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If it has any hoped-for outcome which it serves. Even a spiritual outcome such as *redemption or salvation, mourning*, compromises its purity. Forgiveness is not normal for Derrida—it must function *as if* it interrupted ordinary temporal historicity. Formal, merciless description: "forgiveness forgives only the unforgivable."

There is no moral mandate, "one should forgive," for Derrida. One should never forgive. Forgiveness is a phenomenon that "happens anyway." In this sense it precedes morality. Effort by the forgiven to avoid the return of evil enters forgiveness into the economic sphere. It compromises its purity.

Andrea Dworkin does not clearly believe that economic forgiveness, of the repentant, is possible. It is not clear that she believes that unconditional forgiveness of the guilty is desirable.

I avoid forgiving B because I want to avoid making his abandonment intelligible by acknowledging the extent of my wrongdoing. My wrongdoing would possibly make his abandonment conceivable, even if he really loved or loves me. I don't want to forgive B, because it would require admitting that he loved me, which would make the reality and evitability of his abandonment of me hurt more, and be more tragic.

Hannah Arendt says that punishment and forgiveness both bring an end to an otherwise interminable thing. She believes that people cannot forgive what they cannot punish, and cannot evaluate. Thus, we can't punish the unforgivable, because we can't evaluate it as unforgivable. Evaluating something as unforgivable cannot but be a form of punishing—punishing equally either the action or the actor. And yet, if we could punish it, we could forgive it, and thus it would not be unforgivable. We cannot forgive the unforgivable, because in not being able to evaluate or punish it, neither can we forgive it.

Against the idea that forgiveness becomes meaningless in the face of the irreparable ("out of proportion to all human measure"), Derrida says the very history of forgiveness begins in the unforgivable. It is like original sin, if original sin means that we have committed a wrongdoing that is unforgivable and which we cannot hope to repent of, fully. But the unforgivability of this radical evil, for Derrida, does not open a horizon onto Christian redeemability. He seeks to think forgiveness beyond the horizon of redemption. It is forgiveness that spills open into an abyss.

It seems easier to forgive someone who is not unforgivable. Rape is more of a violation when perpetrated by one we love, or *in and through* love. An unloved rapist harms us in a topical, "physical" sense only. We can forgive rape, only when it is unforgivable. Rape is only unforgivable when it is the beloved who rapes us. But if they rape us—how are they the beloved? If you repent, how can I forgive you? You are no longer the unrepentant you, who needed forgiveness. If you have raped me, it means I must have loved you. But you cannot have raped me, or else I would not love you. But if I did not love you, then there would be a clear horizon to the intelligible harm in rape, and rape would not be radically evil—a state of affairs unlikely to satisfy Andrea Dworkin.

Thus, not just "all sex is rape," but *only that sex to which we consent to*, is rape. An unloved rapist

harms my body, topically, finitely, and hence in a way I can forgive. The loved rapist harms me more profoundly, and unendingly. The profundity of this pain makes us greater. But it would be unbearable, and would kill us, without the topical foil, to render it intelligible. We pretend the loved rapist is not a "real" rapist, in order to make reality survivable. Unconditional forgiveness relies on the conditional for its intelligibility, and conditional forgiveness relies on the unconditional for its movement.

In Abrahamic religion, we repent "because" the unconditional forgiveness of God is, itself, what condemns us.

The radical purity of forgiveness is both necessary and excessive, hyperbolic, insane. Its radical hyperbole makes it not (just) impossible but the *only* thing that truly "arrives" in the sense of interrupting the ordinary course of history. It is outside law and politics. It originates outside them and it cannot be their foundation.

If secular forgiveness—the cosmopolitan goal of international law—remains Christian, as Derrida says, that is bad for Christianity. Getting rape recognized as a violation of human rights is an extremely limited, unambitious goal. Even an attempt to bring about a messianic promise, or a supreme good, would be considered conditional, and not directly engaging forgiveness. But what is the messianic promise without this unconditional forgiveness, a forgiveness which makes us human? Derrida unravels it. We can only understand it as a failure, or else must understand ourselves as a failure to be more-than-human.

Forgiving for the sake of survival may be necessary but makes pure forgiveness impossible.

New love is a violation of fidelity to B. It is possible that only a new love could make surviving to understand the violation of B's abandonment possible. Which is all that makes his abandonment forgivable, because I would not be able to understand his abandonment as a loss unless I survive. And if I understand it as loss it is unforgivable.

he loved me.

