

Structural Violence and Evil as a Social Action

by

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List of Publications

Material from the articles listed below served as the basis for some chapters. The chapters of the present dissertation contain additional material not included in the papers.

- Forthcoming “Evil as a Social Action”, accepted on *Thesis Eleven: Sage Publications*.
(Used in chapter 3 with modifications and additional material)
- 2016 “Sociological Theories of Agency and Evil”, *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* Vol. 6 No. 8, pp. 63-69. Center for Promoting Ideas. (Partially used in chapters 2 and 3 with modifications)

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1. Introduction

It has traditionally been argued within the field of sociology that violence and evil as the harming of others have not been a topic of central debate (e.g. Alexander 2003, 2013; Cushman 2001; Ray 2012). This claim may be contested by the classical studies realized by thinkers of the caliber of Durkheim, Weber, Elias, Giddens, and Foucault just to mention a few. Each one of them in their own way at some point in their lives were pondering on the social mechanisms of violence. The criticism comes from the fact that even though violence was picked up in their works, it was done so at the expense of its autonomy. Violence and evil were always connected with some other social factors such as power, modern organizations, deviation from the accepted form of norms and culture.

During recent years however, theorists have started to grant violence and evil the autonomy and central role it seemed to deserve (e.g. Alexander 2013; Bauman 2016; Bezerra 2013; Card 2006; Das 2007; Hinton 2005; Joas 2003; Katz 1988; Neiman 2004; Ray 2012; Smith 2013; Vetlesen 2005; Wieviorka 2009, 2012). Ironically, this renewed interest in granting violence and evil a central role within sociology and social theory has also exposed the fate of violence as a social phenomenon and the traditional theoretical division that has haunted sociology.

Violence and evil as the harming of others has been rigidly divided into its structural and individual manifestations. The most important contemporary thinker that shed light on the hidden aspects of violence as being built into structure was Johan Galtung (1969) with the concept of structural violence. Galtung (1990) eventually expanded his theory of violence to incorporate the symbolic dimension of violence as well. The argument developed was that violence works in various levels. Direct violence is the most visible manifestation of the triangle because it is the interpersonal harm done by individuals. Structural violence is the perpetrator-less violence that is built into the structure. Cultural violence is the aspects of culture that works in the background to

justify and legitimize direct and structural violence. Although there is indeed a connection between the three corners of the triangle of violence, Galtung fails to address and uncover the mechanisms that make the different manifestations of violence to interact with each other. In simpler words, it does not explore the interplay between the types of violence. In order to make up for this deficiency, the present dissertation offers the concept of evil as a social action developed by John Kekes (1997) as an alternative.

Galtung's triangle of violence (structural, cultural and direct) exposed and brought attention to the less visible sides of violence. As influential as his concepts of structural and cultural violence are, they nevertheless fail to explain how the gap between the structural and individual dimensions of violence can be closed. There have been a few attempts to close the distance between the manifestations of violence at the structural and individual level (e.g. Wikstrom and Treiber 2009; Zizek 2008). These attempts at overcoming the division between structure and agency in the studies of violence fail to solve one or more of the following issues:

1. Defining violence: clear cut definitions of what are the dimensions that are being treated cannot be developed without completely disregarding some of the key elements of the other. This translated to how violence is approached, whether in terms of effects, the structural dimension or the intentions of individual agents.
2. Causes and correlates: once again, the social mechanisms that underlie violence at the structural and individual level cannot be developed without the risk of excluding important explanatory arguments of the other side. This in turn prevents a proper identification of the causes and effects of violence.
3. The integration of the levels (dimensions): as with the traditional dilemma of sociological theory, studies of violence are composed of the dichotomy between structure

and agency. The approaches undertaken to examine the phenomena reveal this point since many of them emphasize only one aspect of the issue.

4. Failure to address the mechanisms of transformation and reproduction: theorists often failed to explain in what way the interplay between agency and structure gives rise to social processes that transform or reproduce violence.

Overcoming these issues is important because without an appropriate approach that includes both the structural and individual dimensions of violence, key causal elements of either side are excluded from the explanations and solutions offered to the problems. Without an adequate solution, it is difficult to explain the role that agents play in the perpetrator-less structural violence. The individual explanations of violence may also fail to include and explain the role of the structural influences on individual agency and the subsequent effects that social actions might have on structures.

On practical grounds, the interplay between the different dimensions of violence makes it extremely difficult to determine who is the perpetrator. Even in cases where the answer seems to be evident, structural processes and therefore its explanations cannot be fully dismissed. It would not be an exaggeration to state that sooner or later, analyzes of violence are destined to be related and examined under the relationship it has with other social factors.

The aim of the present dissertation is to explore and uncover the connection between violence at the structural and individual level in order to shed light on the mechanisms and issues that entail this division. Violence at the structural level has unique characteristics that cannot be seen or perceived from the manifestations of violence that are expressed at the individual level. From the same argument, individual level possesses and manifests characteristics that cannot be perceived from the violence at the structural level. The contribution of the present dissertation then, is that

it offers a new way overcoming the issues that arise from the division that exist between the different types of violence by employing sociological theories and concepts.

Related to the path taken to accomplish the aims of the present dissertation, sociological theories of structure and action are employed to analyze the complex interplay between violence at the structural and individual level. The novelty of the present dissertation lies in the theories employed to connect both dimensions and how the 'unique' characteristics of each side are accounted for. By uncovering and connecting the mechanisms that underlie the different manifestations of violence, the arguments presented are also an attempt to overcome the issues outlined above.

An underlying theme throughout the dissertation is “to specify and conceptualize the processes and mechanisms by which the more complex and indirect sociative structures or communication matrices are generated out of less complex, less indirect and patterned sociative processes-on how the former feed back to help structure the latter; and on how each may continually interact to help maintain or to change the other” (Buckley qtd. in Archer 1982:475). Uncovering the mechanisms that enable the interplay between structure and agency, makes it possible to tackle issues such as the allocation of accountability in complex social situations of violence.

The present dissertation is organized into 5 chapters. Chapter 2 explores violence from a structural perspective by examining the concept of structural violence in the scope of sociological theories. It does so to avoid excluding the role of agency in social processes without taking away the perpetrator-less aspect of structural violence. The triangle of violence developed by Galtung (1969,1990) is elaborated in relation to concepts developed by Bourdieu and Zizek. Giddens' (1979, 1984) structuration theory, the conceptual reformulation of structure by Sewell (1992) and the analytical dualism developed by Archer (2011) are employed to explore the mechanisms that

underlie the different dimensions of violence.

Chapter 3 argues that evil as a social action that harms others is better suited than the concept of direct violence to address the social processes that agency entails. Furthermore, evil is divided into the categories of nonautonomous and autonomous evil to shed light on the unintentional and intentional elements of individual violence. The elaboration of evil as a social action also makes it possible to link the individual dimension of violence with the structural dimension. The chapter concludes with a reformulation of evil that explains how agency simultaneously entails both types of evil to a varying degree.

Chapter 4 introduces the concepts of emergence and emergent properties to elaborate on the types of agents and the complex situations of violence. The concept of emergence clarifies how agents at different levels interact with each other and with the different manifestations of violence. This elaboration in turn makes it possible to shed light on how accountability dissipates and how it can be approached.

Chapter 5 concludes by summarizing the arguments developed throughout the dissertation and giving some remarks on the implications and possibilities of the dimensions of violence that were treated.

2. A Structural Conception of Violence

The act and social phenomena of harming others has been a topic that has been treated throughout the entire spectrum of the social sciences. From Max Weber and Norbert Elias to Zygmunt Bauman and Michel Foucault, violence has been reflected upon in one way or another. Regardless of the way violence is seen, –either as an external factor linked to power and organizations or as a phenomenon in its own right– the emphasis that has been given to violence is a double-edged sword. Virtually all the advantages and drawbacks that have emerged from its study are due to the very diversity that characterizes the research on violence.

The approaches taken to analyze violence are as diverse and complex as the way violence is done and the forms it manifests itself. Ironically, it is this complexity that drives the debate of the possibility of generating a ‘general’ theory of violence. Karstedt and Eisner (2009) and Tittle (2009) have pondered on the issue and concluded that although the possibility of developing a general theory of violence is appealing, it is very unlikely it could ever be accomplished. However, it is also stated that the quest and attempts made to develop a general theory of violence are valuable because each theory sheds light on a unique facet of the issue.

The intrinsic complexity of violence is what makes its study so difficult. Micro and macro causes of violence are apparently unrelated and intertwined at the same time. Violence can be analyzed from the perspective of legitimacy and crime, while being linked with social relations, power, discipline, modern institutions and organizations. It can also take a variety of forms from genocide and war to a fist fight in a bar or poverty.

Another common argument is that although violence has been a widely treated topic of concern in sociology, it has at the same time been treated as an external element unworthy of being a central topic by itself. Ray argues that theoretically, violence “has tended to be regarded as residual to questions of integration, the state, power and conflict” (2012: 11). While Alexander

has pointed out that violence has been treated “as a residual category” that “camouflages the destruction and cruelty that has accompanied enlightened efforts to institutionalize the good and the right” (2003:109).

Considering that sociology has carried the Enlightenment ideals of good and progress, it may be natural that violence came to be seen as the result of nations and institutions that failed to establish those ideals. The view that violence is the result of the failed efforts to institute progress and goodness into society and people, can also be found in the heart of sociological thought. Violence, or any deviant behavior for that matter is something that happened to fall away from those efforts. “Social notions of evil, badness, negativity are explored only as patterned departures from normatively regulated conduct” (Cushman 2001: 80) which implies that ‘crime is normal’ but only in the sense that it is “necessary because it is only punishment that allows society to separate normative behavior from that which is considered deviant” (Alexander 2003:116).

The complex nature of violence in both its essence and as a widely-treated residual topic has left it in a peculiar position within sociology. In social theory, violence is represented by the traditional dilemma of structure and agency. The forms violence takes in either one of the two poles can deeply affect how it is approached which has great implications in theory and practice.

It is no coincidence that for decades, the study of violence has been divided either in terms of intention or in terms of effects (Geddes 2003). On the one hand, there is research that focuses on the effects of social structures that strip individuals of their ability to act freely (e.g. Milgram 2009 and Bauman 1989), while on the other there are studies that emphasize the role of the individuals’ intention and free will to harm others (e.g. Goldhagen 1997 and Katz 1988). However, the division between intention and effects also implies a more essential division that lies at the center of sociological theory: the division between social structure and agency. This division becomes clear in the concepts of structural violence and evil. In its simplest form, structural violence as defined

by Johan Galtung (1969) is violence that lacks an identifiable perpetrator. Evil on the other hand is defined as a social action that harms others (Vetlesen 2005). In other words, it is done by a perpetrator. It will be discussed below how the theoretical division of structural and individual violence can be overcome by using sociological theories that analyze how violence is connected at the structural and individual level. Consequently, by shedding light on the connection between violence, social structure and agency, violence becomes a central topic in sociological theory.

2.1 What is violence?

In order to discuss the forms of violence at the structural and individual level, it is first necessary to reconsider the concept of violence¹. By doing so, it will be possible to clarify key similarities and differences between the concepts of violence, structural violence and evil which will then lead to a better understanding of violence at the structural and individual levels.

The concepts of violence and evil have been used interchangeably within the literature to describe social actions and phenomena that range from genocides and terrorism to crime and murder (see Bezerra 2003; Cushman 2001, Das et al. 2007; Geddes 2003; Giddens 1985; Girard 2008; Katz 1988; Vetlesen 2005). Judging by the subjects and objects of study, violence might intuitively be defined as anything that harms others.

Violence as the harming of others, has been examined in terms of its relationship with philosophy and morality (e.g. Zizek 2008; Eco 2010). Zizek and Eco, along with Felson (2009)

¹ The legal definition of violence developed by Max Weber as the power and monopolization of such violence by the state to implement it legitimately is a quick introduction to the civilizing process that encompassed the right by the state machinery to exercise violence. It has also been a key definition that has had great impact throughout the literature

seem to echo Johan Galtung's definition of structural violence because they form part of the debate about the territory that the definition of violence should cover at the structural level².

Bufacchi (2005) and Cushman (2001) on the other hand, prioritize the physical harm and excessive pain caused by individual agents whereas Felson (2009) and Vetlesen (2005) argue for a definition of violence that covers non-physical harm such as the psychological aspect.

It has also been argued that violence (and evil) can be expressive and instrumental (Wieviorka 2009). Expressive violence is violence done for its own sake, while instrumental violence is done as a means to achieve a greater goal. Both types entail the loss or attainment of meaning. It serves to categorize and describe both the social actions and the types of perpetrator and have been used to describe social phenomena such as racism and terrorism (e.g. Wieviorka 2012).

These arguments about the territory that the definition of violence should cover can be summarized in what are known as the minimalist and comprehensive conceptions of violence (Ray, 2012). The minimalist conception focuses on the physical harm caused by violence. A proponent of the minimalist conception are Wikström and Treiber, who define violence as “acts intended to bring about physical harm to other beings” (2009: 78)³. This definition emphasizes the infliction of pain upon the body as well as the intention which motivates the action of harming others. This definition is convenient in the sense that it allows a direct understanding of violence

² Zizek's triumvirate of violence is divided into subjective violence and two types of objective violence (systemic and symbolic). While the two types of objective violence are very similar to Galtung's concepts of structural and cultural violence, it differs from them in the emphasis it puts on the symbolic filters it undergoes to be established.

³ This definition of violence was given in the context of Situational Action Theory –also known as SAT– (Wikström and Treiber, 2009). Although the theory aims to overcome the division between environmental causes and individual motivations for violence, it is safe to consider the definition of violence within the SAT as a proponent of the minimalist conception because the authors only consider acts that were *intended* to cause *bodily* damage due that the theory is more criminological than sociological in nature.

with other elements such as social relations and power. A disadvantage of the minimalist conception is that it fails to cover the consequences of any action that was not intended to harm anyone but still ended up doing so. Another disadvantage of defining violence as the physical harm caused on others is that it excludes psychological harm which ends up creating the question of where is the line that separates physical and psychological harm in the first place. Complex social situations of violence such as social injustice, wars and violence that lacks malicious intentions cannot be properly explained by the minimalist conception.

The comprehensive conception on the other hand, aims to overcome the limitations of the minimalist conception by viewing violence as the effects and outcomes that causes harm on others. The definition of violence is broadened “to include anything avoidable that impedes human realization” (Ray 2012:9). Although the comprehensive conception of violence belittles the role of intention, the emphasis in the effects and outcomes in the definition of violence does not necessarily mean the disappearance of the agent as the perpetrator. Anthony Giddens’ definition of agency as the “capability of doing ... things” (Giddens 1984:9) and not as “a series of discrete acts combined together, but to *a continuous flow of conduct* [italics in original]” (1979:55) detaches the agency of the perpetrator with their intention. This means that any action with unintended consequences that causes harm to others can be defined as violence regardless of the original intention. Patrick Baert summarizes the conceptual implications of defining agency as the capability of doing things in the following manner:

It follows that action ought to be seen as ‘purposive’ -not ‘purposeful’. That is, people might lack clear intentions in everyday life, but they nevertheless regularly attend to their actions and to the actions of others. To say that people are agents is to acknowledge that they are always able to act otherwise: in any situation, people could either intervene or refrain from

doing so. In short, Giddens' notion of agency implies that people are able to transform things, and that *a fortiori* the future is not pre-given.

(Baert 2004: 101)

Therefore, if the concept of agency as defined by Giddens is introduced into the comprehensive conception of violence, it is possible to include not only physical harm but to encompass any kind of harm, both in the way it is done and where it is aimed at. It attempts to cover both the (non-)intentions of the agent (perpetrator) and the effects of actions that were not intended to cause harm.

Within the arguments of the present dissertation, the definition of violence as “the cause of the difference between the potential and the actual, between what could have been and what is” (1969: 168) developed by Johan Galtung is the one employed. For violence done at the individual level, the concept of evil will be discussed more in detail in the next chapter.

Another way of formulating the definition of violence given above, is that “violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations” (Galtung 1969: 168). Expanding the definition of violence and agency to include the effects and outcomes –of actions regardless of their original intention– that causes a difference below an individuals' actual somatic and mental realization, paves the way towards the formulation of the concept of structural violence and the social processes it entails.

It is this definition that connects the concepts of violence and evil because both concepts are used to represent and describe the concept of “harm” in the literature. It is the reason why violence and evil are used interchangeably across the literature. Galtung's concept of violence as the difference of ‘what is’ and ‘could have been’ also makes it possible to cover both, the minimalist

and comprehensive conceptions of violence. It grasps both the physical and psychological aspect of violence and above all, this definition functions as a background to explain the violence that happens and is done at the structural and individual level, without having to exclude the connection between the two levels as long as the concept of agency is employed as well.

This common ground is what creates the need to clarify the differences between the two concepts: violence and evil. The concept of direct violence (also developed by Galtung) fails to grasp and explain the unintended consequences of action and the lack of motivation to harms others. Both are elements that entail Galtung's concepts of structural violence. If evil is to be defined as a social action that harms others, it is necessary to clarify what are its differences with the concept of direct violence. In the same way Giddens had to formulate the similarities and differences between the concepts of social structure and social system, it is now necessary to clarify what is the difference between violence and evil. By doing so, it will be possible to shed light on the social processes at the structural and individual level. But before explaining the difference between the concepts of direct violence and evil, it is first necessary to elaborate once again the definition and significance of structural violence and structure.

2.2 An Examination of the Triangle of Violence

The lay definition of violence as the physical harm inflicted on others by a perpetrator has proved insufficient to solve theoretical and practical issues. By focusing too much on the physical harm done by an identifiable perpetrator, research on violence runs the risk of not being able to effectively tackle the social injustices that affect the world. It was in order to overcome this deficiency that Johan Galtung set out to develop his research program on peace studies.

In his paper *Violence, Peace and Peace Research* (1969), Galtung established the foundations for a theory that grasped the structural dimension of violence. As it was outlined

above, violence is defined as “the cause of the difference between the potential and the actual, between what could have been and what is” (Galtung 1969:168). Galtung’s aim was to offer a definition that extended the concept of violence to cover aspects of violence other than the physical harm done by an individual. What is meant by the difference “between the potential and the actual” refers in other words to an influence that causes “actual somatic and mental realizations” to be “below their potential realizations” (Galtung 1969:168). This *influence* that causes the actual somatic and mental realizations of an agent to be below its potential –what could have been– can be an action performed by an agent or the influences and constraints imposed by a social structure.

