Those Who Aren't Counted

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1. Introduction

On the morning of the eighth of May 1945, as the Nazis surrendered to the Allies toward the end of World War II, a day now celebrated as Victory in Europe Day, 5,000 Algerians paraded through the French Algerian city of Sétif. While celebrating the end of the war and paying tribute to their fallen, some of those marching also carried banners on which messages decrying the colonial rule of the French were written. These marchers clashed with the local *gendarmerie* — literally, "armed people," a facet of the French military tasked with local law enforcement — when the gendarmerie attempted to seize their anti-colonial placards. There is some debate about who fired the first shot, but what happened next is uncontroversial in its essentials. Both the police and the protesters, including those carrying banners and others, suffered numerous casualties. Armed protesters captured and slaughtered Europeans in the streets. And on that same evening, a peaceful protest orchestrated by the Algerian People's Party in the nearby city of Guelma was suppressed with shocking violence.

In the rural areas surrounding Sétif, news of police brutality led angry locals to attack *pieds-noirs,* a segment of the population comprised largely of ethnically French people born in Alge-

ria and people whose ancestors had migrated to French Algeria in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The pieds-noirs overwhelmingly supported the colonial rule of the French, and this fact played a justificatory role in the attacks against them which directly followed the violence in Sétif. These attacks led to the deaths of 102 Europeans, almost all of whom were civilians. There were, in addition, hundreds of non-fatal injuries, including systematic rape and corollary trauma. The mutilation and desecration of corpses was widespread. The French military quelled the rebellion after several days, with a great deal of damage already having been done. But the military didn't rest contented with having put down this resistance. They enacted a number of brutal reprisals on settlers and Algerian Muslims alike. In a *ratissage* or "raking-over" of the countryside near Sétif and Guelma, the military carried out summary executions, bombed villages entire, and shelled the town of Kherrata from a cruiser in the Gulf of Béjaïa. Pieds-noirs, reacting to assaults and seeking vengeance, lynched randomly selected Algerian Muslims who had been incarcerated in local prisons. Staking a bloody claim to vigilante justice, they shot whomever was seen wearing a white arm band — a symbol of the resistance — with no questions asked.[1] Perhaps it is unsurprising that most of the victims of this violence weren't involved in the original protests on the eighth of May.

Altogether, the violence that followed the events in Sétif and Guelma is estimated to have led to between 1,020 and 45,000 fatalities. There is of course a stark difference between the lower and upper limits of this estimate. There is not much reason to doubt that the violence which took place on the eighth of May and shortly thereafter brought about a great many avoidable deaths. Many of those who died in this unrest were horrifically

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1   Like the violence perpetrated by the recently defeated Nazi regime, this violence was committed *mit keine Fragen,* extra-judicially and with no questions asked. For further information, the reader may find it helpful to refer to Mehana Amrani, *Le 8 mai 1945 en Algérie: Les discours français sur les massacres de Sétif, Kherrata et Guelma* (Paris: Editions L'Harmattan, 2010).

slaughtered, and many of those who survived were nevertheless condemned to lead lives warped by their having taken part in the violence or misshapen by the tremendous burden of mourning in the wake of inhumanity. There's plenty of reason to find these events tragic. But many of us, looking back at these events, will be more inclined to consider the violence a severer tragedy if it led to 45,000 deaths rather than 1,020, just as we would be inclined to find an event that caused 100 deaths, while still tragic, even less severe.

The figure of 1,020 deaths was reported by the French government in the Tubert Report, shortly after the events that took place in Sétif and Guelma. The figure of 45,000 deaths was reported by Radio Cairo, also very soon after the violence subsided. Now, if we set aside the horrific but non-fatal barbarity of the injuries that resulted from this conflict — wounds no doubt physical, psychological, and social — and focus simply on the reported number of fatalities, which is often used to mark a conflict's severity, we'll notice a significant narrative difference between the two reported figures: 1,020 deaths and 45,000 deaths. Each figure tells, and fits into, a different story about what went on in Sétif and Guelma on the eighth of May and soon after, and about what it means. Each figure conveys a different sense of the magnitude of the tragedy. And each makes various attitudes in response to that tragedy seem more or less apt. If the number of fatalities was 1,020, as the official French report claims, then a certain attitude toward the violence might seem more appropriate: though we regret that anyone had to die in such a way, we might be willing to say that the death toll was the price that had to be paid for civil peace. Although it sounds crass, and maybe for good reason, we might be thankful that more people who might have perished were saved from this fate. The conflict might in this sense look less bad than it could have been, in virtue of a comparison between the number of fatalities that were its consequence and the number that might conceivably have resulted had things been only slightly different. If the number of fatalities was 45,000, however, then we might take the violence to have been worse in degree than had it been 1,020. We might