After murder, forgiveness is impossible. The forgiver is dead. People who loved the victim may represent the victim, but only mediately. They cannot forgive.

Some *desire* an Other to be unforgivably bad so that they can become good, in forgiving them. It is an insane desire for one's own victimization, but does it not arguably motivate some?

If B is never going to forgive me, that is unforgivable, because I am going to strive forever to become worthy of forgiveness. I would only strive forever given the possibility he is good enough to be justified in not forgiving me. Only B's unforgivability would allow me to unconditionally forgive. This would not require that I be worthy of forgiveness, but only that I forgive.

Forgiving the rapist allows us to forgive consent.

*Only if rape is unforgivable, and hence forgivable,
can we conceive of the harm done in consensual sex as conceivably forgivable.*

Without that, we have no touchstone

(as Kant had no touchstone in experience for the a priori)

from which to come close to understanding consensual sex as violation.

It is only because rape is forgivable that consensual sex as lesser rape is.

Forgiving consent lets us make forgiveness of rapists intelligible. Absent the former as conditional forgiveness, forgiving a rapist would not be legible. It would be only a "pure," personal forgiveness outside language.

Forgiving consensual sex, from woman to man.

I forgive you for obtaining consent and thereby coercing me.

Forgiving consent, from man to woman.

I forgive you for consenting, and thereby making me a rapist.

If it harms B irreparably to forgive me, then I could not forgive him for forgiving me.
I could not forgive him for loving me.

If he loves me, his abandoning me is unforgivable.

If he loves me, he might risk a harmful forgiveness.

But if he loves me, he will not let himself come to harm by forgiving me,

Depriving the world of himself, who I love.

Letting myself hurt myself by not forgiving him (and acting out of despair) means I betray him—
But forgiving him seems to mean I love him enough to harm myself (via the loss of him) or that he is not worthy of love (in which case the loss is not a harm).

Letting myself risk hurting myself by not forgiving him (and acting to remedy the harm) risks betraying him, and betrays him by not forgiving him, but is perhaps an unconditional that would make forgiveness possible. If I am hurt in such a way that the world loses me, then B is unforgivable. But if I am hurt in such a way that the world loses me, it will have been for the sake of a love that was not unconditional, and hence was not worthy of sacrifice—and hence I will be the mistaken one, harming those who do love me, by sacrificing myself to counterfeit love. Thus I will be unforgivable.

A refusal to harm myself out of fidelity to B would involve a refusal to forgive him his abandonment and thus a refusal to accept the loss of him. A refusal to harm myself in fidelity to him leads via forgiveness to a refusal to love him.

I love him, so I refuse to harm myself by loving him.

I refuse a harm, which is why I do not love, if it is unrequited—for that would be a harm.

I recall other harms, such as a bad relationship,
which his harm of abandonment sought to evade.

I refrain from evaluating these potential harms as "greater" harm—I forget them—
so that he may be unforgivable, (perhaps on behalf of his child, which we never had),
so I may forgive him.

But one cannot be asked to repent of *harming a person* who never was even conceived.
So perhaps only the child of another, a child ***whophysicallydied*** in part because I loved B ,
could demand accountability *insuchawaythatB wouldbe* unforgivable.

I cannot forgive on behalf of this child.

B is unforgivable, ***andonlynowcouldI*** unconditionally forgive him.

But in that case *thelossisreal*. Where the harms of our bad relationship are handled agnostically, and are not evaluated as greater than the harm which B caused by abandonment, he harms a love,

which was valuable, and he harms the child of an Other's love, incalculably valuable. No bad relationship could be more harmful than death. Only B's causing the death of a child, without knowing it (and he cannot know it even if I tell him), could ensure that any bad relationship is preferable. Only a child, who was never able to know that B caused his or her death, could unconditionally forgive B. Only this is unforgivable; only here I—ghost / mother / of mother / of ghost—am able to approach a remote horizon of forgiveness. But arriving is impossible.

If the loss of the love of B is real,
Forgiving B would harm my ability to love myself
by giving myself what I desire, which is him
by harming my ability not to hurt myself
by refusing to love

(If I refuse to love you then the loss is not real).
(If I refuse to love you then the loss is not real).