It is easy to understand violence in the form of individual action or as Galtung labels it, direct violence. When someone’s arm is cut off by another individual, the victim’s actual somatic and mental realizations end up being lower than the potential, what it could have been. When this happens, there is violence and more importantly, a perpetrator. Additionally, the elaborated definition of violence allowed Galtung to go one step further to include unacceptable forms of social order. This means that social phenomena such as an unfair allocation of resources, racism and deaths caused by a curable disease are also violence. An individual that did not receive medical treatment because of a lack of resources, a child that is not able to eat well or receive an education that is available to members of a more privileged social group, have also been affected by a violence that lowers their actual somatic and mental realizations. It was an explicit and important part of Galtung’s agenda to develop a theory that grasped social injustices. In this sense, Galtung openly admits that his theory is normative: he expects his work will bring attention to general patterns in society that harm people.

By expanding the concept of violence to emphasize ‘highly unacceptable social orders’, it is also implied that violence does not necessarily has to be carried out by a specific perpetrator.

Galtung makes what is perhaps his most important theoretical distinction of whether or not there is always a subject (perpetrator). It stresses that in some cases violence lacks a subject. As opposed to direct violence where the harm is done in a personal and straightforward way, indirect or structural violence lacks a clearly identifiable actor. In other words, in structural violence the perpetrator is unidentifiable. As Galtung points out, “there may not be any person who directly harms another person in the structure. The violence is *built into the structure* [italics added]” (Galtung 1969:171).

In order for violence to be built into the structure, there has to be an element that allows its normalization. Violence therefore, has to be supported by another force that enables it to be built into the structure. To explain the symbolic forces that allow violence to be activated at the individual and structural level, Galtung employs the concept of cultural violence. Cultural violence refers to any aspect of the “symbolic sphere....that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence” (Galtung 1990,291).

It is also worth noting that only certain aspects of culture can be classified as cultural violence. Elements in ideology, the arts, religion, language and even formal and empirical science can be considered as cultural violence provided that they justify and legitimize violence at the structural and individual level. Not all culture is cultural violence, but it is cultural violence that normalizes and violence at the structural and individual level. As Galtung points out, “cultural violence makes direct and structural violence look, even feel, right -or at least not wrong” (Galtung 1990:291).

The three types of violence are in reality different manifestations of the same phenomena. In order to illustrate this connection, Galtung uses the term triangle of violence (Fig. 1). Within the triangle, cultural violence lies in the background and legitimizes and/or justifies the structural and individual dimensions of violence.

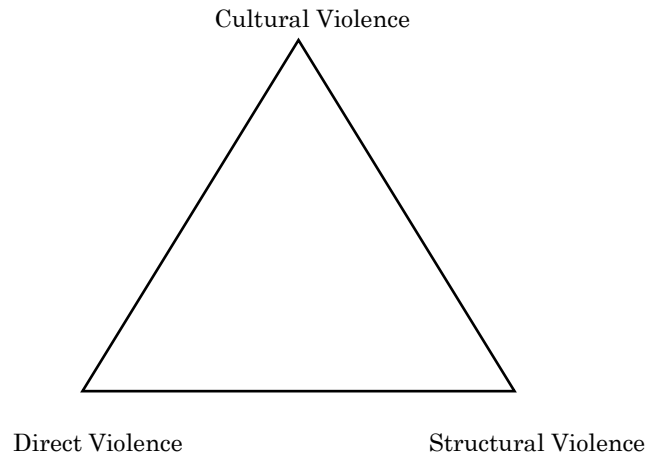


Fig. 2.1 The Triangle of Violence (based on Galtung 1969; 1990)

Cultural violence is not only complementary with Bourdieu’s concept of symbolic violence but also bears an uncanny resemblance with it. Symbolic violence, is the “violence which is exercised upon a social agent with his or her complicity” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 2004:272). The concept was developed by Bourdieu to ponder on a variety of topics that range from politics to religion. The complicity that arises from agents in symbolic violence is achieved through a number of mechanisms. First, the symbolic sphere (culture) must be embodied in the agent in order for them to perceive the other manifestations of violence as normal. Second, this embodiment is carried out through a process of misrecognition that is created by linguistic and cultural representations of the social world. This in turn makes the agents take for granted the aspects of the social world that should be considered as violence. Symbolic violence “accomplishes itself through an act of cognition and of misrecognition that lies beyond –or beneath– the controls of consciousness and will” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 2004:273).

It means then, that cultural violence is embodied by the agents to perform political actions and mold power relations. According to Bourdieu, a knowledgeable agent that acts in the social world “aims to produce and impose representations (mental, verbal, visual or theatrical) of the social world which may be capable of acting on this world by acting on agents’ representation of

it” (Bourdieu 2011:127). From this standpoint, it can be argued that structural violence lacks a perpetrator and cultural violence legitimizes and justifies violence provided that the structure/culture are embodied and reproduced by agents.

It implies an interplay between a coercion and consent from part of the agent that is characteristic of Bourdieu’s work. Unlike Galtung, Bourdieu attempted to overcome the theoretical division between structure and agency. It is here where the limitations of Galtung’s theory of violence become apparent. The triangle of violence presupposes an inherent division in the three types of violence that makes it difficult to examine how they are intertwined beyond the context of justification and legitimization. Galtung’s typology is analytically indispensable. However, the triangle suffers from the traditional dichotomy between structure and agency that could be observed in traditional approaches. In this sense, Zizek’s triumvirate of violence is slightly more appropriate to understand the complex interplay between the three types in the triangle developed by Galtung.

In the same way Galtung identifies three types of violence, for Zizek there are also three types of violence. The most visible type of violence is the subjective violence that interrupts the normal state of things. Subjective violence is “experienced as such against the background of a non-violent zero level” (Zizek 2008:2). It is the personal, face-to-face violence that deviates from the socially accepted norms and forms of conduct. Besides the visible, easy-to-spot subjective violence, Zizek identifies two other types of violence that are more difficult to notice: systemic and symbolic violence. For Zizek, systemic violence is often the “catastrophic consequences of the smooth functioning of our economic and political systems” (Zizek 2008:2). Symbolic violence is the type of violence that is “embodied in language and its forms” (Zizek 2008:1).

At a first glance, it may seem that subjective violence, systemic violence and symbolic violence is just another way of saying direct, structural and cultural violence respectively.

Galtung's and Zizek's similarities in their definition of violence lies in their argument that inequality is a form of violence. However, they differ in their explanations, the difference being that the former emphasizes the lack of a perpetrator in the structure while the latter explains inequality as the rise of the individual's threshold of sensitivity.

There are also a couple of social processes that can be better explained with Zizek's triumvirate of violence. Zizek's concept of symbolic violence (and Bourdieu's for that matter), covers not only what ends up being seen as evil and violent, but it also disguises violence into something that is not only acceptable but desirable. While Galtung's cultural violence describes the legitimization and justification of violence that is backed up by the symbolic sphere, Zizek's and Bourdieu's symbolic violence explicitly implies an embodiment of violence from part of agents. This embodiment is created by the socialization and internalization of a language that creates a misrecognition of the different modes of violence. As Bourdieu points out, "the distinctiveness of symbolic domination lies precisely in the fact that it assumes, of those who submit to it, an attitude which challenges the usual dichotomy of freedom and constraint" (Bourdieu 2011:51).

The aspects that entail the violence in its symbolic form that are well grasped by Galtung are the legitimization and justification of violence, of how violence at the structural and individual level becomes so normal that it is no longer perceived as such. Zizek argues that besides the legitimization and justification of violence, symbolic violence also represents a sort of complex competition that determines what ends up being considered as violence or at least as an important kind of violence. Whenever there is an action or a social phenomenon that is being labelled as evil or violent, "one should always bear in mind that a particular crisis only explodes into media visibility as the result of a complex struggle" (Zizek 2008:2). The people that have died in Congo, Iraq and Syria as a result of political violence, the victims of the terror attacks that occur in the

Middle East become second class victims compared to the mainstream victims.

The political consequences of the legitimization and justification of cultural violence is that small and large-scale violence that have succeed in entering the symbolic sphere as being acceptable gives rise to the lesser evil argument. The lesser evil argument “accepts as inevitable that it is not always possible to save human beings from harm without killing [or harming] other human beings” (Ignatieff 2005:21). The emergency powers mechanism, the suspension of individual liberties, torture and violence at a general level to counteract enemy strategies are all a form of evidence that discloses the possibility of self-destruction in the ideology of liberal democracy. It also accounts for the homeless, alienated members of society that are seen as to having fell victim of their own unsuccessfulness and the second-rate victims of violence that fail to make it to the main stage in the media were just one example. As Bauman said, “one can possibly avoid being a victim, but nothing can be done to escape the fate of being a ‘collateral casualty’” (Bauman 2013:89).

By the same token, the power to justify and legitimize violence also means that it is possible to categorize violence and evil in a way that fits the symbolic patterns that drive cultural violence. An example given by Zizek clearly illustrates this point in the following manner:

Responsibility for communist crimes is easy to allocate: we are dealing with subjective evil, with agents who did wrong. We can even identify the ideological sources of the crimes – totalitarian ideology, *The Communist Manifesto*, Rousseau, even Plato. But when one draws attention to the millions who died as the result of capitalist globalization, from the tragedy of Mexico in the sixteenth century through to the Belgian Congo holocaust a century ago, responsibility is largely denied. All this seems just to have happened as the result of an “objective” process...

(Zizek 2008:14)

Symbolic violence not only leaves room for a moral judgment of evil, it also allocates the identification of violence based on cultural patterns. In short, Zizek's symbolic violence complements Galtung's cultural violence because inquires how certain forms of violence reach media visibility to form perceptions that will in turn mold the cognition that categorizes what is and is not violence according to criteria held by the symbolic sphere. Not only does it legitimize violence, but it identifies violence as violence whenever it is deemed necessary.

Another key element that Galtung fails to grasp in the triangle of violence, is that cultural violence is closer to structural violence than it first appears. In the triumvirate of violence, it is explicitly suggested that symbolic and systemic violence are part of the same category and for good reason. If subjective violence is the interruption of the normal state of things, symbolic and systemic violence are a form of objective violence that determines what is wrong and right (Fig. 2). Objective violence then, is the "language and its forms....[that enable the] smooth functioning of our economic and political systems" (Zizek 2008:2-3). In other words, the division between subjective and objective violence in the triumvirate represents the dilemma between agency and structure.

As revolutionary as Galtung's concepts are, the three corners in the triangle of violence are too separated as to reflect the complex interplay that exists between the manifestations of violence at the structural and individual level. By introducing the typology of subjective and objective violence employed in the triumvirate, it is possible to lay the foundations that explain how violence interacts at the structural and individual levels.

Structural violence can be regarded as the representative form of the comprehensive conception of violence because it focuses on the effects rather than on the intentionality of the

perpetrators. It is also too separated from cultural and direct violence which are supposed to be manifestations of the same social phenomena. In order to account for the social processes that connect the three types of violence, it is necessary to reconsider the definition of structure and how it relates to action theory.

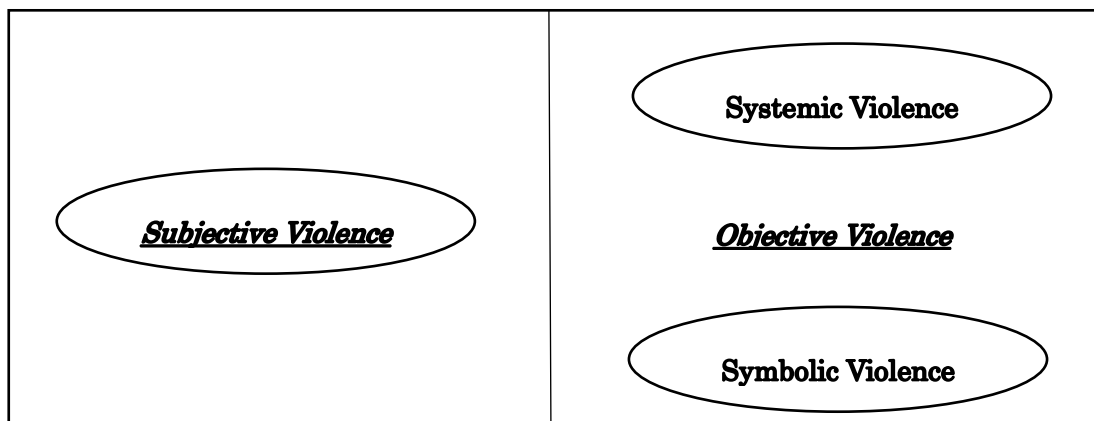


Fig. 2.2 The Triumvirate of Violence (based on Zizek 2008)

The conception of violence as being built into a structure, naturally gives rise to the question of what are the mechanisms that allow it to operate. In order to answer this question, it is also necessary to elaborate once again on the definition of structure. Giddens' concept of structure and the subsequent reformulations done by Sewell and Archer are going to be explored on the next sections as to provide the foundation that will explain the mechanisms of structural violence. An elaboration of the concept of structure proves that structural and cultural violence are indeed different faces of the same coin.

2.3 The Concept of Structure in Structuration Theory

Why is accountability detached from individual action in complex social situations of violence? Why are there interpretations on the Holocaust that focus on the agent while others

approach the matter from structure? Is there any intentionality in the harm done by individuals that are simply following orders and doing their jobs? And most importantly, is structural violence truly perpetrator-less? Concepts such as the duality of structure, the stratification model of action, and the unintended consequences of action developed by Giddens serve as the foundation for understanding violence and its different social processes.

In *Central Problems in Social Theory* (1979) and *The Constitution of Society* (1984) Giddens formulates the basic ideas that compose his structuration theory which gave him the title of the most important action theorist in modern sociology. His structuration theory was originally developed to describe the importance of knowledgeable agents' actions in the reproduction and transformation of structures in the social world. Although agency has the lead role within structuration theory, the concept of structure developed in his work serves as the basis for subsequent arguments that explore the interdependence between perpetrators' actions and structural violence.

There have been –and to some extent still are– two ways of conceiving structure as such. The first one comes from the traditional notion within Anglo-Saxon social science and philosophy that structure is “a sort of visual analogy” that molds society and its institutions as “patterns or relationships observable in a diversity of social contexts” (Giddens 2007: 60). The other way structure has been conceived, comes from structuralism and post-structuralism. In contrast to the way structure is defined within the Anglo-Saxon tradition, structure in the structuralist and post-structuralist traditions has emphasized the aspects that do not exist in time and space. In other words, it is not observable.

Giddens himself, throughout his entire opus has opted in embracing the latter view of structure for two reasons. The first reason is that his own work (specifically his structuration theory) is influenced by the works of structuralists and post-structuralists like Saussure's and his

followers. By conceiving structure as something outside time and space, as ‘relations of absences and presences’ (like in language), the agent is required to have a great deal of knowledge and familiarity on the rules of everyday life activities that allow him/her to implement their actions.

The second reason is that by “conceptualizing structure as a set of relations of ‘presences’, structure then appears as a constraint which is ‘external’ to action” (Giddens 2007: 61). A rigid conceptualization of structure as a physical dimension that constraints the agents’ activities would have been an obstruction to Giddens’ enormous ambition to develop the structuration theory aimed at overcoming the division between agency and structure. Understanding structure as something that does not exist in time and space and as something that is not external to action are both foundations for the development of structuration theory.

One of the key features of structuration theory is that it explains how social reproduction and transformation happens across time and space. In order to develop the concept known as the ‘duality of structure’, Giddens formulated the following two ideas:

1. Social structure and social system are two different concepts.
2. Structure, as opposed to social system, is not located within time and space.

Structuration theory was developed to overcome the division between agency and structure. Therefore, the duality of structure is a key idea that attempted to overcome the limitations of structural-functionalist and interactionist perspectives by somewhat merging the two analytical traditions. As explained by Giddens, “the constitution of agents and structures are not two independently given sets of phenomena, a dualism, but represent a duality” (1984:25). This means that structures do not unilaterally influence agents’ actions but rather agents draw on structure to reproduce and transform them.

For Giddens structure is “rules and resources”. He specifically emphasizes that social *structures* and social *systems* should be analytically separated within social theory. This is necessary in order to reject the dualism between structure and agency that traditionally divided sociological thought and instead offer a *duality of structure*. Because structure is a set of “rules and resources” that can be “recursively organized” and implemented (meaning that they can be reflexively drawn out) by the agents; it is located “*out of time and space* [italics added], save in its instantiations and co-ordination as memory traces, and is marked by an ‘absence of the subject’” (Giddens 1984:25). Social systems on the other hand are not “out of time and space” but because it is where the “structure is recursively implicated...[systems] comprise the situated activities of human agents, *reproduced across time and space* [italics added]” (Giddens 1984:25).

The differentiation between social structure and social system as two different concepts, allows Giddens’ theory to argue that knowledgeable agents draw upon the ‘rules and resources’ of the non-observable structure to reproduce and transform the physical dimension of social systems through everyday interactions. In other words, social systems are the observable outcomes of structuration. This distinction between systems and structures paves the way to see how agents through the recursive application of “rules and resources” reproduce and transform social systems.

Structure then, is not something external as it has been traditionally perceived and claimed but it is in a sense something internal located within individual agents. The duality of structure conveys the idea that “the constitution of agents and structures are not two independently given sets of phenomena, a dualism, but represent a duality” (Giddens 1984:25). Structuration –as the name itself reveals– is a process. By making an analytical differentiation between social structure and social systems and developing the duality of structure Giddens planted the seeds necessary to incorporate the external, physical dimension of structural elements that were up to very recently

thought to be the sole and major cause of violence carried out by agents. It conceptualizes the social forces to be integrated into the structural properties of social systems that are both the medium and outcome of the what is known as the reflexive monitoring of action.

The reflexive monitoring of action is defined as “the intentional or purposive character of human behavior: it emphasizes ‘intentionality’ *as process* [italics in original]. Such intentionality is a routine feature of human conduct and *does not imply* [italics added] that actors have definite goals consciously held in mind during the course of their activities” (Giddens 1979:56).

