libertarianism will thereby also be weakened.

That being said, his objections to theistic libertarianism can also be evaluated separately from his compatibilism.

4.1. Difficulties in Flew's Objections to Theistic Libertarianism

Of the three objections Flew has against theistic libertarianism, I will discuss one, namely his linguistic criticism of the theory on defining free will as uncaused cause, while evaluating his compatibilism, and here I will focus on the last two objections. First, let's look at the claim that libertarianism is incompatible with theistic teaching.

4.1.1. Are Theism and Libertarianism Truly Incompatible?

First, Flew's claim that if a God with ultimate power and knowledge existed, human beings are not free in their actions, is based on the assumption that only one agent is responsible for an action. For him, in theism, this agent is God, the super agent. However, this assumption is not true for cases where more than one agent has shared responsibility (Helm 1997: 150). Flew perceives God as a super agent who can manipulate human actions, given that he has ultimate power and is the sustaining cause of everything. However, similar to how we don't have any proof that a human being with manipulating power manipulates others all the time, we also cannot prove that God is manipulating human actions at all times just because he has the manipulative power to do so (Helm 1997: 152).

In theism, God is also described as a being with not only absolute power but also absolute will. Having absolute will describes a quality of competence. A God who is described as the perfect being cannot be thought not to have perfect will. In that case, he would be an incompetent, imperfect God, which cannot be accepted by theism.

If God is a being with absolute will, then Flew's claim that theism necessitates fatalism becomes disputable. This claim would only be viable if we bring forth certain qualities of God, such as his absolute power and knowledge and ignore others, in this case, his absolute will. Flew's assertion that God's wisdom relies on his power and knowledge can only be justified like this. But, once God's will is highlighted, it is also necessary to acknowledge that his wisdom will rely on his will and his choices as well. It is reasonably imaginable that a being with ultimate will would limit his own will and power to allow human beings to have freedom in action. In such a case, God would not have predetermined all the desires and actions of human beings, but only the preliminary desires. This idea does not lead us into fatalism. Here Flew, too, accepts that human beings are not capable of choosing their own preliminary desires even in a world without God.

Flew's objection that theism's omniscient God and libertarianism, where an agent's actions cannot be known prior to committing them, are irreconcilable, is not applicable for at least certain understandings of theism. For example in the process theism, also known as open theism, God's omniscience is interpreted as him knowing the possible as possible and the actual as actual (Taliaferno 2003: 251; Kane 2005: 160-161; Katzoff 2003: 335; Hassan 1978: 211; Fazli 2005). This understanding of God prevents God's absolute knowledge from eliminating human being's free will. Here God can also be interpreted as only the necessary condition, but not the sufficient

condition for human action. Therefore, contrary to what Flew claims, theism's notion of an all-knowing God can in fact be reconciled with libertarianism.

4.1.2. What does the False Assumption Objection Really Mean?

Flew's false assumption objection presents certain difficulties in terms of the internal reasoning of religious language and the idea of possible worlds. First of all, Flew's compatibilism and his claim that God could have created human beings that always freely choose the right thing (which in fact is a theistic compatibilism thesis) contradict each other. This can be clearly seen in Flew's attempt to justify his own compatibilism where he emphasized that the cause of a human-agent's action is internal and defined freedom as the agent being under no external compulsion. However, Flew also asserted that the God of theism was the sustaining cause of all, including human actions. Now if we accept both of these claims as true, the reasonable conclusion is that a human-agent's action is always caused externally. But then, even the hypnosis case Flew used to refute theistic libertarianism ironically becomes a case to falsify his claim that God could have created human beings that always and freely choose the right thing. As this claim presupposes that the cause of a human being's action is external, in its essence, it is not much different from God hypnotizing all human beings to choose the right thing all the time (Gooch 1994: 97-98).

Moreover, Flew's claim that God could have created a world where human beings always and freely choose the right thing, is contradictory both to theistic teachings and to the general agreements that our common sense has about human beings and God. For example, even our common sense, as Flew himself agrees (1998: 145) tells us that we are "fallible". Therefore, it is not possible for us to imagine a normal human being with qualities such as not being able to do wrong or having no inclination to sin. What allows us to define a person as good requires that he is also capable of doing bad. Therefore Flew's hypothetical creation of a free yet infallible human being is neither supported by common sense nor theistic teaching. In this respect, Flew's thesis can be qualified as an unrealistic, utopic thesis as Smart has rightfully asserted (1961: 188). This free yet infallible being that Flew claims God has the power to create, is no longer a human being but a different type of being (1961: 193).