find the tragedy severer, the burden of mourning weightier, the horror of what went on in Sétif and Guelma more intense and less comprehensible. For even if all these deaths were the cost of the mitigation of unrest, even if there had been no imaginable alternative, it may yet seem to us that 45,000 deaths are considerably costlier than 1,020 deaths, or any lesser number for that matter.

We may feel that our reason to be saddened by this tragedy — to mourn, to seek in its light to prevent similar conflicts from escalating in this way in the future, to take the violence of Sétif and Guelma as a historical example of atrocity — is proportional to the number of the dead. This is a common attitude when it comes to atrocities: the greater the number of the dead, the more tragic we say it was. This attitude seems to me to be mistaken, since it rests on what I take to be a distorted picture of the real affliction that those who perished in Sétif and Guelma underwent. A sense of *atrocity,* based in part on the fatality count that conveys an impression of its severity, stands in for the *affliction* of those who, whatever the fatality count, were indeed downtrodden. We should, first and foremost, attend to and mourn this affliction when we are trying to understand historical tragedies and conflicts, wars and injustices. The atrocity signified by the number of a body count often obscures the genuine affliction that real people experienced. It covers over the suffering that in some cases characterized their lives and the lives of those who knew them. I believe that this has an enormously deleterious effect on our capacity to make sense of, mourn, and live in light of the horrors of our past. An ethical attitude toward these horrors, I will argue, demands attention to the affliction suffered by the injured and the dead, no matter the putative severity of the atrocity given meaning by the number of fatalities.

In coming to terms with one's history — insofar as this is possible (I don't claim that the relevant mourning is ever necessarily completable, though I don't think this prevents it from being practicable) — the moral person keeps her eyes fixed on affliction rather than atrocity, on the suffering of each person who

endured tragic circumstances or died under them, rather than on the count of bodies or list of injuries. In the face of atrocity, the moral person turns her attention to affliction. In the face of the impression of tragedy given by a body count, she turns her attention instead to those who aren't counted, to the suffering that can never be counted. This, I will contend, is the shape the moral person's attitude takes with regard to events such as those that went on in Sétif and Guelma.

2. Analogy and Atrocity

As is shown by the dissensus with respect to the number of fatalities that resulted from the violence of Sétif and Guelma, the number of a body count is implicated in a wider political narrative, within which this violence and its aftermath are to be made sense of.[2] In the case I've been discussing, this is either the narrative of the French colonial government (1,020 deaths) or that of the Algerian resistance (45,000 deaths). The wide gap between the two estimates isn't merely the consequence of, say, hasty miscounting, misreporting, or confusion due to the ongoing conflict and an attendant lack of cooperation and communication, though these are surely relevant. Rather, the divergent numbers find their place, and are as such intelligible, in divergent worldviews. These numbers are, in this sense, given from

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2   To put it another way, the number of a fatality count is, in a certain sense about which I'll try to get clear, politically theory-laden. As Paul Feyerabend writes, "Not only are facts and theories in constant disharmony, they are never as neatly separated as everyone makes them out to be." The fact of the number of the body count and its weight or significance can't be neatly separated from the theoretical apparatus of what I'll call an "analogy." This is the set of relations in and through which sense is made of affliction as atrocity. The *fact* of a body count of 1,020 is intelligible as such to those who see a certain atrocity, who have a certain going *theory* or narrative about what went on in Sétif and Guelma. The *fact* of a count of 45,000 is intelligible to those who see another atrocity, who have a different theory or narrative about what went on in Sétif and Guelma; they make different sense of it. Paul Feyerabend, *Against Method* (London: Verso, 2010), 51.