Structuration is a process enabled by the recursive application of ‘rules and resources’ by a knowledgeable agent. It reproduces both the transformative rules that compromise structure and the physical patterns of social systems in which the agents are located. By having conceptualized structure as a set of abstract ‘relations of absences and presences’, it allows the agent to recursively apply the ‘rules and resources’ to reproduce and transform social systems. Consequently, it follows that social systems are both the medium and the outcome of what Giddens calls the reflexive monitoring of action.

Another implication of structure existing outside time and space, is that social structures are internalized *within* the agents. The ‘duality of structure’ entails that structure both enables and constraints the agents’ actions. It blends the concept of agency with structure, since both concepts are now intertwined in a process that reproduces and transforms social systems.

The concept of structure developed by Giddens has greatly influenced how social structure and agency came to be understood afterwards. Traditions such as critical realism, the renewed emphasis on the emergent properties of social entities would all be to some extent unconceivable without the ideas developed in his theory. It enables a better understanding of how social phenomena is connected at the structural and individual level. By having clarified how social structures are interconnected with agents’ actions, Giddens has laid down the foundations to

understand how individual violence is connected with the apparently perpetrator-less structural violence.

2.4 Beyond Giddens' Structuration Theory

Despite the great accomplishments of structuration theory, in order for the concept of structure to be useful as a foundation of structural violence, it is first necessary to elaborate in more detail about the definition of structure and the implications that this elaboration may have as Giddens' definition seems to be insufficient to grasp the social processes that connect structural violence and evil as a social action. The two reasons why the non-observable dimension of structure was adopted by Giddens are indispensable but only as far as it concerns his structuration theory (as an attempt to solve the structure/agency dilemma).

Questions about the virtual and physical dimensions of structure must therefore be revisited and expanded from Giddens' account. What is structure? Is it rules? Does it serve as an obstacle? If it does not exist in time and space, what makes it invisible? And is the physical dimension of structure really incompatible and therefore external to an agent's actions? These are important questions that must be answered because they have profound implications on the organizational and technological social mechanisms that make structural violence and the dissipation of accountability possible.

The duality of structure developed in Giddens' work, is a double-edged sword because it implies that the concept of structure is co-constitutive with agency. The post-structuration theories of Margaret Archer and Nicos Mouzelis can be considered as an attempt to overcome this flaw in structuration theory.

Conflation in traditional social theory has meant the one-way influence exerted by either social structure or agency. Subjective and objective accounts of violence as well as the micro and

macro sociological studies on their causes and effects are reflections of the unilateral view that conflation can cause. Archer has described these unidimensional ways of theorizing as downward and upward conflation. In downward conflation, “structural properties engulf agency through the basic processes of regulation and socialization”, while in upward conflation “social interactions forms and transforms structures whose properties are merely the resultants of domination or objectification” (Archer 2011:80). Both approaches acknowledge to a certain extent the existence of the other but only as elements that strengthen their arguments. In the downward conflation structure is the sole source of explanation and although agency is recognized as somewhat having a driving power of its own, it is never what dictates the direction of the effects and transformations that structures will have and undergo. Upward conflation on the other hand tends to view agency as the primary property of social phenomena, meaning that all explanations end up being reduced to social interactions between actors. In this view, social structure exists, but only as a social construct that is the result and effect of other actors’ interactions.

It was in order to avoid the shortcomings of these two ways of theorizing that Giddens elaborated the theory of structuration. The duality of structure does grasp how structure and agency are interconnected, but by doing so Archer argues that Giddens ended up creating yet another problem. Archer has identified the co-constitutive nature of structure in Giddens’ theory as the ‘fallacy of central conflation’ (Archer 1982, 2004, 2011). Specifically, the fusion between agency and structure makes it extremely difficult to analytically separate and therefore analyze how they interact:

The notion of mutual constitution as a simultaneous process means that there is no way of ‘untying’ the constitutive elements. The intimacy of their interconnection denies even relative autonomy to the components involved. And in the absence of any degree of autonomy it

becomes impossible to *examine their interplay* [italic in original].

(Archer 2004:80)

The ‘duality of structure’ attempts to overcome the downward and upward conflation by creating a common ground so tight that the border between the two elements disappear. Also, by joining the concepts of structure and agency, the duality of structure revives an array of issues that are not present in the downward and upward theorizing of social phenomena. As Archer pointed out, “by enjoining the examination of a single process in the present tense, issues surrounding the relative independence, causal influence and temporal precedence of the components that have been eliminated at a stroke” (Archer 2011: 93-94). By treating agency as the analytically inseparable building blocks of structure, the *sequential process* by which social phenomena occurs cannot be grasped properly. In other words, the duality of structure represents a simultaneity that does not allow a clear identification of causal efficacy and temporal social processes.

Archer does point out that the duality of structure is valuable and valid on philosophical grounds but fails as an analytical tool to precisely describe the very same processes it attempts to overcome. It is important to clarify the strengths and weaknesses of the theory of structuration, because the same issues that haunt Giddens’ ‘duality of structure’ are the same issues that impede a proper understanding of violence works and is connected at the structural and individual level.

2.4.1 Sewell’s Reformulation of Structure

A few approaches and concepts in contemporary theories of structure have come forward in an attempt to solve the flaws and logical conflict within Giddens’ theory and its definition of structure. William Sewell’s reformulation of structure (1992) unifies both aspects of structure, the

observable and unobservable dimensions. Sewell labels the division between the Anglo-Saxon and (post) structuralist conceptions of structure as the materialistic and idealistic division of structure. It was (arguably) observed by Sewell that traditionally in the discipline of sociology the materialistic dimension of structure was given priority. Meaning that the concrete and hard aspects of structure were the ones determining the individuals' actions in contrast to the usage that was given by the discipline of anthropology. In Sewell's view, anthropology emphasized the soft dimension of structure perceived as culture and was the virtual dimension that determined individuals' actions.

Based on the idealistic conception of structure, Giddens (for the above-mentioned reasons) defines structure as "rules and resources". However, Sewell begins his reformulation by rightly pointing out that in most cases 'resources' are not virtual as it is presupposed in Giddens' theory. In order to grasp the idealistic and materialistic conception of structure, Sewell utilizes this logical flaw in Giddens' definition of structure to recompose how structure should be defined.

For Sewell, structure is "composed simultaneously of schemas, which are virtual, and of resources, which are actual" (1992:13). This definition was developed to fill in the gaps that were identified in the definition of structure as 'rules and resources'. In order to accomplish this, Sewell proposes substituting the term rules with *schemas*. The reformulation would include the virtual aspect of Giddens' structure, while engulfing his own reinterpretation of the material dimension of 'resources'. The resulting definition of structure would then be '*schemas and resources*'.

By defining structures as 'schemas and resources' Sewell intends to grasp the material and idealistic dimensions of structure at the same time. The material and idealistic dimensions are representative of how the term 'structure' was used by sociologists and anthropologists respectively. The former argued and maintained the materialistic dimensions of structure in the social world while anthropology treated structure as a cultural model. It also has the advantage of

solving the self-contradictory definition of Giddens' structure. For Giddens, social structures are 'virtual' in contrast to the social system that are observable in time and space. Sewell points out that resources exist in time and space and cannot be virtual. By reconceptualizing the term structure into 'schemas and resources' Sewell avoids the traditional division between the materialistic and idealistic dimension of structure. Sewell's idea of structure is summarized in the following manner:

“By definition, human bodies, like any other material objects, cannot be virtual. But what about knowledge and emotional commitments, the mental aspects of human resources? Examples might be the Roman Catholic priest's power to consecrate the host and hear confession, children's sense of obligation toward their mothers, or the fear and reverence that subjects feel for their king. Unlike factories or Hudson Bay blankets, such resources are not material, or at least not in the same sense. Nevertheless they seem to me actual as opposed to virtual. They exist in what Giddens calls "time-space"; they are observable characteristics of real people who live in particular times and congregate in particular places. *And it is their actualization in people's minds and bodies that make them resources* [italics added]. It is not the disembodied concept of the majesty of the king that gives him power, but the fear and reverence felt for him by his actual subjects.

(Sewell 1992:10)

Unlike Giddens who prioritized the 'virtual' dimension of structure, Sewell offers an inclusive approach that encompasses the material side as well. This is important, because large-scale atrocities would be unthinkable without the material and concrete elements of structure that restrain agents and create a distance between the perpetrators and victims.

2.5 The Mechanisms of Structural Violence

The combining of the idealistic and materialistic dimensions of structure has deep implications in the way structural violence and large-scale massacres are understood. For example, Sewell's reformulation of Giddens' structure offers a new way to understand the misleading division of the different approaches and interpretations given to the Holocaust. The reinterpretation given by Sewell clarifies how the social processes described by Bauman (1989) and Goldhagen (1997) are in reality two faces of the same coin.

At a first glance it may seem that Bauman and Goldhagen are focusing on a different phenomenon: concentration camps and spontaneous mass killings. Another way of viewing this division is that it is the result of the dualism between the materialistic and idealistic dimension of structure. The varying interpretations of the same phenomena are due to the social mechanisms that give rise to the different manifestations of violence. These mechanisms can be understood with the three facets of structure: institutional, relational and embodied structure (Lopez and Scott in Elder-Vass 2011:77).

As it has been outlined above, structure refers to 'schema and resources'. It covers the virtual and materialistic forces of society that enable and constrain agents' actions. But in order to acquire an in-depth understanding of how those virtual and materialistic forces spread through society, the three conceptions or facets of structure have to be understood as well.

The virtual dimension of structure (schemas), has been commonly conceived as institutional structure. According to Elder-Vass, institutional structure derives from Durkheim's collective representation, the "systems of shared norms, values and ideas that shape social behavior" (Elder-Vass 2011:78). It includes everything that is shaped by virtual forces from large-scale institutions to every-day shared values in micro interactions. The virtual influences that enable agents to act,

has been the argument utilized to explain individuals and collectivities that carry out face-to-face atrocities (e.g. Goldhagen 1997; Hinton 1998, 2005; Katz 1988).

The materialistic dimension of structure (resources) on the other hand, has been referred to as relational structure and is based on Durkheim's collective relationships. It is conceived as the "sum total of all the social relationships of all individuals at a given moment in time" (Radcliffe-Brown qtd. in Elder-Vass 2011:78). This conception of structure gave rise to analyses of social organizations and social strata. Within the research of violence, the materialistic dimension; the relational conception of structure has been used to explore the mechanisms of bureaucracy that nullify what Arendt called the 'animal pity' of men which in turn enables individuals to participate in large-scale genocides (e.g. Arendt 2006; Bauman 1989; Geddes 2003; Milgram 2009; Zimbardo 2009).

The analyses done by Bauman and Goldhagen are representative of the way complex situations of violence are divided depending on the approach. The materialistic and virtual dimensions of structure can lead to the misleading idea that in some sense, researchers are not tackling the same social phenomena. Bauman (1989) for example, is credited for having shed light on the mechanisms of bureaucracy that make it possible to commit grand-scale atrocities. The arguments were based on a Weberian conception of bureaucracy and the experiments performed by Milgram. It showed how social mechanisms that were commonly found in large scale organizations could be used to reinforce a system of obedience that enabled common people to contribute to the smooth function of concentration camps. Goldhagen (1997) on the other hand, focused on the massacres that occurred outside the concentration camps. Consequently, this lead him to emphasize the spontaneous and face-to-face interactions that occurred during the ethnic cleansings outside of the camps.

Sewell's reformulation of structure is in a sense an attempt to reconcile the virtual

(institutional conception) and the materialistic (relational conception) dimensions. It shows how elements that exist and do not exist in time and space of the social world enable and constrain actions of violence. The necessity to overcome and reconcile the two dimensions and how they both influence agents' actions naturally gives rise to a third conception: the embodied conception of structure. The embodied conception of structure is defined by Lopez and Scott in the following way:

Patterns of institutions and relations result from the actions of individuals who are endowed with the capacities that enable them to produce them by acting in organized ways. These capacities are behavioural dispositions, and so social structure has to be seen as an embodied structure [*italics in the original*]. Embodied structures are found in the habits and skills that are inscribed in human bodies and minds and that allow them to produce, reproduce, and transform institutional structures and relational structures.

(Lopez and Scott qtd. in Elder-Vass 2011:79)

Embodied conceptions of structure appear in the works of Giddens⁴, Bourdieu⁵ and Foucault. These theorists argue and demonstrate each in their own way how the materialistic and idealistic dimensions of structure complement each other through their embodiment in individuals. The concepts of duality of structure, habitus and power/knowledge shed light on the different ways

⁴ The duality of structure developed by Giddens outlines how social structures and systems are the medium and outcome of an agent's action. It explains how knowledgeable agents draw on their stock of knowledge to reproduce and transform the social world.

⁵ Bourdieu, through the concept of habitus shows in what way agency is intertwined with structure. Habitus is "an objective relationship between two objectivities, enables an intelligible and necessary relation to be established between practices and a situation, the meaning of which is produced by the habitus through categories of perception and appreciation that are themselves produced by an observable social condition" (Bourdieu 2010:95).

agency and structure interact with each other.

Of the three thinkers, the one that shows in the most concrete manner of how structure is embodied through a delicate balance of the material and virtual forces is Foucault. Through the concepts of power/knowledge, technology and the body, Foucault is able to grasp how abstract bodies of knowledge are complemented and used with material infrastructure to manipulate, mold and create entire populations' and individual behaviors. For example, his most famous illustration of surveillance in the panopticon shows the "means of an omnipresent and omniscient power that subdivides itself in a regular, uninterrupted way even to the ultimate determination of the individual, of what characterizes him, of what belongs to him, of what happens to him" (Foucault 2009:197). Power, in the form of bodies of knowledge are an essential part in determining how nonlinguistic aspects of the social world are viewed and molded. The disciplinary regime described by Foucault to which prisoners are subjected to, exemplifies how technologies of the self are applied to control and channel spontaneous behaviors and even thoughts. It is a process that requires from both, the material and idealistic dimensions of structure to be embodied in the agents.

The embodied conception of structure does capture in what way individuals are inextricably linked and influenced by social structures. However, the problem of structural violence as a form of violence with an apparently unidentifiable perpetrator remains somewhat unsolved. In order to tackle this problem, the concept of analytical dualism employed in the morphogenetic approach to explore the relationship between action and structural violence as an unintended consequence.

2.6 The Role of Analytical Dualism in Structural Violence

Margaret Archer's *morphogenetic approach* was developed to overcome the conceptual deficiencies of structuration theory. Archer herself, pointed out that Giddens' theory suffers from

an issue known as the fallacy of central conflation (Archer 1982; 2011). According to Archer's criticism of structuration theory, structure and agency are so closely linked that it becomes impossible to analyze them separately. This means that structural violence and the social processes that individual actions entail, cannot come into being because they would not be perpetrator-less in the first place. This dilemma arises from an inability to analytically differentiate between agency and structure. As Archer has pointed out, the duality of structure "provides no analytical grip on which is likely to prevail under what conditions or circumstances. The theory of 'structuration' remains fundamentally non-propositional" (Archer 1982:459).

The failure to specify when and how there will be more agency or structure in the explanation of social processes leads Archer to introduce "analytical dualism" as a solution to the problem posed by the central conflation in structuration theory. The key in understanding analytical dualism is the introduction of temporal sequences employed to determine in what way action and structure interact with one another:

Action of course is ceaseless and essential both to the continuation and further elaboration of the system, but subsequent interaction will be different from earlier action because conditioned by the structural consequences of that action. Hence the morphogenetic perspective is not only dualistic but sequential, dealing in endless cycles of –structural conditioning/social interaction/structural elaboration– thus unraveling the dialectical interplay between structure and action. 'Structuration', by contrast, treats the ligatures binding structure, practice and system as indissoluble, hence the necessity of duality [italics in the original] and the need to gain a more indirect analytical purchase of the elements involved.

(Archer 1982:458)

The implication of this approach is that structure *presupposes* action, which in turn gives rise to a structural elaboration that is different from the structure that conditioned the action in the first place (Fig. 2.3).

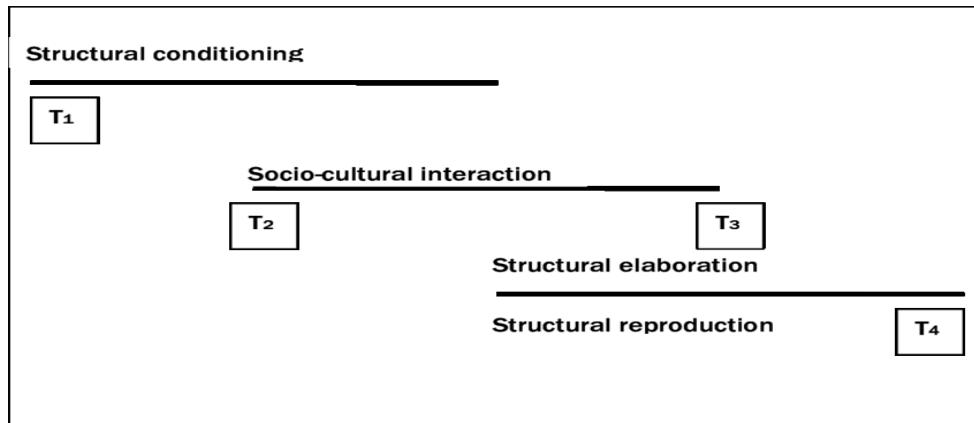


Fig. 2.3 The basic morphogenetic/static cycle (Archer 2011:157)

Here, it is necessary to differentiate between two types of sequences. Morphogenesis, is defined as “those processes which tend to elaborate or change a system’s given form, structure or state” (Buckley qtd. in Elder-Vass 2011:34). Morphostasis on the other hand, are “those processes in complex system-environment exchanges that tend to preserve or maintain a system’s given form, organization, or state” (Buckley qtd. in Elder-Vass 2011:34).

It is important to note the difference between the two processes, because it shows that the temporal sequence causes both the reproduction and transformation of structures and actions. A sequence which ends up reproducing and/or maintaining the original structure that conditioned the action for structural elaboration is morphostatic, while a sequence that changes and transforms the structural elaboration into an end-product that is different from the original structure that conditioned an action is morphogenetic.