That being said, even if we agree for a moment that such an understanding of human being is not problematic, that it is possible and meaningful for a human being to have freedom of action and be completely good, such a model would cause another problem, the problem eliminating the cognitive freedom of the human being. The described human beings would eventually realize that their doing wrong has been prohibited. This, then leaves them with no freedom to refuse God's existence and leave them forced to believe in him on a cognitive level. However, looking at this issue from a theistic perspective, it could be said that what matters most to God is the voluntary act of faith (Dilley 1990: 1-2). Then even if Flew's approach were accepted as true for the sake of argument, human beings would have freedom of action but not freedom of thought.

Also, Flew's claim that God could have created human beings completely good and completely free, if God had absolute power and goodness, would mean requesting from God to grant the freedom he has promised to give human beings in heaven while

they were still on earth. However, a theist does not perceive the freedom in heaven merely in terms of God's power. Although many theists believe that being in heaven is ultimately due to God's grace, they also believe that they will have deserved this freedom in heaven to a certain extent. Human beings do not deserve to enter heaven just by being humans per se. This is why Flew's hypothetical model of a human being who never commits wrong or bad actions due to God's power and goodness, is problematic not only in terms of cognitive freedom but also in terms of earned freedom (Yardan 2001: 110-112).

Moreover, although Flew's claim places importance on human freedom, it ignores God's freedom. By asserting that God is obliged to create a world where human beings are free in their actions yet are barred from doing wrong, means eliminating God's freedom in order to give human beings a higher level of freedom (Yardan 2001: 113).

Also, although a world where human beings always do the right thing while maintaining their freedom is conceivable in terms of God's power, it still cannot be expected of him to actually create such a world. This is because for a human being to be a free agent, it is required that she chooses to do wrong or err at least once. An agent who has the option to but never commits an act is not a free agent. Therefore, if God were to actually create one of the possible alternative worlds, this would be a world, reasonably speaking, where the free agent would do wrong at least once (Kondoleon 1983: 6-9), not the world depicted by Flew, where she would never do wrong.

Furthermore, in the world imagined by Flew, saying a person would do "right "or "wrong" has no factual meaning. However, the idea of possible worlds requires such counter-factual propositions. Therefore, the claim that due to the lack of contradiction in Flew's idea of the world where the human beings are free and always do the right thing, such a world is one of the reasonably possible worlds, is very disputable (Peterson 1998: 39-40). Moreover, the lack of contradiction does not necessitate the existence of something. The lack of contradiction does not oblige God to create a particular world chosen from the possible worlds (Yardan 2001: 112-113).

Therefore, there is no impassable contradiction between theism and libertarianism as Flew suggests; the real contradiction is between theism and Flew's own assumption that God could create a world where the human being can freely always choose the right thing.

4.2. Problems With Flew's Compatibilism

Flew's compatibilism seems open to criticism in three main lines of his reasoning: Assuming that PCs can solve the problem of the free will, basing compatibilism on common sense, and basing arguments on the hypothetical interpretation of PAP instead of the categorical.

4.2.1. Are PCs Sufficient in Justifying Compatibilism?

First, it should be stated that Flew's use of PCs to justify his compatibilism is highly disputable. Flew's reasoned that if you can learn the meanings of the notions such as 'acting free' and 'being an agent' by referring to PCs, you cannot claim to

support a hard determinism (1960: 19-20). But, PCs are not sufficient to prove a claim for certain, although making use of them in solving philosophical questions is not futile, either (Hanfling 2000: 74-75; 1991: 38; Marconi 2009: 118-119). This is because in metaphysical discussions such as those on the free will, you can fabricate PCs that both support and refute it (Danto 1959: 120-124; Watkins 1957: 25-33; Harre 1958: 96).