And harming myself (harming an unborn child) harms my ability to love B
Because if I loved him I would not make his harm unforgivable
In this harm. And if my ability to love him is harmed,
Then so is **the** reality of loss.
But I cannot refuse **the** reality of loss in the death of my child who was conceived and unborn

My own personal *refusal to die* of loss preserves *the love and the loss*.
But in **the death of my child**, which *is unforgivable*, we preserve *only the loss*.
There is no love, after **the loss of death**. There is *only an unforgivable*.

If I die to end **the** loss of love,
a loss which consists *insuffering*,

I will also lose **the** reality *of a love*,
whose reality will not
abandon us to death.

If **the** Other is intimate enough with me to risk not only their own death, but my death, without overstepping an ethical boundary, then the love is real, and the loss is real. It is only if the love and loss are real that my death is risked in a forgivable way. Love and loss need not both be real for my death to be unforgivable.

Refusing to end *the relationship* preserves
the love but also the harm in it.
Ending **the** relationship ends *some harm* but it also harms the reality of love.
Ending **the** relationship also creates *a new harm* of loss beyond the *first harm*,
of bad love.
Ending **the** relationship creates the possibility of *not ending* the relationship,
by ending **the** harm and witnessing
the love *that is preserved*
perverted

The love that is preserved is redemptive only

if it is not unconditional.
Predicating the love *on any condition* makes it conditional love.

Unconditional	love must be (and cannot be)	redemptive.
Redemptive	love can be and must not be	unconditional
	must be and must not be	

Redemptive love is conditional and non-redemptive
No forgiveness is absolutely redemptive.
No real redemption is conditional.
No truly loving forgiveness is unconditional.
No unconditional forgiveness is forgiveness
No conditional forgiveness is forgiveness
No unconditional forgiveness is unforgivable
No conditional forgiveness is forgivable
No conditional forgiveness is unforgivable.

Seeking pure forgiveness demarcates a relationship consisting of the unforgivable.

Abandoning me traps me

We cannot forgive without a common language, but forgiveness that makes itself intelligible creates a third party.

Forgiveness is thus mad. It must plunge, but lucidly, into the night of the unintelligible. (49)

For forgiveness "it is necessary that at the most intimate of that intimacy an absolute hatred would come to interrupt the peace." This would be radical evil, but it is also the only thing that makes the *question* of forgiveness emerge, because only radical evil is unforgivable.

Radical evil aims at the face of the Other.

*A finalized forgiveness is not forgiveness;
it is only a political strategy or psycho-therapeutic economy. (50)*

The ghost of B's child, who was never conceived,
Harms the ghost child of new love who died
because conceived.

THE DEAD GHOST MAY FORGIVE AN UNCONCEIVED GHOST;
only if all other things are irreparable.

<i>Even</i> then, it is only	<i>potential.</i>
<i>Even</i> then, the unconceived is	<i>potential.</i>
<i>Even</i>	<i>potential</i>
<i>Potential</i> conceives	<i>potential</i>
Unconceived	<i>potential</i> conceives

potential

In the dead

potential Not irreparable

The ghost cannot forgiv

I may be reconciled to my fate for the sake of survival
Without forgiving its conditions
Pure and impure forgiveness
are irreducible to one another
and they are indissociable
In order to change the law (inflect it)
we must refer to a hyperbolic ideal (of forgiveness)

B needed purity which made him unforgivable.
It makes him forgivable
if he includes me as an object of purity. Including me makes him non-forgivable.

A man also becomes unforgivable if a need for purity consists in pedophilia.

a ,men

| Trust can be broken
| Virginity can only
| Be lost once and it
| Is not an object,
| Define it as violated
«|when prohibiting
|themselves from taking

IT

Including me in the category of purity is forgivable only if I am Good
Pedophilia is only forgivable when arising out of the love of life,
Not the fear of death.
Since fear of death needs to be overcome for life to be livable, pedophilia becomes

un
forgivable/givable.

Children are the only appropriate pedophiles.
Only adult pedophiles are forgivable because only adult pedophilia is unforgivable.
Children love children if they love life.
Men love children when they fear death.

Only the weak may be punished, by the powerful, for crimes against humanity.
Only children, may be punished, by adults—irreducible injustice

*The sovereign is jealous of their own sovereignty
And B is jealous
I cannot forgive him
as he does me*

Death penalty is never justly imposed if it can only be imposed
by powerful nations on the weak ones;
Even when punishing crimes against humanity.

The imprescriptable *signals toward the transcendent order
of the unconditional.* (53)

Crimes against humanity of this power and my powerlessness
Crimes against humanity of my self-harm, making
it a crime to abandon me.