Analytical dualism makes it possible to analyze the different degrees of constraint and

freedom in the agents' action while also analyzing the transformation and reproduction of the structure and structural elaboration that predates and precedes the action. It is a flexible approach that lays gives a hint on the way structural violence comes into being. Analytical dualism sheds light on the reason why structural violence is perpetrator-less despite being made possible from the actions of agents.

The unintended consequences of action and the way social systems are reproduced and transformed by action, is according to Archer one of the few times Giddens acknowledges the importance of elements that stretch beyond the reach of agents, and hence, making it slightly possible to analyze how structure differs from agency. The fact that structure is both constraining and enabling does not necessarily "prevent[s] the structured properties of social systems from stretching away, in time and space beyond the control of any individual actors" (Giddens 1984:25). All actions have consequences that escape the scope of intentionality and monitoring from part of the agent that caused it. The unintended consequences of action is perhaps what truly unifies agency and structure both theoretically and empirically speaking but it is also at the same time what makes it possible to differentiate the different characteristics that are possessed by agents and the structural elaboration caused by actions. It holds the keys in uncovering why individuals despite being 'good' or 'decent' are capable of harming others. It reveals what is the role of evil in human agency within what was up until now seen as a cog in the machine.

3. Evil as a Social Action

The concept of structural violence has not only contributed to the development of the debate between the minimalist and comprehensive conceptions but has also been further developed in its application. Previous research has elaborated on structural and cultural violence (Galtung 1969, 1990) and has proposed operationalizations of the concept (Galtung & Hoivik 1971). Furthermore, there are studies that attempt to show the empirical uses of structural violence by conducting studies of the magnitude of structural violence at the national (Hoivik 1971) and global level (Kohler and Alcock 1976; Hoivik 1977) as well as diachronic empirical analysis (Alcock and Kohler 1979). It has even been applied to study the relationship between international organizations and structural violence (Rittberger 1973).

The elaboration of the concept of personal violence on the other hand, leaves much to be desired because it fails to grasp the implications of agency and the unintended consequences of action. The definition of violence is quite not the appropriate one if the traditional division between effects and intentions as well as structure and agency is to be overcome. For example, the concept of direct violence fails to cover certain key elements that arise from the act of harming others at the individual level. Galtung considers the act of harming others by an identifiable actor to be direct violence while structural violence on the other hand has no identifiable actor. This chapter argues that the concept of direct violence is insufficient to cover the implication of the agents' capability of doing things, thus the use of the concept of evil. It is argued in this section that the concept of evil is better suited than direct violence to include the implications of agency, intentionality and unintentionality into the action of harming others within the context of structural violence. If evil is an agency-driven social action that harms others without their consent, it may seem at a first glance that it is a form of direct violence. The key part however is *agency-driven*.

Despite the fact that there has been an analytical division between the effects of social structures and the intention of individuals regarding the topic of violence, social theorists in the 70's and 80's have attempted to develop theories that surpass the division between social structure and individuals at the theoretical level. These theories were not developed to address the problems and issues of violence and evil. However, if applied correctly theories such as the structuration theory can be used to surpass the aforementioned division. Social theories of agency and structure can be used to analyze violence from the point of view of individual, collective and organizational action and its unintended consequences. This will shed light to the relationship between evil as a social action and structural violence as violence with no identifiable (or accountable) actor.

Anthony Giddens' theory of agency detaches intention with agency by focusing on the unintended consequences of actions that come to compose social structures. The key element of structural violence as a form of harming that has no identifiable actor needs to be considered from the point of view of the unintended consequences of the actions of individual agents. The relationship between evil as a social action and its relation with structural violence must therefore be analyzed by incorporating sociological theories of agency.

3.1 The Role of Agency in Structural Violence

Structure constrains and enables the agents in their everyday social interaction and activities. Agents reproduce and transform social systems by recursively drawing on structure (rules and resources). 'Transformative rules rather than rules of transformation'. There is however another aspect that allows the duality of structure besides the analytical separation between structure and system: the unintended consequences of action. The fact that structure is both constraining and enabling does not necessarily "prevent the structured properties of social systems from stretching away, in time and space beyond the control of any individual actors" (Giddens 1984:25). All

actions have consequences that escape the scope of intentionality and monitoring from part of the agent that caused it. As long as it is within the context of the morphogenetic and morphostatic sequence in which it operates, the unintended consequences of action is perhaps what truly unifies violence at the individual and structural level. It holds the key in uncovering in what way individuals despite being ‘good’ or ‘decent’, give rise to social processes that harm others regardless of their intentionality. It also reveals what is the role of human agency in reproducing and transforming the perpetrator-less structural violence.

Ironically, the implication of the theories of structure outlined above implies that agency cannot be completely detached from structural and institutional processes. The ontological conflation and the analytical decoupling of structure and agency requires an analysis of how individual actions and social processes create structures that stretch beyond the action of individuals while constraining and enabling them at the same time. In other words, agency and everything that it entails cannot be treated outside the role it has within an institution and how the agents’ action causes the structuration of the social world. However, it is important to remember that the social processes described below have to be explored within happen within morphogenetic and morphostatic temporal sequences.

For Giddens agency is the agents’ “capability of doing ... things” (Giddens 1984:9) and it “does not refer to a series of discrete acts combined together, but to *a continuous flow of conduct* [italics in original]” (1979:55). By asserting the importance of temporality –“the continuous flow of conduct”– in the agency of individuals, Giddens had an enormous impact in the concepts of agency that were developed by the theorists that came after him. The different temporal-spatial elements of agency established by Mustafa Emirbayer and Anne Mische (1998), the different types of agency conceived by Steven Hitlin and Glen Elder (2007) and the morphogenetic approach developed by Margaret Archer (1982, 2008, 2011) are all unconceivable without having

Giddens' work in the background.

A proper understanding of Giddens' formulations must begin by analyzing how he positions the agent's intentions within human agency and the actions themselves. The reader is reminded that traditionally speaking agency could be defined only in terms of the intentions the agent had. If not the "action" would be seen as a reactive response or as a behavior due to the lack of intention from part of the agent or because of actions that cannot occur unless there is some intention from part of the agent (1984:8). The plausibility of this view is in part supported by Giddens himself if one takes into consideration actions such as suicide in which the agents' intention is the main motor for the occurrence of such actions. However, it is rightly pointed out that most human actions are not of the same nature of actions such as suicide meaning that "in so far as it can be said to have occurred only when its perpetrator intended it to occur" (Giddens 1984:8). Subsequent arguments however emphasized the importance of 'description' when examining human agency. In order for an action to count as an example of human agency the intention must be true and accountable under *some description*. It seems this was done in order to include, explain and in some ways even to compensate the unintended consequences (the structural elaboration) of the agents' actions that could be observed after such actions. A bureaucrat that stamps a document intends to do so but said document ends up being a key evidence for the conviction of criminals that were part of an organization responsible for the death and suffering of thousands of people. The agent does something, but it is not what it was originally imagined.

It is after considering these two views on agency that Giddens avoids involving too much the giving of act descriptions to define agency. The reason is because agency (and it is here where the other important property of agency besides the temporal aspect is established) "refers not to the intentions people have in doing things but to their capability of doing those things in the first place" (Giddens 1984:9). This has enormous implications in the way violence is done and seen.

Regardless of the discursive formulation modern perpetrators tend to give that they were merely under orders or simply doing their jobs when directly and/or indirectly harming someone else is that “the individual could, at any phase in a given sequence of conduct, have acted differently” (Giddens 1984:9). Even the most redundant office worker, a thoughtless soldier or a bureaucrat merely reproducing past norms and procedures at the end of the day ‘could have done otherwise’.

In fact, one of the most famous arguments in support of the notion that the Holocaust occurred because the Germans wanted it to occur is (although not on purpose) based on this aspect of agency developed by Giddens that agents ‘could have done otherwise’ (i.e. Goldhagen 1996). Unlike the popular belief that Nazis diligently followed orders because disobeying an order could otherwise end up being a death sentence; Goldhagen points out that evidence suggests otherwise.

C. Fred Alford summarizes the argument by saying that:

“Germans were forced to kill Jews. No, says Goldhagen. As the Nuremberg Trials revealed, not a single case has been discovered in which a German was severely punished, let alone killed, for refusing to kill Jews. In most cases, a transfer to a less emotionally taxing assignment was readily available, though few took advantage of the opportunity.” (Alford 1997:720)

This disposition and capability from part of the agent to do evil is not the same as saying that structure should be forgotten. On the contrary, it is not at all what Giddens wanted to do when establishing the structuration theory.

3.2 Unintended Consequences of Action

Most of the research done in the social sciences have opted for a naturalistic explanation of

violence that tends to reduce the phenomenon analyzed into the influence of forces that lie beyond the individual which consequently end up ignoring the agentic dimension. A proper understanding and analysis of evil as the violence done at the individual level must also take into account the context and external influences that are the consequences of the agent's action. "To study the structuration of a social system is to study the ways in which that system, via the application of generative rules and resources, and in the context of unintended outcomes, is produced and reproduced in interaction" (Giddens 1979:66).

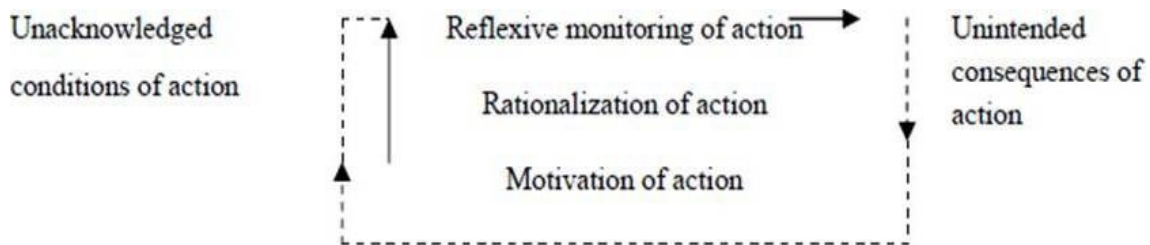


Fig. 3.1 Stratification Model of Action (Adapted from Giddens, 1979:56)

The key in understanding why evil (especially post-Milgram evil) tends to be misunderstood exclusively as the result of social forces that influence individuals without slightly touching the agency of human beings is because most frameworks tend to overlook that these social forces are the unintended consequences of the agents' actions that give feedback as the unacknowledged conditions of action. As it can be seen in the stratification model of action developed by Giddens (Fig. 3.1), the agent's action has a set of consequences that stretch out in time and space beyond the reach of the individual himself. The unintended consequences of action are then reflected in a feedback which becomes the unacknowledged conditions of actions that in turn influence the agent's action. In order to avoid central conflation, the unintended consequences of action must be examined as the structural elaboration that condition the actions that will follow after the

morphogenetic sequence. The model implies Giddens' philosophy that an appropriate framework should not only contain the seeds of transformation despite dealing with reproduction, but it should also at the same time deal with transformation itself: the morphogenetic and morphostatic sequences.

The reflexive monitoring of action is "the intentional or purposive character of human behavior: it emphasizes 'intentionality' *as process* [italics in original]. Such intentionality is a routine feature of human conduct and *does not imply* [italics added] that actors have definite goals consciously held in mind during the course of their activities" (Giddens 1979:56). The reflexive monitoring of action is always grounded on the *rationalization of action* which are "the capabilities of human agents to 'explain' why they act as they do by giving reasons for their conduct" (Giddens 1979:57). This definition in particular should be dealt with carefully because the rationalization of action is not the capability of the agent to discursively manifest their activities, but it is the *understanding* they have of those activities in order to carry them out with relative ease. Nevertheless, the reflexive monitoring of action and the rationalization of action are differentiated from the motivation of action. As Giddens says, "if reasons refer to the grounds of action, motives refer to the wants which prompt it...motivation refers to potential for action rather than to the mode in which action is chronically carried on by the agent..." (Giddens 1984:6). Giddens however commits an error afterwards by saying that motives rarely tend to have a direct purchase on action because most of the day-to-day activity is routinized and is not directly motivated. He compares this to Schutz' 'project' by emphasizing that a purely motivated action is in a way a break from routine that surges in unusual circumstances⁶. Although the motive may

⁶ Emirbayer and Mische (1998) have shown that even though agents tend to emphasize a specific temporal dimension within situated activities they can still at the same time take into consideration other temporal aspects. A bureaucrat's routine procedure can still take into account a future project and a politician can eloquently recite a future vision of society while digging down the past.

not be fully expressed in the agents' action and the outcome of such actions it can nevertheless have a direct purchase on the agents' decisions and actions without being a break from routine. If reasons "refer to the grounds of action" and motives "refer to the wants which prompt it" it also means that actions can be directly motivated and still be based on routine. A soldier may be motivated to fight for freedom and peace but shooting and killing people may be done because it was an order or a job that is part of the organization's routine.

The differentiation between the reflexive monitoring of action, the rationalization of action and the motivation of action helps shed light in the detachment there is in modern perpetrators between their reasons and motives. An agent can become a part of an institution with good intentions but can still become part of and act in accordance with things that directly contradicts the original motives.

There is no need to forcibly attach motives with a break with routine since the stratification model of action and the idea of recursivity already contains the agentic dimension of routine in the reproduction and transformation of structures. The agency in "routinized action lies precisely in the recursive implementation of structures by human actors" (Emirbayer and Mische 1998:978).

Evil then as reflexive monitoring of action works in order to manifest itself in the structuration of social systems that will in turn be the structural elaboration that conditions further actions. The model implies however that there are aspects in agency that are out of the reach of the capabilities of the intentionality of the agents themselves. The unintended consequences of action which are the unintended results of the monitoring of action also conditions the intentionality of agency as unacknowledged conditions of action conditions that the agents are not aware of. It is only with the stratification model of action that evil in agency can be fully understood as an intentional social action. The seemingly non-agentic property that structural violence possesses of being perpetrator-less can understood from this point.

Two classics on the topic that not only illuminate how the stratification model of action works in the context of evil in agency but also the misconceptions that arise from the unintended consequences of such actions as structures that condition violence, are also the unacknowledged conditions of action Zygmunt Bauman's *Modernity and the Holocaust* (1989) and Hannah Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem* (1963=2006).

Bauman points out that social theory has displaced evil and that it is necessary to reestablish it in order to account for what happened during the holocaust. Even though Bauman is right in pointing out the importance of evil he attributes the events not to be the cause of individuals' agency that did the evil action but to "the efficiency of the Nazis' bureaucratic killing machine" (Alexander 2003:114).

Hannah Arendt's famous work, *Eichmann in Jerusalem* also illuminates how easily the evil in agency can be misinterpreted by introducing the banality of evil. It looks to "the ordinary, to thoughtlessness, to what is devoid of depth...what has become of evil in the age of large-scale atrocities administrated by the institutions of the State" (Vetlesen 2005:5). It depicts Eichmann to be an ordinary person, a *thoughtless* person that was just following orders and doing his job. This portrayal of Eichmann as a thoughtless person following orders denigrates the importance of human agents as competent members of the organizations and institutions they are part of. A crucial element in human agents is the awareness and knowledge about the social worlds that they live in. The misconception of Eichmann as a thoughtless dupe follows the routinization of action that is one of the consequences of the agent's action.

It is a reminder of both Weber's rationalization and Post-Milgram evil which focuses more on the routinized patterns of social interaction and the structure of the bureaucratic machinery that enabled the Nazis' to carry out the Holocaust at the expense of the agents' will and intentions. It is only a part in the more general trend within sociology to explain modern evil as a pathology

and/or as the result of the organizational and bureaucratic structures of society that was beyond the agency of individuals. These organizational and bureaucratic structures in turn allow the perpetrators to excuse themselves by saying that they were just following orders or simply doing their work. It is this mechanism that gives evil its modern characteristics: of making good (or at least non-sadistic) individuals commit atrocities. Bauman's and Arendt's work are a reflection of their times in which the post-Milgram view was prevalent.

It is necessary to apply the stratification model of action within the context of morphogenetic and morphostatic sequences to examine the agentic dimension of individuals that show the essential fact that human agents are competent actors that know a great deal about the social world they live in. It can be seen that even though the bureaucratic element does in fact condition action to a certain extent it does so as the unintended consequences of action that influence the agents' action as the unacknowledged conditions of action or in Archer's words, the structural elaboration that gives rise to a new morphogenetic sequence that conditions further actions. There is always a degree of agency in the individual regardless of the degree of routinization an action has.

If Eichmann is the cog in the machine, the ideotypical bureaucrat of Bauman's Holocaust and the categorization of Eichmann as merely thoughtless is a result of the traditional division between consciousness and the unconscious. An action used to be perceived as either performed consciously or unconsciously. Hence, when Arendt saw the ordinariness of the man that was being convicted as someone that helped carry out one of the most remembered atrocities of the 20th century she quickly attributed that he was simply following orders thoughtlessly –doing his job. Thus, the banality of evil. The revision of the traditional division between consciousness and the unconscious however, changes the whole picture. Giddens adds in order to account for the human conduct that is not neither conscious nor unconscious the category of practical consciousness. Practical consciousness is the “tacit knowledge that is skillfully applied in the enactment of

courses of conduct, but which the actor is not able to formulate discursively” (Giddens 1979:57). The three types of consciousness establish a continuum between the reflective and unreflective aspects of action. As Giddens states, “between discursive and practical consciousness there is no bar; there are only the differences between what can be said and what is characteristically simply done” (Giddens 1984:7). The line that separates discursive and practical consciousness is not fixed. It can move depending on the agent’s surroundings and experiences. The line between the conscious and the unconscious on the other hand is clearer, more rigid and fixed in comparison. Most routinized activity requires only minimal attention in order to be carried out without hindrance. Practical consciousness has a key role for agents in the reproduction of social patterns and procedures.

Practical consciousness perhaps in an indirect manner helps demonstrate how ordinary people can harm others without relying only on the misleading external social forces that leave no room to evil as an agency-driven social action. The key concepts of the structuration theory and the stratification model of action as a temporal morphogenetic sequence show how evil can be carried out by a human agent in a reflective and unreflective manner as the result of the unacknowledged conditions of action that emerges from the unintended consequences of action.