Inwagen points out that using PCs to justify human freedom may require us to accept unreasonable results, as well. For instance, imagine that aliens placed a device in our brains the moment we were born, forcing us to make our decisions using a certain software, but our linguistic practice worked in its regular fashion. In this case, all the PCs shown to support the existence of free will are just examples of determined actions (Inwagen 2002: 109-110; Daw and Alter 2001: 350-351) From this perspective, there is nothing to bar us from perceiving the PCs, such as the threat cases and the marriage case which Flew presented to support freedom of action, as cases based on the ignorance of the prior causes of the action that was assumed to be committed freely. If the prior causes of the action were exactly known, then we would have to admit that the sense of freedom is an illusion.

That being said, it could be argued that PCs are examples from normal people's experiences and that there is no need for fictional scenarios. Two responses can be given to this. First, the goal in Inwagen's approach is not to create fictional scenarios but to point out that we are not in a position to know that those cases we saw as examples of acting on free will are really examples that demonstrate the existence of free will or not. Second, the PCs extracted from real life experience depend on two factors: linguistic practice and common sense. However neither of those provides us with the certainty looked for by a philosopher.

Our understanding of the world and our relationship to it is limited to words. In other words, we can think of our understanding as being in a linguistic predicament. However, if we really are in a linguistic predicament, if we are imprisoned within language, then using linguistic analyses and PCs to justify a claim only serves to beg questions. For example, if we are not sure that our linguistic practices reflect a factual truth, then, contrary to Flew's suggestion (1987a: 58-59), we are not in a position to know that a real difference exists between cause, reason and motive. From this perspective, there is no difference between the libertarian description of free will as uncaused cause, and Flew's compatibilist definition of freedom as lack of external compulsion.

Moreover, internal causes of an action, similar to the motives that Flew called 'moral causes', are physical causes just as external causes are. Flew misses this point when he states that Mordo's endocrine glands are not other people or external causes that oblige him to act a certain way (1955: 153), or when he argues against the inclusion of unconscious desires as determining factors of compulsion (1978: 191-192). His line of reasoning may rest on the idea: if I am not the one responsible for my actions, then no one is. Their responsibility is all mine. And if I am responsible from them, then it shows that I am a free agent.

However, this reasoning appears problematic in two ways. First it seems to be forgetting that in order to grant responsibility to someone, it is first required to prove

that he is free. The second, is Flew's assumption, 'If I am not the one responsible for my actions, then no one is.' This, as Helm emphasized (1997: 152), does not mean that nothing is responsible for them. Here it is possible to attribute responsibility to the causally sufficient conditions of the action. Although because 'responsibility' is a quality that can only be attributed to conscious beings, Flew would not be pleased with its use in this context. However, this is a secondary and linguistic problem, not a primary and ontological one. External or internal, compulsion is compulsion (Lamont 1967: 114-115). In a paper written by Robinson where he evaluates Flew's objections to sociobiology, he emphasizes that Flew's claim for a distinction between moral and physical causes justified by linguistic analyses and PCs, was not strong enough to refute that the mental states and interests of human beings can be determined ultimately by physical causes (1995: 216-218).

Yet, let's assume that the said distinction is sound enough to show we are free in action. Even then, it cannot show that we are free in terms of will. Freedom in action is different than freedom of will. First one implies a freedom in doing what a person wishes to do, the second one implies a freedom in wishing something. In the first condition, a person can be said to be free as long as he is not forced to act this way or that. However, in this kind of an understanding of freedom, an animal can also be considered to have freedom of action as long as it is exempt from external compulsion, and then the difference between human beings and animals no longer remains (Lester 2000: 21).

4.2.2. Common Sense Experience versus Manipulation Argument

When Flew asserts that freedom and any other ideas related to it result from our own experience and that those who are not convinced by these experiences have the burden of proof to prove otherwise, it becomes clear that his PCs are based on the experience of common sense (1990: 35-36; 1994a: 28). However, the sense of freedom derived from our common sense cannot provide us a certain proof. The manipulation argument (Pereboom 2014: 71-82; 2001: 110-117) used to deny compatibilist theses such as Flew's, emphasize this point. This argument suggests that PCs exist or can be fabricated, where human beings are manipulated by another and still think of themselves as free, as in the hypnosis cases discussed. There are no differences between manipulated agents and human beings living in a determinism-dominated world. Therefore, our sense of freedom is not irreconcilable with the idea that all our behavior is determined.