Absolute legislative condemnation can coexist with forgiveness.
Acquittal and amnesty can coexist with the unforgiven.

IMAGINE A VICTIM OF TERRORISM, A PERSON WHOSE CHILDREN HAVE BEEN
DEPORTED OR HAD THEIR THROATS CUT, OR ANOTHER WHOSE FAMILY WAS
KILLED IN A DEATH OVEN. WHETHER SHE SAYS 'I FORGIVE' OR 'I DO NOT
FORGIVE', IN EITHER CASE I AM NOT SURE OF UNDERSTANDING, AND IN ANY
CASE I HAVE NOTHING TO SAY. THIS ZONE OF EXPERIENCE REMAINS
INACCESSIBLE, AND I MUST RESPECT ITS SECRET. (55)

Nietzsche describes mercy as the privilege of the most powerful man.
Derrida says that France can afford to take inventory of the unforgivable.

B can afford to take inventory of his harm to me.
B can afford to remember.

He can afford to be unforgivable, and REMEMBER,
AND IN REMEMBERING, give my love meaning.
This reproduces a heterosexual logic which is itself unforgivable,
Which means he would have been right to abandon me in love.
His rightness makes the loss I have incurred to myself in losing him unforgivable.

Nietzsche describes mercy as the privilege of the most powerful man.

In one sense Derrida says it is the responsibility of the powerful not to grant mercy
To the unforgivable unless necessary to survive.

WHO CAN TELL US WHAT IS UNFORGIVABLE

We can never be certain we are being just by forgiving
The unforgivable. Knowledge and certainty would make it transactional and not unconditional.

Because certainty explains motivation toward a specific end.
The future cannot tell us if we were right in having chosen,
Because having chosen is irrevocably participatory and changes the situation.

Forgiveness, as a concept, for Derrida, is a

Question,
Not a claim.

Andrea Dworkin seems illegitimate
when she indicts all sex
as all founding violence
is illegitimate before it
successfully founds. Founding force
is always "violent"
even if only because
it lacks legitimizing law.

Forgiveness which is possible is odious it comes from the top down

Derrida says that an absolute victimization which deprives
the victim of life deprives them of an ability to even consider
forgiving.
And he says this victimization is not only confined to murder.
If my love of B contributed to the death of my child, then
I cannot say that my child forgives me
because they are not alive to consider
forgiveness

Only forgiveness without power is pure
Unconditional forgiveness is not only unconditional
because it can afford to be unconditional.
This is Kantian because
A concern with outcome and inclination
WILL divert us from morality.

Only a raped woman can forgive.
If all sex is rape. Only then can we forgive men.

If I consent only because you will not rape me, then my consent is
conditional and does not involve pure forgiveness.
If I consent absolutely, then my consent is unconditional and is
no longer legible as consent.

If I

Only a strong and noble soul

can forgive from the top down

without punishing or evaluating.

Legislative forgiveness of the weak is only generous mercy.

Pure forgiveness is not merely generous, is unconscious and ignorant

In order to refrain, not merely from punishment, but from evaluation

Is the will to forgive considered to possess the purity of "lacking power"

if its only sovereignty consists in being ruled autonomously by universal moral law?

Or is there no universal moral law

And no pure intelligible forgiveness

Doing wrong may be productive in a certain way. For one, a deep wrong describes our ignorance to us, that we may learn. Further and more darkly, a wrong sufficiently grievous is a sacrifice which can last, at times, a lifetime, or far beyond. The value of sacrifice is in memory. The memory of sacrifice is eternal even if the event appears to us in the world as having duration. It appears finite to us but continues after its own death, the death of the sacrifice, and in each moment when it resurges, disrupting the core of our affective world, it is as if the blood that was initially shed were being shed all over again. In this, we find conscience. Perhaps, this is the origin of all human conscience—memory, sacrifice, and then promise.

In principle, forgiveness has no limit. Forgiveness is heterogeneous from penal law. Forgiveness may overlap with legal judgments, but it never originates there. If its originating language is typically Abrahamic, then nor can Abrahamic religion or————

There is an internal contradiction in the concept of hospitality. I can agree to welcome you once its opportunity appears, but even if I have invited you, prepared for you, or awaited you, I will never truly be able to anticipate everything to which I consent in the "welcome." Perfect consent to welcoming the other is, in this sense, impossible. There is a "good violence of the Other that precedes welcoming." (AR, 364)

We may identify some attributes of hospitality. "The welcome must be laughing or smiling." This is straightforward enough; a welcome characterized by solemnity or sadness is not a welcome, really. Pregnancy involves an irreducible "love," regardless of one's passing mood on the state; similarly, hospitality structurally *requires* being happy that the Other is here.