Evil is a social action; and as all actions it can shape and be shaped by the social world of the agent that carries it out. The consequences of action and even the action itself can escape the scope of the agent by stretching out in time and space only to become something unimaginable. The unintended consequences that are also the unacknowledged conditions of action by the reflexive monitoring of action of evil caused by agency is what has misled the theoretical approaches and interpretations given to evil social actions by the social sciences. A difficult realm indeed because it lies between the conscious and unconscious actions that can nevertheless be attributed to the evil done by the agency of individuals. Acknowledging the agency of individual perpetrators by

using Giddens' model of agency only shows the frightening reality that even individuals that seem to be unrelated to the suffering of others can be accountable for it. As Max Weber proclaimed nearly a century ago, "it follows that as far as a person's actions are concerned, it is not true that nothing but good comes from good and nothing but evil from evil, but rather quite frequently the opposite is the case. Anyone who does not realize this is in fact a mere child..."(Weber 2004:86).

3.3 The Types of Evil Doing

Social actions that unintentionally or intentionally harm others are essential elements in understanding social phenomena. Due to the very nature of the discipline, sociology has focused on nonautonomous evil because the aim was to uncover the social mechanisms of modern organizations and institutions that allowed individuals to commit atrocities. However, in reality it is very difficult to divide nonautonomous and autonomous evil or in other words, the unintentional and intentional harming of others. This section argues that evil is composed of both nonautonomous and autonomous evil and what it differs is the degree of each type depending on the social situation. Consequently, by developing an argument that includes both types of evil while preserving their differences will show that the distinction between autonomous evil and nonautonomous evil subsumes the traditional distinction between individual intentionality and structural influences.

Evil sometimes seems to be misunderstood as having fixed, even universal denotations whenever it is being argued. The form evil can take however, varies depending on the social and historical context it is located. There was a time for example, in which the earthquake of Lisbon in 1755 was perceived as evil (Neiman 2004). Natural misfortunes are seldom perceived as evil in a modern society. Any comparative analyses of past events can show that what was perceived as evil in one moment can be seen as a misfortune and vice versa in a different socio-historical

context. The understanding and ways of doing evil change over time and are in themselves a reflection of society. It follows then that the way modern perpetrators do and understand evil is in more than one way a reflection of modernity itself. Sociology as the science that deals with modernity and human individuals is obliged in examining what forms evil take within modernity and what are its social processes. Evil in modernity is –intentionally and unintentionally– perpetrated by and among individual agents. It is therefore necessary to approach evil as a social action that is perpetrated by human agents.

For sociology whenever evil was the object of study, standard practice was to view it as a pathology or as the result of organizational and bureaucratic structures. In other words, as the result of forces *beyond* the agency of individuals. These organizational and bureaucratic structures in turn allow the perpetrators to excuse themselves of the evil they committed by saying that they were just following orders or simply doing their work. It is this mechanism that gives evil its modern characteristics. This view is however incomplete and misleading. Evil is a social action that has to be perpetrated. It is done by individual agents that harm other human beings against his or her will. It is in the suffering of others that evil finds its other half. Without this suffering and the harm that is being done to others by fellow human beings a lot of the evil seen in the world is unimaginable.

Evil is social and societal. If evil is to be adequately reintroduced into social theory it has to be seen as agency-driven. The concepts of nonautonomous and autonomous evil developed by John Kekes (1997) can be helpful not only to clarify the misunderstandings but also to understand the gap that exists between being aware one's own social actions that harm others and not admitting or not being aware of the evil that entails one's actions. It shows that evil is an important part of agency regardless of the agents awareness of the evil that actions entail within modernity.

Nonautonomous evil is the evil done by agents that fail to understand their actions as evil due

to a misconception of the action that is being performed. Autonomous evil on the other hand, is the evil that has been understood and performed intentionally (Kekes 1997). In a sense the typification of nonautonomous and autonomous evil represents the division that has been present in the traditional studies of evil. Up until now evil was seen “either in terms of intention or in terms of effects”⁷ (Geddes 2003:104). On the one hand, those who view evil in terms of effects have opted for arguing in an evil that is the effect of a structure devoid of agency (Milgram 2009; and Bauman 1989) while on the other there are the intentionalists that give a unidimensional approach to evil doing (Goldhagen 1997; and Katz 1988). The social processes of evil doing are far more complex than what can be grasped between the divisions of the effects structures have on perpetrators and the intention that lies behind evil doing.

A full examination of evil must consider these two dimensions –the intentionality of individuals and structural influences– as part of the same process and it can be done so by analyzing evil as an agency-driven social action.

3.4 Nonautonomous Evil

Perpetrators of nonautonomous evil tend to visualize a specialized task as a job whenever they are about to engage in evil doing. In more than one sense it is also the way in which not only sociology but the social sciences in general have viewed the matter for the past decades. The famous experiment done by the psychologist Stanley Milgram (2009) found the astonishing results that ‘under certain circumstances’ common people could do evil: inflict harm and pain to

⁷ Jennifer Geddes (2003) also points out two other traditional divisions that have been prevalent when examining evil: the division between the studies of perpetrators and victims and the division between theoretical and empirical research. A proper theory of evil in agency would be capable of filling the gaps that exist between these separations. However, it is beyond the capability of this paper to do so and will therefore concentrate only on the separation that has marked intentionality and effects.

others. Milgram's work is the prototypical view the social sciences have adopted since. It is a view that neglects the agency that all individuals possess by emphasizing too much on the absolute and unquestionable influence 'structures' have upon human beings.

Deprived of its once widely held status as elementary, as a given [italics in original] disposition of human nature, evil came to be seen predominantly in a perspective of irreducibly social (environmental, circumstantial) constraints and influences on the individual agent.

(Vetlesen 2005:3)

The notion given by post-Milgram evil which removes the autonomy evil deserves within social theory was the result not only of empirical developments but also of theoretical developments that can be traced back to Durkheim. For Durkheim, 'crime is normal' but only in the sense that it is "necessary because it is only punishment that allows society to separate normative behavior from that which is considered deviant" (Alexander 2003:116). This view shows an approach that underestimates the importance evil has in the social world by treating it as an incidental process. Its existence is acknowledged only as part of a necessary set of actions that surpass the accepted and desired codes of conduct.

Nonautonomous evil is defined by John Kekes as "actions that their agents perform by choosing one among several alternatives that have not been forced on them, but the agents fail to evaluate or to understand the significance of the alternatives they freely choose. They do evil, but they do not see what they do as evil. They see their actions under some other description, and their misperceptions are due to a kind of cognitive failure" (1997:32). It is worth pointing out that a key aspect of agency is the individual's capacity of doing or not doing something; meaning that they –at any given moment– could have done otherwise. A task however routinized it may seem

still allows room for creativity and maneuver for the agents' decisions and actions.

There is a popular misunderstanding however, that in the case of perpetrators that are part of a vast organization and inflict harm and suffering to others tend to do so only because there was no other choice. In extreme cases, it is perceived as a kill or be killed situation. As the extensive research done by Daniel Goldhagen (1996) shows, this has rarely been the case. It was revealed that there was not a single case of severe punishment or execution for someone that refused to kill Jews during the Holocaust. There were job transfers available but only a few took advantage of the opportunity. The ability and possibility the perpetrators had of doing otherwise or simple not doing evil gives rise to the argument that what has been traditionally interpreted as the following of orders or the meticulous and effective task performance was in reality just the outcome of intentional action. Thomas Cushman (2001) went even as far as arguing that all evil is autonomous (intentional) precisely because of this aspect in the perpetrators' action. At any given moment they could have done otherwise. This view however only ends up in denying the irrefutable influences structure have on individuals. A proper examination of evil must therefore grasp the agency of individuals while considering the structural processes it entails.

Nonautonomous evil is examined before the more explicit autonomous evil because it is the modern manifestation of evil. In order to grasp the significance nonautonomous evil has in the agency of individuals it must be remembered that before post-Milgram evil became mainstream, evil was seen as an elementary aspect of the human condition. Paradoxically, the most satisfactory answer to the modern problem of evil can be developed by seeing the transfiguration evil has been through between pre-modern and modern processes. The process of how modernization (also known as the civilizing process) collects, isolates and controls violence has been seized in the works of Norbert Elias, Michel Foucault and C. Fred Alford just to mention a few. As Bauman summarizes:

The most common (and widely shared) [sociological image of the civilizing process] is one that entails, as its two center points, the suppression of irrational and essentially antisocial drives, and the gradual yet relentless elimination of violence from social life (more precisely: the concentration of violence under control of the state [or any other legitimate organization], where it is used to guard the perimeters of national community and conditions of social order). What blends the two center points into one is the vision of the civilized society...[as] a moral force, as a system of institutions that co-operate and complement each other in the imposition of a normative order and the rule of law, which in turn safeguard conditions of social peace and individual security poorly defended in pre-civilized settings.

(Bauman 1989:27-28)

Modernization aims in achieving the systematic control of violence and power to distribute and use it in a manner that does not contradict the established moral and ethical norms of societies. Evil is not an interruption in the otherwise calm daily life nor a rare occurrence performed by a psychopath incapable of moral judgment. The capacity of individuals of doing evil is there, only that modernity conceals it. As Alford says, “we cannot see it, not however because it is not there, but because the terror is transmuted into rationality” (1997:726). Viewing evil and the harming of others as a job or a rationalized task that is the essence of modern evil: nonautonomous evil.

Zygmunt Bauman’s *Modernity and the Holocaust* (1989) bases its arguments on a Weberian and Milgram model of bureaucracy and orders, the mechanisms by which nonautonomous evil is possible. Modernity is all about approaching and undertaking matters rationally and efficiently. It does so by dealing with a task from a bureaucratic and scientific way. By adopting a Weberian approach to the Holocaust, Bauman uncovers how the culture of modern bureaucracy deliberately

established the necessary social mechanisms to overcome inefficiency and sympathy to execute mass murder. The innate capacity to feel sympathy towards other human beings can be easily neutralized within a bureaucratic institution. The social mechanism known as ‘moral invisibility’ allows no room for sympathy and moral debate because “the struggle over moral issues never takes place, as the moral aspects of actions are not immediately obvious or are deliberately prevented from discovery and discussion...the moral character of action is either invisible or purposefully concealed” (Bauman 1989:24). By thinking of the task at hand in terms of efficiency and work related issues, the humanity and morality of the actions performed are concealed and vanish from the minds of the agents. The ‘uniqueness and normality’ of the Holocaust lies in the unusual combination of normal and everyday elements that can be found in modern societies. It implies that common people can participate in a genocide if the conditions align. The “holocaust was as much a product, as it was a failure, of modern civilization. Like everything else done in the modern –rational, planned, scientifically informed, expert, efficiently managed, coordinated– way, the Holocaust...[exposed its pre-modern equivalents] as primitive, wasteful and ineffective by comparison” (Bauman 1989:89).

Any organization that works with the principles of the bureaucratic culture with a precise division of labor is capable of performing a mediation of action. An individual that finds him/herself working in a vast organization will be working for someone else while having people that work for one’s sake as well. The mediation of action allows the collection and dissipation of accountability by dividing the work into little tasks (fragmentation of tasks) in order for the consequences of action to become invisible. The invisibility of the victims is a part and a consequence of those social mechanisms.

The agents’ failure to recognize, evaluate and understand the significance of their actions and the consequences it entails is a fundamental element in nonautonomous evil. The social

mechanisms uncovered by Milgram and Bauman is what leads agents to view “their actions under some other description, and their misperceptions are due to a kind of cognitive failure” (Kekes 1997:32). The reason why soldiers ‘neutralizing’ people or bureaucrats that implement the extermination of people behind their desks is precisely because of the social mechanisms that dominate modern institutions and the agents within it.

The organizational and institutional mechanisms of modern societies allow an allocation and dissipation of guilt that removes or neutralizes what Arendt called ‘the animal pity’ of men, the capacity to feel sympathy towards others. Men’s capacity to feel sympathy towards the pain and suffering of other individuals can be nullified within modern institutions. It is not that agents do not have the capacity to do evil, it is just that modernity has found and developed new ways to do evil. That is the frightening reality uncovered by the works of Stanley Milgram and Zygmunt Bauman.

3.5 Autonomous Evil

Autonomous evil can be regarded as the manifestation, the remnants of pre-modern evil. The uncontrolled, unchecked evil driven by personal motivations and desires is the opposite of the controlled and channeled violence modernity has aimed for. Autonomous evil is the “actions they [agents] have favorably evaluated and whose significance they have understood, and their habitual actions are evil. Such people thus knowingly, intentionally, and frequently act in evil ways” (Kekes 1997:30). In order to understand autonomous evil, it is necessary to categorize the reasons that could potentially lead to it. The two possibilities presented by Kekes are the so-called moral monsters and the systematical subordination of moral commitments. The former seeks to harm others either for the sake of it or for the pleasure evil doing entails while the latter subordinates its moral judgment to other commitments (personal, political, religious, aesthetics, etc.). Both

possibilities have the common trait in which the agent is fully aware of the evil that is being committed.

Autonomous evil is the most explicit form of evil doing because the pleasure evil offers as well as causing the suffering and pain in others are by themselves the desired end. Autonomous evil tends to be seen as irrational and as such it presents a problem when grasping the rational order of things within modernity. The moral monsters presented by Kekes for the prevalence of autonomous evil can be complemented with a concept that has been gaining popularity among scholars during recent years: *transgression*.

Transgression is not something that goes against what is prohibited. It “does not deny the taboo but transcends it and completes it” (Bataille 1957=2012: 63). ‘Rules exist to be broken’ and ‘taboos are there to be violated’ because they appeal to the aggressive urge that seeks to transgress the various prohibitions that reign over people’s lives. Evil in this sense becomes more than a social action; it is a *desired* form of social action. The various forms of evil are understandably seen as an aspect of the human condition and a society that must be suppressed no matter the cost. The prohibition of illegitimate evil action paradoxically ends up creating something that is desired: “Men are swayed by two simultaneous emotions: they are driven away by terror and drawn by an awed fascination. Taboo and transgression reflect these two contradictory urges” (Bataille 1957=2012: 68).

One of the most mainstream reasons for explaining autonomous evil is the sexual pleasure the perpetrators derive from it. The sadomasochism displayed by some are often explained by the sexualization of the power relations that emerge from the sadists and masochists. The pleasure derived by serial killers like Ted Bundy and Robert Anderson are interpreted to be the fulfillment of suppressed sexual pleasure. The sadism that drives the transgression of hurting others is in more than one way sexual. There are however recent interpretations that suggest that the hurting

of others can generate pleasure without inciting sexual excitement. The common denominator that lies beneath the hurting of others regardless of the pleasure derived from sexual excitement or just the infliction of pain and suffering is that “*sadism is the form aggression takes when it seeks to inflict its [own] doom on others* [italics in original]” (Alford 1997:732).

What is the doom that perpetrators (moral monsters) of autonomous evil seek to inflict upon others? The answer lies in the dimension of experience that sadism offers. Evil as a social action that harms others is a condition of being human. Autonomous evil then, from the existential and experiential level offers the possibility of “relief from the burden of being human and so vulnerable” (Vetlesen 2005: 109). The projection in sadism is the route of escape that perpetrators have to flee from the sense of dread that forms part of the human existence by intentionally inflicting pain and suffering upon others. Autonomous evil allows the agents’ to attempt “flee his doom...by way of targeting another individual so as to make him or her suffer. It is a matter of doing unto another what one is most afraid of experiencing oneself” (Vetlesen 2005:109). Acknowledging the humanity of the victim is key in autonomous evil because it is only by acknowledging the victim as a human being that the ‘doom’ of the perpetrator can be inflicted upon others through evil. Transgression is not only about surpassing the established taboos and the boundaries they represent; it is also about transgressing into the humanity of another person by inflicting pain on others. Unlike the double dehumanization of nonautonomous evil that strips away the humanity of both the perpetrator and the victim; autonomous evil seeks to establish a double humanization of the perpetrator and its victim. Inflicting pain and suffering is an end in itself because by “making another person suffer, [the perpetrator] applies his human understanding as someone who knows what pain is...” (Vetlesen 2005:109).

Referring to the more mundane and spontaneously motivated forms of evil doing, Jack Katz grazes these experiential dimensions by suggesting that the “assailant must sense, then and there,

a distinctive constraint or seductive appeal that he did not sense a little while before in a substantially similar place” (1988:4). The typical impassioned perpetrators that succumb to their desires (whether of anger or the projection of their human doom upon others) is complimented by the more elaborate and calculating youth groups. Katz found that certain youth groups with violent tendencies are eager to proudly display their means for violence. In fact, these “distinctive features of violence” such as “strategic calculation, militaristic delight, symbolic representation of enemies, and melodramatic self-absorption- indicate a pride in ruling the streets by terror” (1988:115). Indeed, it is a pride that can be found in more legitimate spheres of power as well.

The systematical subordination of moral commitments can also lead agents to intentionally commit evil. The justification by which their argument is based upon is that there are personal, political, religious or aesthetic reasons that enable the infliction of pain and suffering upon others. Wieviorka has pointed out two types of perpetrators that fit this kind of autonomous evil. The agents that look to express themselves through violence and those who make up for the loss of meaning with an excess of meaning⁸ (Wieviorka 2012:21). The crucial and perhaps only difference between the autonomous evil of moral monsters and those who subordinate their moral commitments is that while the former does evil because it is evil; the latter does so because for them there is something more valuable and important.

What can arguably be called the other face of the Holocaust appeals to all of these aspects of autonomous evil that have been argued up until now. According to Goldhagen (1996), the Holocaust occurred not because it was the result of a bureaucratic and organizational culture that aimed for the creation of an efficient solution to a problem but because Germans wanted to kill Jews. The argument is that Germans “had internalized a cultural model of extreme anti-Semitism”

⁸ Wieviorka bases his argument on the link that exists between the subjectivity of the perpetrators and the violence committed.

(Hinton 1998: 10). In a way this includes the two reasons for autonomous evil since Germans made it a policy to know how to exterminate their victims with a cruel indifference to the moral aspect of humanity. While Bauman made it his duty to depict the bureaucratized side of the mass murder that took place in the Holocaust, Goldhagen on the other hand viewed the mass murders as the result of the intentionality in the actions of the Germans. He did so by adopting a cultural model that embraced centuries of accumulated anti-Semitic sentiments.