4.2.3. Principle of Alternative Possibilities

The last and most difficult problem of Flew's compatibilism involves Flew's interpretation of the principle of alternative possibilities (PAP) and also the legitimacy of this principle itself. According to it, an agent is responsible for an action only if she could do otherwise, which is to say, if she had other alternative possibilities of action (Frankfurt 1988: 1-2; 2003: 17-19; Pereboom 2014: 9). In this definition, the principle is open to be used by both compatibilists and libertarians. The central idea in this principle is the ability to do otherwise, which can be interpreted in two ways. Compatibilists understand it hypothetically, whereas libertarians, or incompatibilists, interpret it categorically. Compatibilists think that if the conditions a person is in were different,

this person could have acted otherwise (Reichenbach 1982: 53). Whereas what's important for libertarians or incompatibilists are, categorically, the person could do otherwise even when all the conditions remain the same.

Reading Flew, it is not easy to say that he is very clear about the meaning of "being able to do otherwise". In his PCs (threat cases), where he emphasizes the meaning of freedom as lack of external compulsion, he takes the hypothetical meaning of being able to do otherwise, as any consistent compatibilist would do. As Denneth wished to highlight (1984: 133-142; 2004: 89-95; Zawidzki 2007: 104), if determinism is true, then a person can never be in the "exact" same conditions twice. However, in other PCs (marriage and murder cases) where Flew asserts that a human being can "resist" against internal causes such as human desires, he seems to base his argument on the categorical meaning of being able to do otherwise.

If he bases his arguments on the categorical meaning, then he would need to make a metaphysical or biological explanation to show how the agent could do otherwise when all the conditions remained the same. However, Flew only refers to PCs without making such an explanation. If he bases his arguments on the hypothetical meaning, then this means he is ultimately accepting a pervasive determinism in an implicit fashion. As Searle points out, when a person answers 'no' to the question if they could have done otherwise 'when all conditions remained the same' (1994: 767-768), then there is not much meaning left in talking about freedom.

At the same time, even if Flew interpreted compatibilism hypothetically or categorically, his compatibilism is directly affected by the objection Harry Frankfurt had against the verity of PAP. According to Frankfurt, it is not required that an agent be able to do otherwise in order for her to be responsible for her action (1971: 18-19). His main point can be stated as follows (1988: 6-10; Eshleman 1997: 269-270):

For example, say you will decide to commit an action X. However, there is something you don't know: Somebody else is watching you and knows prior to your action what you will do. This person has the power to manipulate your brain and your nervous system without you knowing it. When you decide to do X, he doesn't interfere, but once he realizes you decided not to do X, he manipulates your thought process and makes sure you do X. Now, if you had decided to do X initially, you would have done so on your own free will and without any interference. However, you would also have been prohibited from doing otherwise. Therefore, a person can be responsible for their action even when he is not able to do otherwise. Therefore PAP is false.

If PAP is false, then Flew's objection to theistic libertarianism, where he states God could have created free human beings who would always do right, is true (Eshleman 1997: 284). However, here Flew's compatibilism is clearly false as it is based on PAP in general, whether being able to do otherwise is interpreted hypothetically or categorically.

It is, however, possible to say that Frankfurt's objection to the verity of PAP is problematic. Normally, we hold an agent responsible for an action not only because she is able to do it, but also because she was in a situation where she could have prevented it from happening (Widerker 2003: 54). Whereas Frankfurt-style cases violate this second

condition of responsibility, and looking at it as a whole, they dissolve the dominance of the agent for her actions. This in fact means that Frankurt-style cases structurally assume the legitimacy of determinism. As Goetz (2005: 83-84) and Ekstrom (2002: 310-312) rightfully emphasized, the inability to do otherwise found in Frankurt-style cases can only be perfectly guaranteed by a causal determinism. However, this clearly begs the question, supporting compatibilism and arguing against libertarianism. Therefore the falseness of PAP is not yet proven.