political stances, which lend them the credence of context. From the point of view of the French government, or for those who share a similar sense of things, the body count of 1,020 makes sense. It fits into a wider frame, without thereby calling that frame too much into question, and it then comes to have further application (justificatory and otherwise) within that frame. Likewise, from the point of view of the Algerian resistance or its allies, the body count of 45,000 is intelligible, and this fits into an operative frame, while the suggestion that the proper count is actually 1,020 looks — from this vantage point — jarring, deceitful, or senseless. If this suggestion is plausible, the pressure may lead one to adjust one's view of things accordingly (perhaps beyond the scope of this specific incident). If it isn't received as plausible, it may be dismissed on that account, and the pressure that would cause one to change one's view, or to have to invent a way to deny the plausibility of the suggestion, won't be felt.[3]

It seems plausible that at least very many of those who inhabited each point of view took the number of fatalities asserted by the representative of that view — either the French government or Radio Cairo — to be accurate. They were sincere in asserting that either 1,020 or 45,000 is the proper count, though both evidently couldn't have been right about this. But all the same, the numeric product that results from the count of bodies, the quantification of the fallen, is the outcome of an operation that takes place within a certain sort of political or social structure. I will call this structure an "analogy."

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3   This simplifies things to a certain extent. In some cases, the suggestion will be received as entirely implausible because an operative view is so strongly held or so resistant to information that conflicts with it; in such cases, the pressure that would cause one to change one's view won't be felt much at all. In other cases, the suggestion will be received as pretty implausible, as likely to be false, or as questionable, but it won't be dismissed outright. This may lead one to change one's view in a minor way, or to repress or twist the information received, since that information won't be received as wholly worthy of dismissal. But the point stands: one's view affects the information one receives. We always acquire information in the midst of things, with a view already in place, more or less liable to change depending on what facts are received and how they're received.

An analogy works like this. From the vantage point of a particular community or social position, within a certain frame of understanding by means of which particular sorts of people (who are often identified as such by attributes of such-and-such a type) make sense of the world and their place in it, it is held as true and importantly meaningful that there's a specific correlation — an analogy — between those who have perished and the narrative of their affliction. The dead are tied to a certain story, seen from a certain view, and this analogy or correlation is what I mean by an "atrocity." An atrocity is this analogical link that unites the dead and a particular narrative about what they suffered and how they died. It's a link that makes sense from a particular view of things and can be seen — depending on the narrative and how tightly it fits with the facts of the affliction (insofar as these are known and open to public view) — to be more or less apt in relation to the wider perspective. In other words, an atrocity is the partial sense made of affliction from a politically or socially specific view. It relies on, helps to explain, and is commonly furthered by particular answers (which have to be seen as more or less intelligible) to the questions: "How many people died there?" and "In what way did they die?" and "Who (what sort of person) killed them, and for what reason?"

An atrocity is an analogical structure with two terms: those who perished, on the one hand, and the narrative of their affliction, on the other. It is the "third" that unites these terms in itself. As terms of the consequent atrocity, the dead and the story into which they fit can't be understood as extricable from their mutual relation, so far as those who see the atrocity *as an atrocity* are concerned. The dead can't be stripped of their narrative significance, which grants their deaths sense for a specific community of the living. Likewise, the narrative can't be understood apart from those who died, to whom it grants a particular meaning for the living. The number of fatalities plays an important part in this analogy. This number, intelligible as such from within a particular point of view, ties together the victims and the meaning given to what they suffered. What results is an

atrocity. The number then signifies and stands in for the atrocity, understood to look a certain way (to which the number of fatalities is to give voice) from a particular point of view.

The atrocity — from whatever perspective, whichever atrocity one sees — subsumes under it both those who have perished and the narrative of their affliction. It's an analogy in which these terms are comprehensible only as indistinct. We can put it this way: those who have perished are always already those who have partaken in the narrative of their affliction, and that narrative isn't separable from those who have perished. Where there was affliction, where ordinary people were forced to undergo real horrors, the quantification of the fallen produces an atrocity whose number crystallizes its sense.

3. Affliction

The affliction that was suffered in Sétif and Guelma is, for each person who underwent it, one and the same, no matter whether the death toll was 1,020 or 45,000. Affliction isn't something that can be measured, weighed, or subject to comparison. It can't be counted. But the atrocity is radically different in each case. It can be measured, weighed, or subject to comparison — in fact, it just is what can be so counted. It is crystallized by means of a specific number, and this number can in certain situations belie it or the wider view from which it is seen.