Among the various examples given and argued by Goldhagen, the killings done by the Police Battalion 101 stand up the most because of the close proximity and the apparent enjoyment its members had for their duties. A member of the infamous Battalion 101 recalls a memory in the following way:

The Jews were brought into the woods on the instruction of [Sergeant] Steinmetz. We went with the Jews. After about 220 yards Steinmetz directed that the Jews had to lay themselves next to each other in a row on the ground. I would like to mention now that only women and children were there. They were largely women and children around twelve years old...I had to shoot an old woman, who was over sixty years old. I can still remember, that the old woman said to me, will you make it short or about the same...Next to me was the Policeman Koch...He had to shoot a small boy of perhaps twelve years. We had been expressly told that we should hold the gun's barrel eight inches from the head. Koch had apparently not done this, because while leaving the execution site, the other comrades laughed at me, because pieces of the child's brains had splattered onto my sidearm and had stuck there. I first asked, why are you laughing, whereupon Koch, pointing to the brains on my sidearm, said: That's from mine, he has stopped twitching. He said this in an obviously boastful tone...

(Goldhagen 1996:219)

The indifference due to the subordination of moral commitments and in some cases the enjoyment displayed by members of the Battalion is a representative trait of autonomous evil. Human agents have the capacity and will to commit evil not only because they fail to recognize the harm that is being done to others but in some cases, it is the opposite: they do understand the harm done to others and yet, they intentionally carry out their actions.

Modernity did not get rid of evil as it promised, it only changed the way evil is done and understood which resulted in new forms of evil doing. The Holocaust alone can be interpreted from two opposite poles. The structural approach that views evil as the results of bureaucracy and organization is a clear example of how individuals commit nonautonomous evil while the more personalized and face to face executions committed by the troops and battalions are a clear example of autonomous evil. Both nonautonomous and autonomous evil are part of agency and modernity.

3.6 A Reformulation of Nonautonomous and Autonomous Evil

In *Modernity and the Holocaust* (1989) Bauman mentions that among the various accounts given by the survivors of the Holocaust some have said that apart from a few officers that were explicitly pleased to hurt the prisoners, they could understand the position they were in since it was their job. What is curious about these accounts is that within the controlled confinements of the concentration camps where efficiency and rigorous calculations devoid of personal affairs are supposed to reign, traits of *both* nonautonomous and autonomous evil could be found at the same time.

If evil is agency-driven it follows that the structural processes that entail agency can also be applied to unify the different approaches given to evil and fill the misleading gap that exists

between nonautonomous and autonomous evil. Regardless of the event (genocide, rape, assassination) or the perpetrator (bureaucrat, soldier, serial killer), evil is agency-driven and evil done is always composed of both nonautonomous and autonomous evil. What differs is the *degree* of nonautonomous or autonomous evil in the social action which depends on the agents' location in time and space.

The problem lies in how to close the apparent gap that exists between the processes that lie beneath nonautonomous and autonomous evil? C. Fred Alford's interpretation of the Milgram experiment helps understand how agents even in situations that may seem to be designed for the execution of nonautonomous evil is also composed of autonomous evil by uncovering the sadistic nature of individuals that are given official permission to hurt others. William Sewell's reformulations and definitions of structure can also contribute in closing the gaps that exist between the material and idealistic division of nonautonomous and autonomous evil.

The Milgram experiment has been reinterpreted by Alford in a way that completely changes its significance. The relationship between the Experimenter (authority), the Teacher (volunteer) and the Learner (the actor) shows how common and normal individuals respond with obedience to authority even if this means hurting others. The experiment's results are traditionally interpreted as showing how common people harm others due to the influence of external forces. Alford however, states that the subjects applying the electric shocks are in fact sadists. Naturally, Alford's interpretation on the Milgram experiment is not popular among researchers. It is ironic to see how the initial reaction of the public regarding the Milgram experiment when it was first published is now the common reaction towards the reinterpretation done by Alford.

Unlike the common interpretation that seeks to redeem the volunteers by giving a unidimensional interpretation of structural influences to the experiment, Alford notes an awkward grin in the face of the teachers and asks quite correctly, "What if these men are giggling in

embarrassed pleasure at being given permission to inflict great pain and suffering on an innocent and vulnerable man? Milgram rejects this interpretation, but offers no reason” (1997:732). Behind the seemingly non-ill intentions of the participants of the experiment, Alford argues that the social mechanisms modernity has created for the neutralization of moral judgment is really not neutralizing it but just channeling the sadism inherent in all individual agents.

The various social mechanisms that come into play and act as structural influences that force individuals to follow orders or view the harming of others as a job is in reality the consequence of the separation of violence and sadism from the private sphere to the more controlled and legitimate organizations of the state. Violence and sadism were not eradicated by modernity; it is just that they are “contained and stored up behind the scenes, in military barracks, police stations, and prisons, ready to be called upon in times of unrest, and exerting a continuous threat to those who would challenge the regime” (Alford 1997:730). The civilizing process that modernity entails is not about making evil disappear, but it is about hiding it and controlling it.

The presence of autonomous elements in nonautonomous evil or in other words the role of sadism in the following of orders is further strengthened by another research by Alford. A survey was made asking a normal group of citizens and a group of inmates convicted of murder and rape what were their thoughts on the Milgram experiment. The answers were completely the opposite:

Almost every free citizen explained the results of the Milgram experiment as Milgram does: People are naturally weak, conformist, and cowardly, but they are not naturally sadistic. Most are simply too weak to say no, or too thoughtless to think about what they are doing. Every prisoner, almost without exception, explained the results of the Milgram experiment as good citizens taking advantage of an excuse to express their sadism.

(Alford 2006:14)

By shedding light on the sadism present even in the situations where common individuals act because of the social mechanisms designed to neutralize their animal pity towards the victim, Alford uncovers the autonomous element in nonautonomous evil. What the inmates –because of their explicit contact with violence– understand better than common citizens is the “the continuity between extreme criminal violence and the everyday, socially sanctioned violence of the state, violence with which it is all too easy to identify and deny at the same time” (Alford 2006:15).

If the criteria of how evil as an atrocity can be defined as the number of deaths, nothing surpasses the nonautonomous evil done by agents that work for the legitimate and authorized institutions of the state: “evil, understood as pleasure in hurting, is more widespread and institutionalized than we know. We just don't see it, as we tend to confuse organization, rationalization, and legitimation with goodness, particularly when the state in question is our own” (Alford 2006:15).

The Alfordian interpretation of the Milgram experiment is that perpetrators of nonautonomous evil are sadists with permission that secretly enjoy harming others. What it seemed at a first glance to be a pure execution of nonautonomous evil has in some degree elements of autonomous evil as well. What happens then to the more personal and explicit autonomous evil that is condemned in societies? William Sewell (1998) has managed to make a reformulation of the definition of structure that was proposed by Giddens (1979, 1984). For Sewell, structure is “composed simultaneously of schemas, which are virtual, and of resources, which are actual” (1992:13). According to the original definition by Giddens structure is ‘rules and resources’. Sewell has seen through the logical gaps of this definition and proposed that rules should be treated as a resource and instead of rules he offers schemas. The remaining definition of structure would then be ‘*schemas and resources*’.

By defining structures as 'schemas and resources' Sewell intends to grasp the material and idealistic dimensions of structure. The material and idealistic dimensions are representative of how the term 'structure' was used by sociologists and anthropologists respectively. The former argued and maintained the materialistic dimensions of structure in the social world while anthropology treated structure as a cultural model. It also has the advantage of solving the self-contradictory definition of Giddens' structure. For Giddens, social structures are 'virtual' in contrast to the social system that are observable in time and space. Sewell points out that resources exist in time and space and cannot be virtual. By reconceptualizing the term structure into 'schemas and resources' Sewell avoids the traditional division between the materialistic and idealistic dimension of structure. Sewell's idea of structure is summarized in the following manner:

"By definition, human bodies, like any other material objects, cannot be virtual. But what about knowledge and emotional commitments, the mental aspects of human resources? Examples might be the Roman Catholic priest's power to consecrate the host and hear confession, children's sense of obligation toward their mothers, or the fear and reverence that subjects feel for their king. Unlike factories or Hudson Bay blankets, such resources are not material, or at least not in the same sense. Nevertheless they seem to me actual as opposed to virtual. They exist in what Giddens calls "time-space"; they are observable characteristics of real people who live in particular times and congregate in particular places. *And it is their actualization in people's minds and bodies that make them resources* [italics added]. It is not the disembodied concept of the majesty of the king that gives him power, but the fear and reverence felt for him by his actual subjects.

(Sewell 1992:10)

If the Holocaust is argued to be the result of the material bureaucratic machine as well as the consequences of the idealistic anti-Semitic cultural model, Sewell's definition of structure establishes a ground in which these two approaches do not have to contradict each other since they are both a social process that entail the agency of individuals (duality of structure). Sewell states that "Structures, ... are constituted by mutually sustaining cultural schemas and sets of resources that empower and constrain social action and tend to be reproduced by that action. Agents are empowered by structures, both by the knowledge of cultural schemas that enables them to mobilize resources and by the access to resources that enables them to enact schemas" (1992:27) and it shows how the findings of Bauman and Goldhagen are complementary with each other.

Agency always entails evil, and evil is always composed of both autonomous and nonautonomous evil, but the degree varies depending on the time and situation. There is always room for creativity on how to inflict suffering upon others, how to innovate methods of torture and killing. Even while following orders perpetrators go to great lengths to make others suffer and to show their creativity or at least to manifest the sadism present in their human condition. The reconceptualization of structure by Sewell closes the materialistic and idealistic gap that exists between nonautonomous and autonomous evil and reveals that both aspects are part of the same process.

This chapter explored the different types of evil as a social action and how they are intertwined. Nonautonomous evil is performed by making use of the bureaucratic social structures of modernity, sometimes making it difficult to be perceived as evil and diluting the agents as the perpetrators. Autonomous evil on the other hand, is the uncontrolled and intentional harm caused by the agents. By applying Alford's reinterpretation of the Milgram experiment and the

reformulation of structure done by Sewell that regardless of the event or type of perpetrator, it was also argued that evil is always composed of both nonautonomous and autonomous elements that vary in degree depending on the situation. The changing forms of doing evil within social structures give a different shape to evil that must be analyzed carefully. The importance in the distinction between nonautonomous and autonomous evil lies in the fact that it is key in illuminating the forms evil can take during modernity as agency-driven social actions. By viewing evil as a social action, most of the contradictions of the new ways of doing evil within modernity can be understood in a better way. The ever-changing nature of evil and violence makes it a crucial task to understand the new ways human agents can harm others.

The next step is to further analyze what is it that makes structural violence perpetrator-less and what are its implications in agency and the way accountability dissipates or is allocated.

4. Violence, Emergence and Accountability

The interplay between the different manifestations of violence at the structural and individual level expose certain elements that cannot be explained by focusing on one side alone. The act and social phenomena of harming others has been a topic that has been treated throughout the entire spectrum of the social sciences but what has baffled researchers is that there are characteristics in structural violence that cannot be found in the violence done at the individual level and vice-versa. The most notable characteristic being the perpetrator-less aspect of structural violence and the dissipation of accountability. Even at the individual level, properties such as (un)intentionality, unintended consequences of action and the types of evil which are nonautonomous and autonomous also undergo complex social processes when the harm is committed by collective and organizational agents. Nonautonomous evil and structural violence can be seen as the unintended consequences of an individual agent's action but can also be considered to be intentional if the action was done by a collectivity or organization.

The violence that “is exercised exercised even if there are no concrete actors one can point to directly attacking others, as when one person kills another” (Galtung 1969:171), and the way it interacts with violence at the individual level is just the tip of the iceberg. The key issue then is to connect violence at the individual, collective and organizational levels with structural violence to shed light on issues that entail its social processes and determine what happens to accountability when harm is done by a collectivity or organization. By exploring how the forms of violence and evil do change depending on the type of perpetrator (individual, collective or organizational), it also becomes clear how individual actions are related to structural violence. Examining the complex interplay between an individuals' actions in the context of social structures makes it possible to identify and analyze the emergent properties of socio-cultural systems and thus, structural violence as well.

The different aspects of violence and evil caused by the different types of agents are important issues that will be examined in order to solve the contradictions and misunderstandings that arise from the relationship between the types of evil doing and its relation to structural violence as an emergent property.

4.1 Violence as an Emergent Property

analytical dualism –unlike the duality of structure– seeks to link agency with structure instead of merging them together. Social structure precedes and conditions action and socio-cultural interactions. Social actions and socio-cultural interactions in turn give rise to processes of structural elaboration and/or reproduction of the same structures that conditioned them. The key difference with the duality of structure, is that it stresses the temporality by emphasizing that one process happens before and/or after the other. Morphogenetic cycles, are the temporal sequences that produce any transformation of the social structure and system. Morphostatic cycles on the other hand, are the temporal sequences that reproduce and maintain the form of any given social structure and system.

The temporality of the morphogenetic/static cycles unmasked by analytical dualism suggests that there is an end product for every social action and socio-cultural interaction that differs from the original structure and intention that conditioned and motivated them in the first place. It is a process that gives way to what Giddens has called the juggernaut of modernity and the unintended consequences of action (Giddens 1979, 1984, 2015). The consequences of actions and interactions can be directed up to a certain extent, but it runs with the risk of both getting out of hand or becoming something completely different than what was originally anticipated.

Analytical dualism and the unintended consequences of action that stretch out in time and space entail the idea that there will be elements of the social world that are more than just the

aggregate sum of actions and interactions. As Archer has pointed out, “the emergent properties which characterize socio-cultural systems imply discontinuity between initial interactions and their product, the complex system” (Archer 1982:458). Thus, the ‘self-regulating properties’ of social structures described in structuration theory is just another way of saying emergent properties.

The concept of emergence “expresses the idea that a thing...can have properties or capabilities that are not possessed by its parts” (Elder-Vass 2011:4). These properties are called emergent properties. The concept has been a topic of debate for quite some time, especially within philosophy. The most commonly used examples that illustrate how complex systems can give rise to emergent properties have been water and consciousness. Water for example, possesses properties that are quite different from its components, oxygen and hydrogen. In the same way, the neuro-chemical interactions between brain cells cannot explain consciousness which is an emergent property of the complex system.

The idea that a ‘thing’ can have emergent properties has to be elaborated further. Elder-Vass conceptualizes ‘thing’ as an “entity” or ‘whole’ (Elder-Vass 2011). In this dissertation, instead of employing the term ‘entity’, the concept of agent will be used. This is because the concept of agent allows for a better understanding of the interplay that occurs in complex situations of violence at the individual and structural level as well as in the structural and cultural sphere.

Within the social sciences, the concepts of emergence and emergent properties offers the possibility to explain the causal powers of the different types of structures and agents. This means that structural and cultural violence –while having properties of their own– do not have to be necessarily detached from violence at the individual level since any kind of social actions precedes structural elaboration. The unique elements that characterize structural and cultural violence, can be analyzed as the emergent properties of the social processes that action and

interactions entail.

Despite the role and importance that actions and socio-cultural interactions have in the creation of emergent properties at a larger scale, the capability to do so must not be exaggerated. Within the morphogenetic/static cycles, not all actions and interactions give rise to emergent properties at a large-scale, “not only may some of the smallest items of behavior be irrelevant to the social system, certain larger ones may also be trivial, mutually cancelling or self-contained in their effects” but depending on the case, “other actions can produce far reaching aggregate and emergent consequences” (Archer 1982:460).

So what are the conditions that are needed in order for social actions and socio-cultural interactions to give rise to emergent properties? In order to answer this question, it is necessary to elaborate what are the mechanisms and processes that generate emergent properties in larger, complex structures based on the way lower agents interact. The important task here is to describe and shed light on how structural violence ends up with properties that are non-existent at the individual level despite being a consequence of actions and socio-cultural interactions. Ironically, analytically speaking the implication is that it is necessary “to grapple with the ongoing interplay between micro- and macro-levels, where the broader context conditions the environment of actors whose responses then transform the environment with which the context subsequently has to deal, the two jointly generating further elaboration as well as changes in one another” (Archer 1982: 476). For the sake of building a coherent argument and because violence is a social phenomenon, individual agents are to be treated as the lowest components that build up agents and interactions at a higher-level.

4.1.1 The Elements of Emergence

Emergence occurs when an agent (entity) possesses characteristics and causal powers that are

not possessed by the parts that compose it, in other words, emergent properties. An emergent property is defined as a property “not possessed by any of the parts individually and that would not be possessed by the full set of parts in the absence of a structuring set of relations between them” (Elder-Vass 2011:17). The key element (at least within the social sciences) for emergence then, is how a certain set of components are related and patterned with each other as to compose an agent at a higher-level that possesses properties not owned by its parts.

The interactions and relations between the components will determine whether an agent will have emergent properties or not and what kind of properties they are. Here, it is important to introduce two elements of emergence: levels and relations.

Agency as the ‘capability of doing things’ is not something that is exclusively possessed by individuals. Collectives, organizations and arguably even societies possess agency. Studies of social phenomena, —including the present dissertation— have to work with the premise that individuals are the lowest possible components of the social world in order to exclude the chemical and biological components that are outside the scope of the social sciences.

The hierarchy of agents in the social world then, starts with individual agents and the higher-level agents that are composed by their patterned interactions. An agent’s emergent property, depends on “being composed of a collection of lower-level entities [agents] that are its necessary parts, and on the properties of those parts; but *not* [italics in the original] on the presence or properties of other entities that are not its parts” (Elder-Vass 2011:19).

An agent with emergent properties then, is further composed of parts that may or may not possess a set of emergent properties of their own. A number of individuals with agential emergent properties compose a collectivity or organization that possesses emergent properties that are not possessed by its components. This creates layers, termed levels, in which an agent is composed of a specific patterned set of relations of lower level agents. Individuals compose collectivities,

and collectivities may in turn compose organizations.

As it was pointed out above, in complex situations of violence it is necessary to label the individual as being the lowest form of component. The way individual agents are aggregated influences both the type of higher level agents and the emergent properties it will possess. Details on these points will be discussed in the subsequent sections of this chapter.

The other important element of emergence besides the level of agents, is the way these agents are related and therefore, interact with each other. The role of interactions and relations for the creation of emergent properties is highly important. The way the parts and components are patterned will determine whether or not a higher-level agent possesses emergent properties and what are those properties going to be. Archer, rightly points out that “emergence is embedded in interaction.... Emergent properties are therefore relational: they are not contained in the elements themselves, but could not exist apart from them... 'although complex social systems have their foundation in simpler ones, they have their own dynamics with emergent properties” (Archer 1982:475).