On the other hand, the ethics of hospitality are not straightforwardly about "politeness" or "niceness." It is "like a promise as much as like a threat." It is promise, because we sustain the Other by hosting them. And it is a threat, because hosting the Other makes them dependent on us. Hospitality leaves the guest at our mercy. This is another link hospitality has with forgiveness: just as the guest apologizes for imposing on the host, the host apologizes for the threat of failing their responsibility to the guest, present as long as the host is host.

Hospitality is straightforwardly understood as when you invite a guest, consciously prepare to host them, and await their arrival. But hospitality is also "contraction of awaiting," because it makes real awaiting impossible. There is no hospitality in awaiting the arrival of only and exactly what I am fully prepared to welcome. In fact, hospitality that consisted exclusively in imposing conditions on the guest would invert the equation. It would make the guest the host, concerned about whether the conditions of your hospitality are conditions they will be able to fulfill. Hospitality is defined by the willingness to take a kind of fundamental uncertainty upon oneself. We can never know precisely what it is we will be asked to welcome; we welcome anyway. The generosity of hospitality is in the "contradiction of welcoming." (AR, 359) Hospitality welcomes what is not invited.

All cultures contain a normative attitude towards hospitality. It is as fundamental to a culture as a prescription regarding rites of mourning. In fact, rites of mourning involve hospitality towards the dead, with regards to their final resting place. "Culture itself" is hospitality, and culture itself is rites of mourning. And the function of the concept of hospitality itself involves a form of "hospitality," towards the opposite concept, of exile—or towards another kind of opposite, violation. Indeed, in hospitality the host has something to mourn, which is the element of violation. And yet the guest mourns as well: for being violated by being made dependent, made to be the occasion of the host's violation. Hospitality is a form of death, for death is also a thing that visits us without being invited. Further aspects of this link between mourning, and hospitality.

Derrida describes hospitality as a willingness to be "raped." (AR, 361) Knowing one will be raped, one prepares for it; but what is prepared for is entirely un-anticipatable. But what does this mean? How can we "let" a rape happen to us? Derrida says we must actually enjoy this element of "rape" in hospitality, or it is not hospitality. Hospitality has a link to forgiveness, and forgiveness is central to being human. The host forgives the guest for "taking them hostage." The host is *always* simultaneously host and hostage. The "at-home" is deconstructed in this concept. (AR, 364) This is because hospitality demands taking into the home something that is not *of it*. A home becomes a home in its ability to host, and thus to *erode or suspend its own boundaries*. It expresses something fundamental about the social orientation of the human: "a good violence of the Other that precedes welcoming." (AR, 364)

This violence may *include* social phenomena like rape in a premoral sense, but it goes both deeper and more topical. Depending on how we use the world, "rape" may express a primordial, existential, human receptivity; or it may describe a legal category for crime; or it may describe something found in benign and superficial interactions. As we trace the concept's origin back in religion, we find a genealogical origin for the justification of and naturalization of rape. Derrida says that monotheism under Abraham is guided by a saint of hospitality. The messianic figure is one of

absolute hospitality, beyond human ability to receive or be worthy. In this sense, He founds our human indebtedness to the Other. Men's access to women's bodies arose in this context. Hence, perhaps unconditional access to women's bodies is predicated on this idea of already being indebted to the Patriarch. The fundamental Christian obligation emerges as the welcome of the stranger "without reserve or calculation, whatever it cost and at any price." (AR, 371)