If PAP is not false, then even if Flew's compatibilism thesis is true, his objection to theistic libertarianism would be false. Therefore, in conclusion, regardless of the verity of PAP, it is not possible for Flew to defend both his compatibilism and object theistic libertarianism at the same time. ***

Flew'nun Bagdaşırcılığı ve Teistik Liberteryenizme İtirazları Üzerine

Özet

Nedensel bir determinizmin egemen olduğu düşünülen doğal bir dünyada, kendisi de bu doğal dünyanın bir parçası olan insanın nasıl olup da özgür bir fail olabileceği sorusu, felsefenin en köklü sorularından biri olup genelde basitçe hür irade problemi olarak ifade edilmektedir. Bu yazıda problem, Oxford Linguistik Felsefe'nin hararetli bir taraftarı ve maharetli bir uygulayıcısı olan Antony Flew'nun determinizm ile insan özgürlüğünün bir arada var olabileceğini ifade eden bağdaşırcı tezi çerçevesinde ele alınmış ve gerek Flew'nun bağdaşırcılığının gerekse de onun teistik özgürlükçülüğe yönelttiği itirazlarının geçerliliği ve sağlamlığı tartışılmıştır.

Flew, yazılarında hur irade problemine başka felsefe problemleri arasında özel bir önem vermektedir. Zira ona göre eğer insan hur olma teriminin sağduyudaki anlamında gerçekten hur bir varlık olmasaydı hem insan haklarının hem de politik ve sosyal özgürlüklerin üzerine inşa edileceği sağlam bir temel bulmak, pratikte imkânsız olmasa bile, teorik açıdan, hayli problemli bir şey olurdu. Yine ona göre, özgürlüğün insan tabiatında derin ve koklu bir şekilde yerleşmiş olduğunu kabul etmeden, fail fikrine dayalı insan bilimlerini nedensellik ilkesine ve doğal determinizme dayalı fizik bilimlerden ayırmak da mümkün olmazdı. Eğer hakikaten özgür olmasaydık, şimdiye kadar yapageldiğimiz bu iki tur bilim arasındaki ayrım anlamsızlaşırdı. Dahası Flew'nun düşüncesinde rasyonellik doğası gereği secimde bulunmayı içerdiğinden katı determinizmin egemen olduğu bir dünyada gerçek anlamda ne bilmekten ne de rasyonellikten söz etmenin bir anlamı vardır.

Tüm bu sebeplerden dolayı, insan hürriyetinin kabulü, Flew için son derece temel bir meseledir. Fakat, buna rağmen, Flew, hur irade problemi söz konusu olduğunda, liberteryen bir tezi savunmuyor. Bunun yerine, hem determinizmin hem de insan özgürlüğünün ayni anda var olabileceğini savunan bağdaşırcı bir iddiada bulunuyor ve liberteryenizmi olduğu kadar katı determinizmi de açıkça reddediyor. Flew liberteryenizmden insanın hür bir fail olarak kendi eylemlerinin nedenlenmemiş bir nedeni olduğunu, böylece de onun doğal dünyanın nedensel determinasyonundan tümüyle muaf olabileceğini öne süren bir tezi anlıyor. Onun reddettiği katı determinizm ise insanın tüm eylemlerinin doğada egemen olan kuşatıcı bir nedenselliğin zorunlu ve kaçınılmaz bir sonucu olarak meydana geldiği, bundan dolayı da doğal bir varlık olan insanın bir fail olarak görülemeyeceği tezidir. Flew, böylece, hur irade tartışmasında, kendisini, açık bir şekilde, özgürlük ve determinizmi zorunlu olarak birbirlerini dışlayan şeyler olarak gören bağdaşmazcılığa karşıt bir konuma yerleştirmiş oluyor.

Fakat Flew bununla yetinmiyor ve iki spesifik iddiada daha bulunuyor: (1) Dilimiz, linguistik pratiklerimiz bağdaşırcılığın doğru olduğunu, nedensel olarak belirlenmiş bir dünyada bile özgür olduğumuzu bize gösterebilir. (2) Klasik teizmin Tanrısının varlığı ile liberteryen bir hur irade anlayışını ayni anda savunmak mümkün değildir.

İkinci iddia din felsefesi üzerine kaleme alınan yazılarda tartışılmakla birlikte, birinci iddia çoğu zaman ya göz ardı edilmiş ya da üzerinde çok fazla ve ayrıntılı