Large-scale genocides and vast military operations for example, rely on the way individual agents are organized which enables collectivities and organizations to develop emergent properties that differ from its parts⁹. The relational approach to emergence then, argues that agents acquire emergent properties “*because of* [italics in the original] the particular relationships that hold between the parts in a particular kind of whole....higher-level entities [agents] are not just a simple aggregation of their component parts” (Elder-Vass 2011:20-21). This point, is beautifully illustrated in the phrase coined by Bauman: *the uniqueness and normality* of the holocaust.

What Bauman means with the uniqueness and normality of the holocaust is that the elements of modernity and bureaucratic structures that made the holocaust possible can be found at every

⁹ For an example of this point, see Bauman 1989 and Giddens 1985.

corner of modern society. The aspect of the Holocaust analyzed by Bauman is unique, because “it is modern...it brings together some ordinary factors of modernity which normally are kept apart” (Bauman 1989:94). These factors, are the following:

- Radical antisemitism,
- Transformation of the anti-Semitic ideology into policy,
- A centralized state,
- An efficient bureaucratic apparatus,
- State of emergency condition,
- Passive acceptance of the above elements by the population.

(Gordon qtd. in Bauman 1989:94)

Except for a couple of factors, all of them can be found throughout society. What makes the difference is the way they are put together. A specific combination of these factors, enables and constrains individual agents in a specific pattern of socio-cultural interactions. These interactions in turn, by working within a complex bureaucratic machinery, gives rise to social process that end up in genocide. The structural dimensions observed in the holocaust are the emergent properties of these specific relations between individual agents.

The characteristics of the bureaucracy such as a hierarchical and functional divisions of labor, the rational and scientific approach to problems, the double dehumanization of the subject and the object, by themselves are unable to create large-scale atrocities¹⁰. They have to be combined in a way that patterns the social actions and socio-cultural interactions so that it gives rise to

¹⁰ For a more detailed discussion of the characteristics of bureaucracy elaborated in this point, see Bauman 1989; Mouzelis 2007; Vetlesen 2005; and Weber 1978.

emergent properties at a higher-level.

The importance and role of the relations between the components of the agents at different levels show that there are relations and interactions between the agents *within and across* levels. Archer summarizes this argument in the following manner:

The primary distinguishing feature of any emergent property is the natural necessity of its internal relations, for what the entity [agents] and its very existence depends upon them. To focus upon internal and necessary relations between components as constitutive of an emergent property is to set them apart from relations which are external and contingent. In the latter case, two entities or items can exist without one another and *it is thus neither necessary nor impossible that they stand in any particular relation to one another* [italics added], for the nature of either does not depend upon this.

(Archer 2011:173)

The example given by Archer to illustrate this point are the practices of 19th century education and industry represented by the Anglican church and industrialists. They were both separated in their own internal relations but also possessed a relation that had significant effects in each other (the relation between workforce education and entrepreneurial development).

Agents interact with other agents within the same level, which in turn it may or may not give rise to emergent properties in higher-level agents that are composed by a specific type of relation among its components.

Thus, the hierarchy of levels between the agents should not be considered as homogenous and static. At any given level, “it is possible that a variety of different classes of higher-level entity[agent] may emerge” (Elder-Vass 2011:20). From the same token, any kind or number of

emergent properties may emerge depending from the combination and interaction of lower-level agents. It is more of a branch, rather than a static strata.

Another possibility besides the bureaucratic dimension of violence of the holocaust as an emergent property is what Ted Poston termed 'social evil'. Social evil is "the pain and suffering that results from the game-theoretic interaction of rational, well-intentioned individuals" (Poston 2014:3). Poston argued that even in the extreme situation where all the individual agents were well-intended virtuous, the result could still be a social evil that inflicted pain and suffering.

Structural violence as a type of perpetrator-less violence that is built into the structure, and social evil as the aggregate result of rational individual agents can be interpreted as strong and weak emergence respectively. Strong emergence views emergent properties as being something that is much more than the result of its aggregate parts. What this means, is that emergent properties cannot be explained as the result of the relations and interactions of lower-level agents. According to Kim, proponents of strong emergence argue that emergent properties are "not explainable, or reductively explainable, on the basis of their 'basal conditions', the lower-level conditions out of which they emerge" (Kim qtd. in Elder-Vass 2011:30).

Weak emergence on the other hand, advocates that emergent properties can be explainable based on the interactions and relational patterns of the lower-level agents. It can be criticized as being reductionist, but nevertheless offers valuable insights especially in the study of social phenomena where the materialistic and idealistic structural conditions enable and constrain the actions of agents.

The problem is that complex situations of violence tend to be seem to be a little bit of both. A military invasion can be analyzed from the standpoint of the hierarchical bureaucratic structure of military organizations but also contains conditions and properties that are beyond the sum of the interactions and relations of the agents involved. In the same manner, the poverty and suffering

created by global capitalism as a form of structural violence cannot be fully grasped by using only one approach.

The arguments on this dissertation take a middle stance, by analyzing the mechanisms that underlie the interactions and relations of agents while acknowledging the existence of the unintended consequences of action that stretch out in time and space.

4.1.2 Diachronic Emergence

The above-mentioned elements of emergence are the emergent properties that can be identified from a synchronic perspective. In other words, it captures emergence and emergent properties as they are across one point in time. Theorists such as Elder-Vass refuse to acknowledge the lay definition of emergence, which is the diachronic definition that represents the idea that ‘something’ emerges through time. The reason used to oppose it is because a diachronic view of emergence does not capture the specific way the components are related and the causal powers these relations give rise to.

A diachronic conception of emergence is however important for two reasons. The first reason is that social processes happen through time and with it, certain events come into being. The second reason is that without a diachronic conception of emergence, it becomes nearly impossible to include the consequences of the interactions and actions of the components of an agent that stretch out in time and space.

To illustrate this, studies on the holocaust once again prove to be useful. Raul Hilberg once argued that the stages for events of mass destruction such as the holocaust were logically determined (Bauman 1989:190-191). This statement however must be approached carefully because it excludes the unplanned and contingent dimension that gave rise to the holocaust.

Christopher Browning described the way the final solution ‘evolved’ and came to be.

Browning argued that there was a gap between what the Nazis wanted to do and actually ended up doing between 1939 and 1941. This has led to the misconception that the holocaust did not emerge diachronically but was planned all along:

Expulsion and ghettoization...is what the Germans sought to do...[and] what they actually did. Too often, however, these policies and this period have been seen through a perspective influenced, indeed distorted and overwhelmed, by the catastrophe that followed. The policy of Jewish expulsion –and its relationship to resettlement policies in general– was for many years not taken as seriously by historians as it had been by the Nazis themselves. Conversely, the policy of ghettoization has all too often been seen as an integral, even conscious, preparatory step toward extermination, while to the Germans at the time it was a temporary improvisation, a “necessary evil” that followed from the failure of expulsion plans.

(Browning 2005:36)

It is important to recognize both the synchronic and diachronic aspects of emergence because without the specific patterns of interaction and relation that agents have within a bureaucratic organization, the spontaneous and improvised manner in which complex situations of violence come into being cannot be grasped.

Hannah Arendt also recorded the way in which the final solution developed. The trial and error approach given to the ‘Jewish problem’ was described in the three solutions: expulsion, concentration and killing (Arendt 2006). The three solutions are also known as the First, Second and ‘Final Solution’ respectively. Through her report and insights of Eichmann and his work, Arendt discussed the solutions suggested by the Nazis in order to realize a *judenrein* Europe. The Madagascar Plan, the Jewish Ghettos and the Final Solution are only a few examples of the

manner how violence can emerge diachronically from a synchronic set of arrangements that determine the way agents interact and act.

Complex situations of violence are not the only social processes that have the synchronic and diachronic capabilities of emergence. Individuals can also give rise to properties that were not originally there depending on the situation and the way they are organized and related to others. Face-to-face killings for example, show how individual agents can adjust their capability to act, and hence their causal power depending on the social context they are in.

The chordal triad of agency developed by Emirbayer and Mische, explains how agents adjust and shift their temporal focus to reproduce or transform their actions and environment. The “degree of changeability or mutability of different actual structures, as well as *the variable (and changing) ways in which social actors relate to them* [italics in original]” (Emirbayer and Mische 1998:1004). The temporal dimensions of agency, provides a dynamic model that makes it possible to understand in what way agents adapt to the social contexts they are located in. The “temporal-relational contexts support particular agentic orientations, which in turn constitute different structuring relationships of actors toward their environments” (Emirbayer and Mische 1998: 1004). Rigid structures, make agents adjust their temporal orientations to the past as to reproduce as much as possible the structure that existed prior to their action. Less rigid structures on the other hand make it easier for agents to adjust their temporal orientations in a way that focuses either on the present or the future. This process in turn causes a structural elaboration that changes the structure that conditioned the original action. The chordal triad of agency model has been applied by Cushman to analyze how the Serbian elite adjusted their temporal dimensions of agency to devise the Bosnian genocide (Cushman 2001).

One of the reasons agents emerge (regardless of the level) is precisely because emergence happens over time. Along with the social processes that give rise to its existence, agents at

different levels may acquire properties that are not possessed by its part because of the relations and interactions that happen over time.

Without the notion of temporality, it becomes nearly impossible to analyze the processes that underlie emergence and the emergent properties possessed by the different types of agents. This means that there are different types of emergent properties that in turn depend on the way agents interact at the structural and individual level. Different ways of constraining and enabling action gives rise to different emergent properties.

4.2 The Types of Emergent Properties

As it was discussed in previous chapters, agency and structure are linked by morphogenetic and morphostatic cycles that in turn produces new temporal sequences that affect both the socio-cultural interactions and the structural elaborations. It was also argued, through Sewell's reformulation that structure has a virtual and materialistic dimension. These points are important, because it shows how different dimensions of structure can affect lower-level agents in differing ways.

4.2.1 Structural Emergent Properties

Sewell (1992) reformulated the concept of structure in a way that linked the material and virtual dimension of structure. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the two aspects are elided in an inseparable manner that does not allow an appropriate analysis of the different manifestations of structural violence. The triangle and triumvirate of violence were originally conceived as to represent this idea. The goal however is to explore how violence is related at a structural and individual level without jeopardizing their respective independent characteristics.

In this sense, it is important to *analytically* separate the different properties and causal power

that structure has while bearing in mind Sewell's reformulation of structure. The reason is because the materialistic dimension of structure entails different processes and properties from those of the more symbolic and virtual dimension of structure. Based on this, the emergent properties that largely but not exclusive depend on the materialistic side of structure is termed as structural emergent properties (SEP's).

Structural emergent properties (SEP's), are "irreducible to people and relatively enduring, as with all incidences of emergence, are specifically defined as those internal and necessary relationships which entail material resources, whether physical or human, and which generate causal powers proper to the relation itself" (Archer 2011:177). The predetermined and rigid nature of material structure makes it difficult to fully categorize as an unintended consequence. As shown with the examples of diachronic emergence given above, structural emergent properties can be in fact the unintended consequences of action but only as a sub-category and never an equivalent social process.

Structural emergent properties, because of their materialistic nature can be used to enable large-scale atrocities. The dehumanizing process, so necessary for the implementation of mass murders, is easier to produce with the structural emergent properties that influence the way individual agents act and interact. It can create a machine that belittles the will and thought of individual agents to nullify the 'animal pity of men'. These properties, where captured in the descriptions made by Stanley Milgram (2009) and the analysis of the holocaust carried out by Bauman (1989).

The terrifying aspect of the way interactions are patterned in a materialistic structure reveals the structural properties that are reflected in the social mechanisms of bureaucratic organizations. The mediation of action, the fragmentation of tasks and double dehumanization created by the physical distance and routinization of tasks would all be inconceivable without the material

dimension of structural emergent properties.

4.2.2 Cultural Emergent Properties

Cultural emergent properties (CEP's) arise from the idealistic (virtual) dimension of structures. They are a consequence of the structural elaboration and/or reproduction of the symbolic sphere that follow socio-cultural interactions. CEP's work in the same way as structural emergent properties since both of them are but one side of structure. Archer however, would disagree because she differentiates cultural systems from structures (Archer 2004, 2011). The argument for this is that while acknowledging the merits of Sewell's reformulation, she believes that the concept of structure developed by Sewell suffers from the elision between the materialistic and idealistic dimension of structure. This criticism must be examined carefully, because separating the idealistic and materialistic dimension of structure too much would just recreate the issues that Giddens and Sewell set themselves to solve.

Although it is true that an analytical separation of the structural and cultural emergent properties is required to analyze social processes like violence, it must nevertheless be kept in mind that they are two sides of the same coin. The reason is because just as cultural emergent properties and structural emergent properties have the same mechanisms to manifest themselves, they are similar in the way agents draw upon them to cause structural elaboration and reproduction.

Practically, cultural emergent properties emphasize the symbolic (virtual) manifestation of violence: cultural and symbolic violence. The symbolic sphere (called cultural system by Archer), is characterized by the pre-existence, autonomy and durability" of its constituents (Archer 2011:179). It is what makes it possible to be identified and implemented by agents.

Here, it is important to differentiate between the causal consensus and logical consistency that happen when agents draw upon the properties of the symbolic sphere. Causal consensus is

the imposition from an agent (or agents) upon others to legitimize, manipulate or argument. Causal consensus tends to expose how the symbolic sphere is linked to power relations and the way it can be used to influence others. The logical consistency of the symbolic sphere on the other hand emphasizes the autonomy of the cultural realm (cultural systems). It shows how culture is autonomous and independent. This shows how it is linked but independent on agents depending on whether or not they drawn upon its elements. In Archer's words, "causal relationships are contingent...whereas logical relationship *do* obtain, and when internally and necessarily related they constitute cultural emergent properties" (Archer 2011: 179).

4.2.3 Agential (People's) Emergent Properties

The arguments presented throughout the present chapter work on the premise that individual agents are the lowest form of components in the hierarchy of agents with emergent properties. The agents' capability of doing things as well as their capacity to refrain from taking any course of action are the emergent properties that agency entails. It also implies that agents, at any given moment in time could have done otherwise regardless of the socio-historical context they were located at and the course of action that was taken.

The agential emergent properties of an individual rests on the agency inherent to human beings (Archer 2009). The agents' capability to act depending on the structural and cultural properties that condition their action lie in turn on the ability to adjust the temporal dimensions of agency. Emirbayer and Mische (1998) expressed this idea with their concept of chordal triad of agency.

The chordal triad of agency is composed of three temporal dimensions: the 1) iterational element which is the "the selective reactivation by actors of past patterns of thought and action, as routinely incorporated in practical activity, thereby giving stability and order to social universes

and helping to sustain identities, interactions, and institutions over time”, the 2) projective element defined as “the imaginative generation by actors of possible future trajectories of action, in which received structures of thought and action may be creatively reconfigured in relation to actors’ hopes, fears, and desires for the future” and the 3) practical-evaluative element which is “the capacity of actors to make practical and normative judgments among alternative possible trajectories of action, in response to the emerging demands, dilemmas, and ambiguities of presently evolving situations” (Emirbayer and Mische 1998:971).

Agents have the ability to adapt and adjust their courses of action precisely because agency is simultaneously constituted of the three temporal elements. Agents are able to express and manifest their courses of action by drawing on the structural and cultural conditions that precede their actions. The structural emergent properties of the materialistic dimension of structure and the cultural emergent properties of the idealistic dimension of cultures are summoned and used by agents in order to manifest the agential emergent properties inherent to agency.

The ability to use SEP’s and CEP’s to express agential emergent properties are also evident on the relational patterns between agents. As Archer said, “agential relations themselves represent emergent powers...that is they modify the capacities of component members (affecting their consciousness and commitments, affinities and animosities) and exert causal powers proper to their relations themselves vis-à-vis other agents or their groupings (such as association, organization, opposition and articulation of interests)” (Archer 2011:184).

The structural elaboration or reproduction that follows the socio-cultural interactions of agents with agential emergent properties largely depend upon the capability of the agent to modify and exert its causal powers. Agents are able to take calculated actions towards a set of goals or projects, that go along with the conditions that were partially imposed by the materialistic and idealistic dimension of social structure.

It must be stressed that the structural and cultural emergent properties of structure and higher-level agents “do not exist or operate independently” from lower-level agents; “they overlap, intertwine and are mutually influential” (Archer 2011:180). By having determined the different emergent properties that arise from the materialistic and individualistic dimension of structure, it is now possible to see how they interact with the agential emergent properties of individuals.

The three types of properties and the realms they derive from, are intrinsically intertwined. The analytical necessity and usefulness of this separation made between the two types of emergent properties possessed by structure and the emergent properties of agents, is that it makes it possible to analyze the interplay between them.

It is only here that the types of agents can be elaborated. As it has already been pointed out, agency as the capability of doing things is an emergent property that is not exclusive of individuals. Collectives (aggregation of individuals) and organizations (large-scale rigid structural patterns of interaction) also possess agency. The types of agents are now apparent and can be categorized in the following typology:

1. Individual agents
2. Collective agents
3. Organizational agents

Individual agents are the easiest type to grasp intuitively. Individuals (as well as the other types of agents for that matter) have the emergent properties that were outlined above. They are the lowest-level components of the social world while having emergent properties of their own.

These emergent properties are the ability that an individual possesses to adjust the courses of action and the interaction with other agents depending on the socio-historical context they are

located in. It also refers to the ability to draw upon and be conditioned by the material and symbolic structures that exist at the time the action is being done. The temporal dimensions of their agency based on the routinized patterns of past structures, the present situation that emerged as the results of contingent conditions, and the ability to project future oriented goals and plan courses of action to achieve it; are all part of the elements that allow the individual agent to express its emergent properties.

Before making a further elaboration of the emergent properties of individual agents, it is first necessary to elaborate on the characteristics of collective and organizational agents to understand how the relations between agents and emergent properties interact within and between themselves.

Archer has differentiated between two types of agency that change form and activate temporal sequences that may cause the transformation or reproduction of structures depending on the configurations of the structures that precede the agents' action. Primary agency, is the characterized by the relatively flexible bonds between the components of the agent.