The affliction of those who met their end in Sétif and Guelma or endured its violence precedes the analogical structure of the atrocity. From the view of the afflicted, their affliction isn't yet atrocious. In the first place, affliction is without atrocity. When the French government made sense of the affliction suffered in Sétif and Guelma by means of the count of 1,020, they dealt with atrocity. Radio Cairo too dealt with atrocity by way of the count of 45,000. In neither of these cases was the affliction itself — prior to its transformation into atrocity — dealt with.

Affliction is different from atrocity in kind, while an atrocity with a signifying number of 1,020 is different in degree from one that has a number of 45,000. The former atrocity is like the latter

in this way: each is a violent set of events — in many ways, the same set of events — that occurred in the context of the Nazi's surrender and the French colonial occupation of Algeria. We could conceivably add further details to our characterization of these events, some of which would fit into the identifiable narrative structures of both atrocities. (This isn't of course true of all the major details, as is shown by the question of how many people died in the violence.) Even so, the former atrocity is unlike the latter atrocity in this way: we're likely to consider the latter atrocity less grave; and this picture of things meshes with a particular frame of social and political reference and understanding.

So affliction can't be more or less than what it is. But atrocity is always more or less than what it is; this intensive difference is given in large part by the atrocity's unique number — the product of the body count — in contrast to other plausible numbers in which one could put one's faith (or in which others put their faith).

The atrocity in which 1,020 people were killed differs in quantity from that in which 45,000 people were killed. But it would be a mistake to see this as merely a difference in quantity. Each number tells a distinct story about what went on in Sétif and Guelma. Each paints a particular picture of the events, and each comes to light in a distinct worldview. Each number thus lends the atrocity a different sense or weight (we might say, a different atrociousness). And each comes to symbolize this sense or weight — in a way, to stand in for it. The apparent difference in quantity between 1,020 and 45,000 is an intensive or qualitative difference, and really a narrative difference. The fatality count gives voice to the qualitative fabric of a particular point of view with respect to what happened in Sétif and Guelma and what it should be taken to mean. The resultant number expresses and carries a specific — and generally communal — opening onto the world. It is an aperture onto the past and a symbol which then figures in mourning, with which one then tries to live going forward.

Now the quality to which the number of the body count gives voice comes to life in an analogy. In this analogy, the self and the other — those who see atrocity and those who were afflicted — are seen to be inextricable, tied together in a knot that is productive of sense. The quality of the atrocity has a recognizable structure. I will call this the atrocity's "for-y" structure. The self and the other are seen to be necessarily "for" each other (y), and each is in itself unthinkable without this "for" and the other term (y) to which it is tied by way of the "for." The "for," however, isn't transitive. The dead "for" those who see atrocity aren't those who see atrocity and have to live in the face of it. That is, the analogical form of the atrocity is made up of two more basic analogies, of which it is the reticulation: the self "for" the other and the other "for" the self, the living who have to go forward in light of atrocity and the afflicted who are intelligible under a certain atrocious aspect for those who see their affliction as atrocity. The unique number of the atrocity, the result of the count of bodies, isn't merely quantitative, since it gives a condensed expression to the "for," the quality that unites the dead and the living in atrocity's analogical schema. The number marks this "for." It symbolizes the analogical reticulation that gives the terms of the analogy their sense precisely insofar as they are its terms.

The result of the body count is the locution in number that stands in for the atrocity. It represents the analogical relation of the two more basic analogies, each of which involves a non-transitive "for-y" quality. So the quantity of the fatality count names, as it were, the quality of the given violence as an atrocity, helping to determine and serving to enunciate its apparent severity and its essence.

4. Quantifying the Fallen

I have been claiming that the unique number of a body count marks the quality — the dual "for-y" structure — of an atrocity. It fits into a particular view, and it comes to give expressive and symbolic weight to a vision of the atrociousness of a set of events

(which then colors these events through and through). The number of the fatality count both fits into and in part carries a wider view. But how is it given? I don't mean to ask about how a count of bodies is undertaken in its logistical details. Rather, I mean to ask about how it is seen from, and done by those who inhabit, a specific view of a set of events, a view through which this set of events takes a particular shape as an atrocity with an identifiable sense.