bir şekilde durulmamıştır. Oysa birinci iddia ikinciden daha önemlidir. Çünkü, ilk olarak, ikinci iddia bir değilleme olduğu için Flew burada kanıt getirme yükümlülüğünü teiste bırakıp sadece teistik liberteryen hür irade anlayışının sorunlarına işaret etmekle yetinebilir. Fakat birinci iddia bir olumlama olduğu için, aynı taktiksel kolaylığa burada sahip değildir, başka deyişle artık kanıt getirme yükümlülüğü Flew'nun kendisi üzerindedir. İkinci olarak, Flew'nun ikinci iddiası da aslında birinci iddiasına dayanmaktadır. Eğer onun birinci iddiasının zayıflığı gösterilebilirse, ikinci iddiasının da gücü zayıflamış olacaktır. Başka deyişle, eğer Flew bağdaşırcılığının doğruluğunu ispatlamada başarısız ise, bu, onun genelde liberteryenizme özelde de teistik liberteryenizme yönelik itirazlarının en azından kuşkuyla karşılanmasına kapı açacaktır. O yüzden bu yazıda, her ne kadar Flew'nun teistik liberteryenizme itirazları eleştirel bir değerlendirmeye tabi tutulmuş olsa da, temel strateji, onun bağdaşırcı tezinin zayıflığını ve iki iddiasını aynı anda savunamayacağını göstermek üzere kurulmuştur.

Flew gerek birinci, gerekse de ikinci iddiasını desteklemek için bir yandan Model Vakalara (Paradigm Case/PC) başvurmakta öte yandan da hür irade literatüründe "bir kişinin yaptığı şeyden ancak yaptığından başka türlü yapabilseydi sorumlu olacağını" ifade eden Alternatif Olanaklar İlkesini (Principle of Alternative Possibilities/PAP) temel hareket noktası olarak almakta ve buradan hareketle, pek alışık olmadık bir şekilde, basitçe kişinin kendi eylemlerinin nedeni olduğu anlamında bir bağdaşırcı fail nedensellik fikrini savunmaktadır.

Oysa, Flew'nun teistik liberteryenizme olan itirazları tartışmaya açık olduğu gibi, bu itirazların ana dayanağı olan bağdaşırcılığını haklı çıkarmada da bir takım sıkıntıları vardır. Flew'nun teistik liberteryenizme yönelik itirazları, üç temel başlık altında ele alınabilir: (1) Linguistik ve Epistemolojik Problem, (2) Tutarlılık Problemi, (3) Yanlış Varsayım Problemi. Flew'nun itirazlarının en güçlüsü sonuncusudur: Ona göre mutlak anlamda kadir ve mutlak anlamda iyi bir Tanrı'nın, bu niteliklerinden dolayı, içinde insanın hiçbir zaman yanlış ve kötü olanı değil ama her zaman doğru ve iyi olanı yapacağı, buna karşın yine de özgür kalmaya devam edeceği bir dünya yaratmasının mümkün olmadığını varsaymak teistik liberteryenizmin ardındaki en temel yanlıştır. Tanrı içinde insanın özgürce her zaman doğru ve iyi olanı yapacağı bir dünya yaratabilirdi. Ne var ki, teizm ve liberteryenizm arasında Flew'nun düşündüğü gibi hiçbir şekilde aşılamaz bir tutarsızlık olmadığı gibi, asıl, Flew'nun Tanrı'nın insanın içinde her zaman hürce doğru olanı yapacağı bir dünya yaratabileceği iddiasının kendisi teizm ile tutarsız gorunmektedir.

Flew'nun bağdaşırcılığının ise üç temel hususta eleştiriye açık olduğu görülüyor: Hur irade probleminin PC'lerle çözülebileceğini varsayması, sağduyuya dayanması, PAP'nin kategorik değil hipotetik yorumunu esas alması. Flew'nun muhtelif yazılarında sıkça tekrarladığı iki PC'den birisi bir Mafya Babası'nın tehdit ettiği insanlar vakası, diğeri de evlenmek üzere olan iki genç Murdo ve Mary vakasıdır. O, birinci tür PC'lerde özgürlüğü fail kavramının çözümlenmesinden ve başka türlü yapabilme tecrübesinden hareketle temellendirmeye çalışırken, ikinci türden PC'lerde onu eylem kavramından yola çıkarak açıklamaya çalışır. Ancak, Flew'nun bağdaşırcılığını haklı çıkarmak için PC'lere başvurmasının oldukça tartışmalı bir şey olduğunu söylemek gerekir. Felsefi meselelerin çözümünde PC'lere başvurmak her ne kadar faydasız olmasa da onlar tek başlarına herhangi bir iddiayı "kesin" olarak kanıtlama gücüne sahip değillerdir. Herhangi bir iddianın hem lehinde hem aleyhinde PC'ler vermek