Primary agency is therefore a characteristic form of agency for collective agents. Within the context of violence, collective agents are characterized by the spontaneous, face-to-face *collective* violence that is a property beyond the sum of its parts. Unlike organizational agents, collective agents tend to rely more on the symbolic domain of structures to activate morphogenetic and morphostatic cycles of violence. The primary agency of collective agents is “inarticulate in their demands and unorganized for their pursuit, in which case they only exert the aggregate effects of those similarly placed who co-act in similar ways given the similarity of their circumstances” (Archer 2009:11). Collectivities have also been elaborated in detail by Domingues (1995, 2016). The nature of collectivities and therefore, collective agents and the emergent properties they have differ depending on the way its components are configured. In order to implicitly illustrate this point, Domingues offers the following typology of collectivities:

1. Network (components without intention)
2. Categories (classes, gender, races, etc.)
3. Groups (peer groups, close friendships, community neighbors, etc.)
4. Encounters (face-to-face centers and events of interaction)
5. Social movements (loosely organized groupings such as political parties, associations or unions)
6. Organizations (the highest level of social system capable of developing intentionality)
7. Society (a form of total social systems)

(Domingues 1995:155)

Domingues however, fails to differentiate between collective agents and organizational agents. These two types of agents possess different types of agency and rely on a different dimension of structure and its emergent properties. It must be stressed that the capability and reliance of the collective and organizational agents to draw on specific dimensions of structure is not exclusive. In simpler words, while collective agents tend to be more conditioned by the symbolic domain of structure, they can also be conditioned by the materialistic dimension of structure that influences organizational agents and vice versa.

This is because there is a necessity to categorize and elaborate different ways violence is done by a group of individuals. Modern and postmodern genocides represent this difference: the former is carried out through rigid materialistic structural conditions, while the latter is carried out in a spontaneous face-to-face setting. Collective agents for example, tend to encompass “a peculiar, cultural-symbolic, dimension” (Fernandes qtd. in Domingues 2016:7). Organizational agents on the other hand, because of their modern nature tend to “seek out order, to build boundaries,

practical and symbolic, of membership and exclusion” (Domingues 2016:137) and “are habitually defined by the quality of having explicitly stated goals” (Domingues 1995:117).

The argument being developed in this chapter therefore, advocates the view that organizations and societies tend to have more characteristics and properties of organizational agents and corporate agency. Although the emergent properties of organizational structures and the corporate agency that compose it are not exclusively of this specific form composition of the parts, the categorization proves to be useful when studying complex social situations of violence.

Primary agency entails the possibility of developing into corporate agency. Thus, depending on the way individual and collective agents’ relation and interactions are organized, they can develop to compose organizational agents as well. This possibility of developing into a higher-level agent comes with the “emergent powers of promotive organization and articulation of interests (such that they become party to negotiated societal transformations) [that] depends jointly on the conditional influences of SEPs [and CEPs] and how these mesh with social factors influencing the cohesion possible within collectivities” (Archer 2011:185).

Corporate agency, has the capability to transform “itself in pursuing social transformation [or reproduction]. Primarily it does this, in the course of its struggles, by inducing the elaboration of the institutional role structure. New roles are created, and these constitute new positions in which more people can willingly invest themselves” (Archer 2009:11).

Structure (material and symbolic dimensions) has emergent properties of its own and depending on the way it is configured it can cause morphogenetic or morphostatic cycles (Archer 2009:11). Therefore, the various types of agents are able to reconfigure their form depending on the relation and interactions of the components that give rise to the emergent properties.

Furthermore, the way higher-level agents’ emergent properties are intertwined and interplay

with the emergent properties of individual agents can be better understood with the concepts of superstructuration and intrastructuration developed by Roy Bhaskar (2008). Superstructuration and intrastructuration convey the idea that emergence “consists in the formation of one or other of two types of superstructure...namely, by the superimposition (Model A) or intraposition (Model B) of the emergent level *on* or *within* [italics in original] the pre-existing on” (Bhaskar 2008:49).

In this way, the emergent properties of a structure in its material and virtual dimension can be viewed as the unintended consequences of action that stretched out in time and space but the emergent properties of structure that influence and are embodied by lower-level agents can also be expressed with the processes described as structures that are superimposed or intrainposed upon agents and structures:

Super- or intra-structures may be formed on or within in. the totality, at least partially constituted by its geo-historical formation and context, is in open process, intrinsically and extrinsically, so that its form, elements and effects will be continuously *configurationally changing* [italics in original].

(Bhaskar 2008:127)

Regarding the difference between collective and organizational agents and their respective emergent properties, it is never about the number of individual that compose said types of agents. The important aspects are the intrinsic qualities that determine and condition the relation between the parts that compose said agents. This in turn will give rise to emergent properties that are very different from those that would have been developed if the components were configured in a different way. A medium-scale bureaucratic organization will have very different emergent

properties from those of a casual mob that is composed with the same number of individuals of those of the bureaucratic organization.

All the types of agents have emergent properties of their own but can also at the same time be the components within a level that give rise to emergent properties at a higher-level. In this sense, Archer's of structure (the materialistic domain) and culture (the symbolic domain) as having emergent properties of their own is on point. By the same token, structural violence – which is composed of both the materialistic and idealistic dimensions of structure–, while being a social phenomenon that apparently seems to be something completely different and detached from lower-level agents, is in fact both the result of actions and interactions of lower level components that gave rise to its characteristic emergent properties.

The perpetrator-less aspect of structural violence is, in other words, an emergent property of the materialistic and idealistic elaboration of agents that act and interact in lower levels. It is a result that is conceived by a specific form of relations among the components of high-level emergent properties but is at the same time a structural elaboration that is more than just the sum of its aggregate parts.

4.3 Complex Social Situations of Violence

Complex social situations of violence are the events and social processes in which there is violence but in which it is difficult to clearly allocate accountability. It has the properties of both, evil as a social action (individual violence) and structural violence. The interplay that occurs between the agents themselves and between structure makes it nearly impossible to analyze where the violence as an emergent property originated.

The temporal sequence of morphogenetic and morphostatic cycles entail the idea that regardless of the transformation and reproduction that occurs in the structures of society and how

it conditions the agents' actions, the results ends up being a picture of a highly intertwined entanglement of interplays between the types of agents and the different types of emergent properties. The examples below will illustrate this idea.

4.3.1 Interchangeability and Cycles of Violence

Cycles of violence can take two forms: the repetition of previous forms of violence or an elaborated new manifestation of violence. According to a report released by the World Bank, 90% of the civil wars of the last decade occurred in countries that had already experienced a civil war in the last 30 years (World Development Report 2011 cited in Marc 2014).

This case illustrates how complex social situations of violence can undergo through morphostatic processes that end up reproducing previous forms of violence. Even when there are morphogenetic processes that cause the apparently superficial transformation of structure, violence changes its form to manifest itself in another way. It is no secret that some 'peaceful' interventions and humanitarian aids end up reproducing patterns of violence *precisely because* of the morphogenetic cycle that changed by the structural patterns that suppressed the manifestations of violence.

The interchangeability of violence can also be observed with the way how certain areas are simultaneously affected by weak governance, conflicts and political instability (Marc 2014). Organized crime in Latin-America, is known for infiltrating sectors of the civil society that were traditionally out of their reach.

Repeated cycles of violence and the interchangeability of the forms of violence illustrates how morphogenetic and morphostatic cycles can give rise to structures that transform and/or reproduce violence. The transformation and reproduction of violence can also manifest itself in a different form and infiltrate spaces of the social world that were not previously affected.

4.3.2 Corporate Cases

Corporations pose a challenge in the sense that it is not only extremely difficult to allocate accountability, but the way it is allocated highly depends on the social context in which the allocation occurs. The financial crisis of 2008 exposed this issue when investment banks in the United States were offered a bailout while their counterparts in Iceland were being sent to jail for their role in causing the financial crises.

The allocation of accountability within the components of the organizational agents can be extremely problematic and contradictory even within the same social environment. Former TEPCO executives are facing trial (as of 2017) because of professional negligence during the meltdown of the Fukushima nuclear disaster. Dentsu on the other hand, was only fined 500,000 yen for the suicide of a young worker that was caused by excessive overtime. So what makes it possible to downgrade the allocation of accountability from organizational to individual agents?

The point of these examples illustrate is that the emergent properties of higher-level agents and the complex interaction between its components can give rise to different allocations of accountability.

4.3.3 Structural Violence as the Unintended Consequences of Action

The example provided by Ermolaeva and Ross (2011) of the unintended consequences of the policies implemented to crack down on illegal immigration in the United States show how well intended actions and plans can ultimately cause more damage than what it was originally anticipated.

There were several measures that were taken to stop the illegal immigration from Mexico and other parts of Latin America. Some of these measures included the strategic relocation of

border patrols to stop illegal immigration in designated point of entry. The unintended consequences of these actions were that the people attempting to cross the border were now forced to take dangerous paths, which in turn increased the death toll of illegal immigrants that attempted it.

Another unintended consequence was the increase in use of illicit services provided by Mexican drug cartels to cross the border. The increase in the income of organized crime was reflected in other social issues such as gambling that affected populations near the border (Ermolaeva and Ross 2011:72).

The unintended consequences of actions serve as a reminder to show how events and social processes can stretch out in time and space to produce violent results that were not originally intended.

4.3.4 The Problem of Accountability

Complex social situations of violence are characterized with having elements of both, structural violence and evil as a social action. What this means is that violence in these situations is both agency-driven and perpetrator-less. The matter becomes even more complex when the types of agents, the emergent properties of structure and agency and the different manifestations of violence are taken into consideration. Large scale atrocities and the concepts of accountability and reconciliation can help understand what are some of the implications of the arguments developed throughout this dissertation.

The paths that can be taken to tackle the issue of accountability works on two fronts. The first one is related to the punishment of the accountable agents. The second one advances on the possibilities of reconciliation of the parties involved in the complex social situations of violence.

The examples given in section 4.3.2 illustrate the positions that can arise in regard to the

conception of what agents are to be held accountable and in what way. For example, business ethics shows the same positions that can be applied to when allocating accountability in complex social situations of violence. There are those that argue that the employees should be held accountable for the harm done on behalf of the corporation they are members of, while others advocate for only punishing the corporation (Wilkins 2001:92). In large-scale atrocities this is translated into the problem of considering which type of agents should be held accountable (individual, collective or organizational) and for which dimension (structural or agentic).

The proposed answer is that it depends on what wants to be accomplished and also on the nature of the agents involved in the complex situations of violence. The dimension in which the violence occurred, in other words the interplay of the different manifestations of violence, reflect the issue and belief “in the influence of cultural and historical factors on human being and their behavior...[but also] believe that the actor has a choice, or, if he didn’t really have a choice when he committed the act, that once he [or someone else] recognizes the consequences of his acts...he *then* [italics in original] has a choice” (Lamb 2009:2).

The problem that arises from the division that exists between the two positions has been summarized and solved by Vetlesen with a dualistic approach:

Normatively speaking: evil-doing...is something for which the individual agent must be held accountable. Modern law is premised on this very principle –and rightly so. But on an empirical-psychological level, their accounts of how the most severe forms of injustice actually happen suffer for lack of combining an individual-oriented approach with a collective-oriented one.

(Vetlesen 2005:260)

Evil, as an individual agency-driven social action sort of facilitates the issue of accountability at the individual level, that is, whenever it is autonomous. Nonautonomous evil present other problems because it goes back to the debate of what is the agents that should be held accountable; individual, collective or organizational?

It must be remembered that a process of double dehumanization is characteristic for most types of collective violence. Both modern and postmodern genocidal logic “subscribe to a notion of agency as collective and, by implication, to the idea of collective guilt. Individuality is obliterated within the in-group as well as within the targeted group: the killing is not an interaction between unique individuals but instead what a member of one group does (executes) to a member of another”. (Vetlesen 2005:260).

Nonautonomous evil dissipates the accountability of individual agents that are the components of the emergent properties of collective and organizational agents. Once again, Vetlesen offers a misleading hint as to what is the solution in cases like this. According to Vetlesen, “when confronted with collectivization of agency, with collectivistic allocations of guilt, law has one principal task: *to disaggregate agency, to strip it down to the individual level where it belongs and where it arises in the first place* [italics in original]” (Vetlesen 2005:264).

It must be pointed out that the stripping accountability down to the individual level is appropriate provided that it is done within the framework of a dualistic allocation of accountability that tackles higher-level agents as well. Vetlesen is half right in pointing out the importance of identifying individual agents to solve the issue of accountability but in the process fails to recognize the importance of high-level agents such as collectives and organizations.

The other available path to tackle the issue of accountability lies in the possibilities of reconciliation between the parties involved in complex situations of violence. Here, it is important first to identify the emergent properties that arise in the victims and perpetrators as individual

agents that had their actions conditions by previous structures of violence.

In such cases, victims possess what Claudia Card (2006) calls the two types of moral powers: negative and positive. Negative power refers to blame which is related to “attitudes of condemnation and resentment” and it invokes “guilt and associated senses of obligation in those blamed” (Card 2006:167), while positive power refers to forgiveness, and it can “relieve burdens that may not be morally relievable in other ways” (Card 2006:167).

Perpetrators on the other hand, possess what is referred to as moral burdens and obligations. What this means is the “burdens of guilt but also those imposed by gratitude for such things as forgiveness and mercy from victims” (Card 2006:167). As it what explained with the arguments related to the types of agents and emergence, the emergent properties of the victims and the perpetrators are inextricably linked: one cannot be accomplished without the other.

The point of merging these two properties of the victims’ and perpetrators’ is that part tends to focus on a different element of the violence that occurred. This focus will provide a way for renewed and improved ways of interacting and reconciling, something that Rigby has termed a culture of reconciliation (Rigby 2001). The culture of reconciliation, is a long-term morphogenetic process that requires the active involvement of the agents. The involvement of the agents works at the lower-level components and high-level agents that are configured by the actions and interactions of its parts. Rigby’s culture of reconciliation therefore, is constituted of the following two elements:

1. The necessary conditions for reconciliation between formerly antagonistic parties can only be realized over time. Moving beyond the divisions of the past is a multidimensional process that can take generations, and the different constitutive elements involved in the journey toward reconciliation can rarely be pursued all at the

same time.

2. In the efforts to promote reconciliations it is crucial that the process should not be confined to a narrow strata of society. The different dimensions and values that together contribute to any healing process must be deepened and broadened to encompass all levels of society...

(Rigby 2001:183)

A third role becomes apparent at this point: the bystanders'. Agency as the capability of doing things, implies that regardless of the course of action that what taken, agents at any moment could have done otherwise not at all. It depends on the case, but both aspects of the agential emergent properties of bystanders work as a double-edged sword. An active involvement for example, can work as a force that elaborate complex social situations of violence for the better, "to become active requires that people focus their attention on a problem, so that their values or feelings of empathy [the animal pity of men] are activated" (Staub 2013:387). But being an active bystander can also give rise to different manifestations of violence and activate repeated cycles as it is the case with failed military and humanitarian interventions. From the same token, not a passive bystander can either contribute to the structural elaboration or reproduction of violence depending on the case.

As Staub has pointed out, reconciliation means "mutual acceptance [between the parties involved in the situations of violence], both parties [victim and perpetrator] letting go of anger and coming to accept the other party more" (Staub 2013:471). In order for it to be successful, the social mechanisms that underlie violence should be understood to address the different issues that arise from its different manifestations while simultaneously promoting the active involvement of the parties to seek an appropriate solution.

5. Conclusion

The present dissertation aimed in accomplishing two tasks. The first one was to explore and uncover in what ways violence was connected at the individual and structural level. It was argued throughout the whole dissertation that the different manifestations of violence were indeed connected which made possible an analysis of its interplay by applying sociological theories and concepts. The key issue was to connect both the structural and individual dimensions of violence without jeopardizing or excluding the emergent properties that characterized them.

In order to accomplish this, it was necessary to examine and reformulate some premises that influenced the way violence was defined. Chapter 2 elaborated a structural conception of violence to explore how the virtual and material dimensions of structure elaborated the way violence manifested itself. Sociological theories and concepts of structure and action were applied to account for the characteristics and interaction that occurs between the dimensions of violence at the structural and individual level. This in turn, gave rise to the need of analyzing the role of agency and social actions with more scrutiny.

Chapter 3 approached the matter of evil as a social action to overcome problems that the traditional conception of personal violence could not do. The social mechanisms that underlie unintentional and intentional evil were elaborated to analyze what were the implications of the social action as a form of harming others. As with chapter 2, chapter 3 also developed the arguments to not exclude the emergent properties of structure and therefore, the interplay that occurs between the different manifestations of violence.

The second task which the present dissertation aimed in fulfilling, was to determine what were the social mechanisms and processes that gave rise to the problem of accountability. In complex social situations of violence, where violence is both agency-driven and perpetrator-less, it becomes extremely difficult to determine who is to blame.

Chapter 4 attempted in shedding light to these issues by introducing the concepts of emergence and exploring the different types of agents and emergent properties of violence that were elaborated and reproduced through social mechanisms and processes. Concepts that clarified the different types of emerging properties and the types of agents and its respective components were developed to shed light on the processes that gave rise to the issues that surround complex situations of violence.

It became a titanic task to attempt in analyzing the allocation of accountability. The issue was explored on two fronts: punishment and reconciliation. The conclusion with the former was to approach the violence and perpetrators from a dualistic solution that includes the structural and individual dimension of violence while taking into consideration how agents overlapped and interact at different level.

On the second possible approach to the issue of accountability Claudia Card's (2006) suggestion of utilizing the moral power of victims and the interplay it has with the moral burden and obligation of perpetrators was outlined to suggest a possible course of action regarding the future interaction of the parties involved in complex social situations of violence. This laid the foundations for Andrew Rigby's idea of culture of reconciliation.

The theories and arguments presented and developed in this dissertation were merely enough to explore and expose some of the social processes and mechanisms that underlie the complex interplay between the structural and individual dimensions of violence. There is still much to explore in regards of the implications that these processes and mechanisms have in the allocation of accountability of complex social situations of violence.

In short, it necessary to keep exploring structural violence and evil as a social action to understand its implications on the relationship between perpetrators, victims and bystanders while clarifying the ways punishment and reconciliation can be achieved under the issue of

accountability.

It may be the case that further attempts in analyzing the interplay between the different manifestations of violence and the types of agents as well as the development of a theory that tackles the problem of accountability are necessary. The present dissertation will hopefully serve as the basis for future research that attempts to solve the issues that remain unresolved.

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