The unique number that stands in for the severity and meaning of an atrocity is given by a political or communal operation, a shared way of making sense of what has happened by condensing a joint understanding (thereby solidifying it) into a sort of crystal: the number of the body count. I'll call this operation the "count-as-x." For the French government, the violence of Sétif and Guelma was counted-as-1,020. For the Algerian resistance, it was counted-as-45,000. Counting-as bestows sense. It folds seemingly senseless and often traumatic events into a narrative structure, and it compresses that structure into the potent symbol of a figure. As we will see, this operation's excess is real affliction. That is what is set aside — forgotten, fundamentally neglected — in the production of atrocity, done by means of the count-as-x.

Now the count-as-x also counts its x as one in the end. For instance, the 1,020 or 45,000 counts for one as "Sétif and Guelma," as "what happened there." A certain univocity is established, imposed on a series of discrete events, on the affliction suffered by each victim (each person who became a victim) beyond the frame of the atrocity. This counting-as-one aids in the production of sense, and it is of especial importance if that sense is to be shared among the members of a polity or passed along within a social sphere. It's this counting-as-one that enables *the* lesson of Sétif and Guelma to be taught to children in a digestible way; it is this that finds its way into history textbooks. What is missed, though, is the affliction — passed over in the count-as-x and neglected entirely in the $x=$ one that solidifies an atrocity made sensible in affliction's place.

The singular people who suffered in Sétif and Guelma thus come under a particular form of description—in effect, a formal order—in which the affliction is thematized as atrocity by means of a dual counting operation: the count-as-x and the x = one. Affliction is made sense of in terms of the particular analogical quality of the atrocity. It is only glimpsed, so to speak, through a decidedly atrocious lens.[4] In this way, it is distorted, rendered intelligible for those who inhabit a particular view of things (which itself isn't limited to retrospection).

The operation of the count-as-x produces a number, x, which is given analogically. This number's sense is that of the analogy—the atrocity—which it marks. The communal or political sphere, as we have seen, structures itself analogically around

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4   Reiner Schürmann writes that "[h]egemonies transform the singular into a particular. They serve to say what is, to classify and inscribe, to distribute proper and common nouns." Reiner Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies,* trans. Reginald Lilly (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 7. There are, it seems to me, important similarities between Schürmann's hegemonies and the totalizing analogies I am considering here. Both transform the singular other person into a particular: the other "for" me, "for" us, "for" the living. Both classify and inscribe, rendering affliction narrowly intelligible as atrocity. Now the question for us is this. Is there a way in which the particular, the realm of the hegemony, might no longer be seen as the "chief-represented" (ἡγεμών) but merely as the represented? Can we come to see the analogical as no longer hegemonic, as secondary to what's singular and, *in this secondariness,* as coexistent with the primacy of the singular? That is: can we inhabit analogy without letting it become totalizing or hegemonic? This question takes a number of forms across various subject matters in philosophy. Consider these examples. Can preferential love coexist with love for strangers? Can community coexist with genuine hospitality? Can ethics coexist with politics? This form of question underlies much of my thinking here and elsewhere. It would not be inaccurate to put it this way. How can we keep the inherent partiality or inadequacy of analogy forefront in our minds while still inhabiting it, and what follows from doing so? How can we keep, in some sense, what hegemonic structures are while dissolving their hegemonic quality? I think that is often possible, though it requires, sometimes, changes to the structures themselves. One case in which it's possible is this: the sense made of affliction as atrocity can be kept as non-totalizing insofar as one bears witness to the affliction itself in its primacy. This essay attempts to get clear about how that would work.

calamitous events. Hence, these events are understood as atrocities, made intelligible within a specific frame. The atrocity is woven into a particular social fabric and in turn helps to support that fabric (or adds to it) by crystallizing affliction in an atrocious number that makes it meaningful and thus more bearable. Through the operation of the count-as-x and the analogical givenness of the atrocity, and especially through the counting-as-one of x, those who inhabit the relevant social position or community can chart a course forward in the face of what has happened. They can make sense of the past, mourn in a way that seems more or less accomplishable, and figure out how best to live going forward. But in so doing, they *have forgotten* the affliction of those whose suffering has been rendered, always in hindsight, atrocious. This affliction comes under a qualifying description that makes it intelligible to those with a certain view; such is the movement from affliction to atrocity. It is this attitude to the horrors of the past, which considers them atrocities, with which I want to take issue.

5. The Topology of the Three-as-One

It will be useful to try to get a sense of the topological form of the communal or political sphere as it functions here. This sphere takes a specifiable shape in the analogical fashioning of atrocity, in making affliction in this way intelligible. I now want to get clear about this shape.