mümkündür. Ayrıca metafizik bir tartışmada PC'ler kullanmak saçma sonuçları da kabul etmeyi gerektirir. Kaldı ki PC'ler iki temel unsura dayanırlar: dilsel pratiğimiz ve sağduyu. Fakat bunların ikisi de bize hür irade probleminin çözümü için aranan kesinliği verecek güçte değillerdir. Bir defa, bizim dünyaya ve dünyayla olan ilişkimize dair anlayışımız dilimizle sınırlıdır. Fakat eğer dilin içinde hapsolmuşsak, dolayısıyla da dilsel pratiklerimizin olgusal olarak doğruyu yansıttığından emin değilsek, Flew'nun öne sürdüğünün aksine, neden, sebep ve motive arasında gerçekten bir fark olduğunu bilecek bir pozisyonda da olamayız. Flew'nun ki gibi sağduyu tecrübesine dayanan bağdaşırcı tezler aleyhine kullanılan manipülasyon argümanı bu noktaya işaret eder.

Flew'nun bağdaşırcılığının üçüncü ve en sıkıntılı sorunu ise bir yandan onun alternatif olanaklar ilkesini (PAP) nasıl anladığıyla öte yandan da ilkenin doğru olup olmamasıyla ilgilidir. İlkedeki merkezi fikir, 'yaptığından başka türlü yapabilme' fikridir. Bağdaşırcılar onu hipotetik olarak anlarken libertaryenler ya da bağdaşmazcılar kategorik olarak anlarlar. Flew'ya gelince, o, özgürlüğün 'harici zorlamadan yoksunluk' olduğunu vurguladığı PC'lerde (tehdit vakaları), açıkça, başka turlu yapabilmenin hipotetik anlamını esas alıyor. Ama aynı Flew, insanın arzuları gibi dahili nedenlere 'direnebileceğini' öne sürdüğü PC'lerde (evlilik ve cinayet vakaları) başka türlü yapabilmenin kategorik anlamını temel alıyor.

Simdi, eğer, o, kategorik anlamı esas alıyorsa, tüm koşullar ayni kaldığında failin yaptığından başka türlü yapabilmesinin nasıl mümkün olduğuna dair metafizik ya da biyolojik bir açıklama vermesi gerekirdi. Fakat, Flew, PC'lere atıfta bulunmanın dışında, böyle bir açıklama vermiyor. Eğer, o, hipotetik anlamı esas alıyorsa, bu ise, reddettiği katı determinizmi dolaylı olarak da olsa kabul etmesi anlamına gelir.

Bununla beraber, Flew başka türlü yapabilmeyi ister hipotetik ister kategorik olarak yorumlamış olsun, onun bağdaşırcılığı, her iki durumda da Harry Frankfurt'un PAP'nin doğruluğuna yönelttiği itirazdan doğrudan etkilenir: Eğer PAP yanlışsa, o zaman, Flew'nun teistik libertaryenizme itirazı, yani Tanrı hürce hep doğru olanı yapacak insanlar yaratabilirdi iddiası, doğru olur. Fakat, bu durumda, Flew'nun bağdaşırcılığı, başka turlu yapabilmenin hipotetik mi yoksa kategorik mi anlaşılacağına bakmadan, genel anlamda PAP'ye dayandığı için, açıkça, yanlış olur. Bununla beraber, Frankfurt tarzı örnekler yapısal olarak determinizmin doğruluğunu varsaydıkları için Frankfurt'un PAP'nin doğruluğuna yönelttiği itirazın kendisinin yanlış olduğunu söylemek de mümkündür. Ancak, eğer PAP yanlış değilse, o zaman, Flew'nun bağdaşırcılık tezi doğru olabilse de, bu sefer, onun teistik libertaryenizme itirazı yanlış olur.

O halde, sonuçta, PAP ister doğru ister yanlış olsun, Flew'nun hem bağdaşırcılık iddiasını hem de teistik libertaryenizme itirazını ayni anda savunması mümkün görünmemektedir.

Anahtar Sözcükler

Antony Flew, Bağdaşırcılık, Hür İrade, Fail, Nedensellik, Teistik Libertaryenizm, Model Vaka Argümanı, Alternatif Olanaklar İlkesi.

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