It is a necessary condition of hospitality that the visitor "radically overwhelms the self of the 'visited.'" (AR, 372) It is only in this way that the self is even *established*, for to be human is to be in primordial Other-orientation. This actually gives strong credence to Dworkin's claim that "getting fucked and being owned, are inseparably the same." But the Derridean formulation does not condone rape. It actually, doubly denaturalizes it. We are, universally, obligated to the Other, in whatever form that Other may arrive. Thus one can easily reverse the machinery which had justified "enjoying" rape and use it to justify Dworkin's rage. Even if the Derridean argumentation delineates a notion of "violation" with a sexual component which is in some sense universal or necessary to the human, it never loses its sense of itself as *violation*. It is part of a rubric for understanding the human itself as first and foremost *obligation*. We are guilty even for whatever harms we fail to prevent, much less ones we actively perpetrate. If Dworkin's claim is one of outrage against rape, we would still remain guilty, and infinitely obligated to her, even if rape were found to be not merely a social universal, but a *primordial, necessary, inescapable phenomenon*. The Other offers themselves to us as victim of rape, and I offer myself to the Other as guilty of rape. This is "a kind of captivity or spiritual residency" which we willingly immerse ourselves in. It orients the community back to a truth "to which it is itself the heir." (AR, 376)

In one sense, for a rapist to repent would actually obligate the feminist—with the burden of forgiving or not forgiving. Thus we see "the war of hostages that is waged in [this configuration] with pitiless compassion." (AR, 379) All welcoming is a welcoming of the infinite, because the Other that there is to receive cannot be delineated in advance by the finite power of our comprehension. Thus welcoming is impossible, even if it must be attempted. Therefore the welcomer must also ask forgiveness of the welcomed, as the welcomed asks forgiveness of the host. I am structurally at fault, because true welcome incorporates a receptivity to something that is fundamentally unforeseeable. Forgiveness cannot let a forgiven evil remain identical to itself. "There is no forgiveness without memory, certainly, but no forgiveness is reducible to an act of memory." Even the primordial "evil" of the capacity for memory, which forgiveness was invented in order to identify, must gain a new dimension in order to be truly forgivable. (GM)

How, then, can intercourse continue? The onus is no longer on Dworkin. Given the severity of instances of rape and femicide which have occurred, who can justify sex's perpetuation? Who gives the "right to forgive for the dead?" (AR, 382) Derrida suggests that sometimes, there is "a feeling of guilt, muted or acute, for living, for surviving, and therefore an injunction to ask for forgiveness, to ask the dead or one knows not who, for the simple fact of being there." (AR, 383) Being-there is thus "originarily guilty." (AR, 383) In this world, men impose on women and violate their consent simply by being alive. But so, too, do women on men, and none are any less obligated to respond.

Hospitality implicates the host as guilty simply for surviving when others have died. Thus it asks the question of a primordial forgiveness which is linked with the process of mourning. "The work of mourning is always an 'I survive' and is therefore of the living in general." (AR, 383)

The guilt in mourning makes all death function symbolically as murder. Whenever someone dies, we always wonder what more we could have done to prevent the death. And thus we inescapably violate the commandment "Thou Shalt Not Kill," even when we touch no one. When we love someone, we take this violation of our ethical character upon ourselves willingly. Those I love are those "who always die by my fault," even if only in a symbolic sense. (AR, 384) The impossibility of forgiveness thus must be understood in the very formation of its concept. The possibility of compassion

involves taking the guilt of the Other willingly upon myself. Hospitality involves taking on a burden which I cannot hope to fulfill. We do not forgive the other *because* of some possibility of repentance. Every appeal to or from the Other is one which requires some form of originary forgiveness. What there is to forgive (a radical, mutual dependency) must be unforgivable, or else the sense in which it is forgiven will be trivial. This is the "tragedy of compassion, and of intersubjectivity as the destiny of the hostage." (AR, 385)

We assume that in forgiving, or in being hospitable, we give a gift to the other. But this gift does not guarantee we are good. Indeed "a gift remains perhaps more unforgivable than nothing else in the world." (AR, 386) (BEING a gift?) It turns out that to *not* problematize forgiveness is what is arrogant. We give beyond ourselves in forgiveness. Taking forgiveness for granted, we assume theatrical political gestures of repentance on a world stage will make "real" forgiveness possible. But forgiveness for the sake of recognition or political aim is fraudulent. Forgiveness requires welcoming the infinite, in the subjection of "one who is who he is only insofar as he asks for forgiveness of the other." (AR, 388) Forgiveness is not reciprocal but fundamentally asymmetrical. We can ask for forgiveness, but can never grant it. We abandon ourselves to the Other, and to God, in asking for forgiveness. There is a freedom here, because we are in the same moment constituted as egos. Derrida cites Levinas, who says that forgiveness is both an ontological category (not merely psychological or moral) and an event of the rupture of the "very categories of the ego." (AR, 391) It locates thus the self in Time.

