

Abstract

I decided to devote my thesis to an reinterpretation of the evil on the basis of aesthetic theories and selected artistic objects, mainly contemporary artwork. I accepted as my criterion how they illustrate the problem of evil; more specifically, I use works whose creators, in my opinion, interpret it like me. The final part of the thesis is devoted to a discussion of my own works, which are intended to complement the theoretical analysis visually.

Evil is by no means an unambiguous term. It was defined differently in antiquity, when it was not shown in a single personified form, and in early Christian times, the Middle Ages and later, when evil was symbolized by the devil with his numerous helpers, demons. I decided to use the most concise definition, namely of evil being a lack of good. The first chapter of the thesis, titled *Evil: ethics and aesthetics*, is devoted to this issue.

An important part of my thesis is a discussion of historiosophical theories in which evil is identified with an imposed system, with forcing standards and imposing legal principles. Therefore, I also see a particular form of evil in the relationships of present giants of market economy with individuals. Today's oppressive ideas of socio-economic corporatism greatly contribute to the increasing indifference of people to their co-existence with others. This is the subject of the second chapter, *Art and corporatism and consumerism*.

Evil identified with contemporary slavery of consumerism inspires many exceptional artists. In order to discuss their works a context is necessary, which is why I draw attention to first ads and new rules of visualization resulting from the information being subordinated to informative, mainly persuasive function.

In the third chapter, entitled *Fascinated with evil: analysis of ways of visualizing evil, based on selected examples*, I refer to the most important artists of the 21st century, namely those who have focused on the impact of the system of corporations on human life.

It is to be noted that it was not during the World War II, but in the age of Enlightenment that the ideas associated with evil were re-evaluated, which resulted mainly from socio-economic events related to the French Revolution. The World War II was simply its postponed consequence.

My sculptural works relate to consumption indirectly, because they consist of the logos of the corporations which I found to be the most aggressive, interfering in my life. They were created on the basis of corporate logos that I recognized as the most deeply grounded in my head, both in the subconscious and consciousness. The first logo, which was the beginning of the whole project, was the logo of Coca-Cola, in my childhood in the communist era associated by me with a sense of freedom. This sculpture led to further searches. I dismembered other flat logotypes, changing them within the scope of their original shape, but doing it always in such a way as not to add other elements, while at the same time make them spatial. Whether static and simple or dynamic and more predatory, they refer to the content of the graphic sign forming their basis. Although they are far from the original signs, I tried to make the recipient encountering them have the impression that he faces something known, while at the same time being no longer able to recognize a specific brand.

These modern hybrids have some features of mammals, some of dinosaurs; maybe they are even cyborgs or robots. This searing critique of consumerism does not mean, however, that I expect myself or the society to renounce the achievements of this world. My sculptures are only meant to direct the recipient's attention to the unequal distribution of material goods obtained through the use of world resources. I hope that when we are aware of this injustice, we may not lose our humanity when becoming consumers.

Promotor:

dr hab. Karolina Komasa prof. UAP

Promotor pomocniczy:

dr Jarosław Bogucki

Recenzenci:

prof. Christos Mandzios

dr hab. Robert Kaja

Poznań 2019