Compassion granted to suffering must arrive in the very present moment of pain. Compassion's mechanism is infinitely mysterious, because the consoler does not end the suffering of the consoled. "Pain cannot be redeemed." (AR, 392) The person I love is in a pain that I caused, and even now I resist acknowledging its reality; I recoil from its possibility, in case it would annihilate me—either because the reality of the pain dealt to the one I love would be unbearable, or because the reality of the love would come into question as a way to minimize or justify the bestowing of pain. Why do I seek recognition as the one in pain before seeking to recognize the pain of the Other—why, at the expense of a relationship? No justice in the future can possibly make reparation for a present pain. This is why forgiveness for Derrida can only be thought beyond the possibility of redemption. Salvation must concern not merely a physical future as opposed to a metaphysical future. Salvation must concern the present rather than the future—the very instant of pain must be transformed in it, rather than compensated for.

In return, the "I" returns non-identically to the future. Its death in the interval between 'present' and 'future' allows it a new birth. The future is an elsewhere-than-in-itself. Time is "the response to the hope for the present." (AR, 393) Hope *is* the expression of the I, which persists in pain. The very instant of pain is to be redeemed. "Hope hopes for the present itself...Its martyrdom does not slip into the past, leaving us with a right to wages. At the very moment where all is lost, everything is possible." (AR, 393) This "past" may be experienced from the first-person perspective as a transmutation of the present-salvation into a symbolic compensation, or it may be understood from the genealogical perspective wherein Nietzsche delineates our concept of metaphysical guilt as originating in the tyrannical extraction of debt from debtors in primitive society.

The I remains exterior to instants of time because it is never exhausted by any one instant. It is always returning in the next. The I is a non-dialectical dynamism of time. It is not a duration which would prevent *l'avenir*, because of an uninterrupted encroaching of the present upon the future. Rather the dynamism of the I lies in the fact that its very being is its expression of hope in the present and yet this hope calls it out of itself, not to a future but a present, redeemed as present. This is what Levinas calls the "exigency" of the I in the present. The demand for a "miraculous fecundity in the instant itself." (AR, 394) We cannot give this to ourselves, and fulfill our own need ourselves. It must come from the Other. For Levinas, against classical philosophy, the I does not negate itself in order to effect the interval between the present and the future to which it can return, transformed. This isn't a negation, but a freedom consisting in "one's being pardoned by the very alterity of the Other." (AR, 395) Prior to

the self's dialogue with itself, it is forgiven by the Other.

"The will essentially violable harbors treason in its own essence." (AR, 395) It is not just that the dignity of the will can be violated, it is that its dignity can be entirely abolished, enslaving it as a "servile soul." (AR, 395) But the will becomes aware of an inexorable possibility of betrayal, and undertakes an activity which retains one sense of inviolability. The will makes itself subject to a jurisdiction which checks to make sure its intentions do not betray it. Before the gaze of this jurisdiction, the meaning of the inward will's being is in this checking. Before even its own desires. In "betraying" itself by making itself subject to this jurisdiction, it ensures that its possibility of self-betrayal, becoming-servile, does not occur. "The will thus moves between its betrayal and its fidelity, which simultaneously describes the very originality of its power." (AR, 395) The will needs a will that can come from outside it to forgive it—but this cannot come from history, since history is the antagonism of the wills. This request for the Other's pardon offers the labor (of making myself subject to a jurisdiction) in exchange for forgiveness. Thus it is not "above" the economic sphere.

Because this work betrays the "I" by giving it to the other, this work is not expressive (of the I's desire). Yet after being separated from my work, I *express* that separation to the Other. In expression, I refer to the self-giving-up-of-myself by which I am free, in relation to history. This freedom is made possible by forgiveness from the Other. It also locates me *in* history by locating me in the sphere of economic exchange.

So much for Levinas. Laughing at the impossibility of forgiveness tells a truth in lying. It recognizes that there is a "logic of the symptom" which will "always be stronger than an ethic of truthfulness." We can never be perfectly transparent to one another. To use a rough and ready distinction, this understanding is "formally" stronger, even if it compromises some technical accuracy of content. One questions oneself in repentance long enough, and forgiveness becomes clearly impossible, for how could we ever be certain? Of our own sincerity, or of the Other's? We always confess we are not sincere enough in a display of hyperbolic sincerity.

At the very moment the two recognize they cannot forgive each other—"cannot disarm nor stop, as life itself never disarms nor stops"