To get going, consider the structure of an analogy that I identified in §2. It comprises two terms—the self and the other, those who see an atrocity and those who were afflicted—and a dual set of non-transitive relations between them; these relations give rise to the analogy's "for-y" qualities. There's the self "for" the other (the living who must go forward in the face of past injustices) and the other "for" the self (the dead who are intelligible under an atrocious aspect for the living). Neither term can be understood as separable from the other. Their relation is treated as primitive. The other isn't really other here, not absolutely. The two terms are thought under the aspect of a third: the

analogy itself, the atrocity that ties them together. In our analysis, there appear to be three operative terms: the self, the other, and the atrocity. But all three have to be thought as one, within the bounds of the atrocity in which the first two terms — self and other — are comprehensible as inextricable. This topology, this shape of the community of the living and the dead, is what I will call "the three-as-one." For there are three terms, but all are, in essence, as one, under the aspect of the third: the atrocity itself.

In the topology of the three-as-one, the self and the other are tied together in the introduction of a third term (the analogy itself) such that they can't be isolated from one another. So there exist three terms in the three-as-one, but they aren't *distinct* terms. They are as one. The self isn't itself thinkable apart from the other, and the other isn't itself thinkable apart from the self. Moreover, neither of these basic relations can be thought without the other, for as we saw the analogy is the relationship between two non-transitive "for-y" relations. The self and the other only exist intelligibly insofar as they exist within the limits of the third term. They must be thought within its frame. The afflicted are the sense made of them for the living by way of the count-as-x. The living are those who have to figure out how to go forward in view of history's atrocities. These terms — the self and the other, the living and the dead — are thinkable only in the relational schema, taken to be originary, of the analogy under which they have always already been subsumed.

The afflicted exist for the living. Within the analogy, then, they are different from the living only in degree. They are not the living, to be sure, but they crucially go on living with the living — they are the sense the living make of them (in part, by counting them as x, and then as one). In the three-as-one, the dead and the living are unthinkable apart from the analogy as a whole. Atrocity functions in precisely this way. It takes the shape of a three-as-one. Those who perished and the narrative of their affliction can't be thought in separation from their conjoining in the third: the analogy itself qua atrocity.

I say that an attitude toward the past's unjust deaths according to which they're to be seen under the aspect of atrocity is not ethical. Affliction is made intelligible as atrocity through the operation of the count-as-x and $x =$ one. What's left out is affliction itself. The idea that atrocity is sufficient, that we must turn our attention to atrocity if we wish to understand the cruelties of history and make a life in light of them, leads us to neglect the affliction of real, ordinary people. I believe that this neglect prevents us from actually coming to terms with the past. It keeps us from really mourning, from leading lives in which we are attentive to what has happened in our history. It doesn't allow us to approach events such as those that went on in Sétif and Guelma in an ethical manner. Living well in view of such events means contending with affliction, not forgetting this in contending with atrocity.

I have described the attitude according to which past afflictions are to be seen as atrocities, and so not as they really are, as *not* ethical. I don't say it is unethical. For I want to emphasize that this attitude doesn't involve a *choice* to conceive of afflictions as atrocities (though particular choices may indeed follow from this conception); as if one knew full well, in conceiving of afflictions as atrocities, that a transformation had gone on. The person who sees an atrocity is not cognizant of having an immoral attitude, nor of seeing the world wrongly. Rather, she has simply *forgotten* affliction. Her error consists in letting it slip from mind, thereby allowing for atrocity's constitution. This forgetting makes room for atrocity. The moral failure here is a failure to stay vigilant, to keep up a certain wakefulness regarding the past's afflictions.

Someone who sees an atrocity in affliction's place has a forgetful attitude toward history's injustices. In this sense, it is not ethical, since an ethical attitude toward these injustices would involve the *perception* of affliction and the vigilant maintenance, the *remembering,* of this perspicuous vision. The person who sees atrocity needs to be woken up, and then needs to keep herself awake.

An atrocity is a kind of totalizing construction; it tethers the dead to a certain narrative of their affliction, and it forgets that affliction itself. It renders the dead not really other than the living, for neither can be fully understood except through their analogical relation. In an atrocity, the dead are nothing but the sense the living make of them. They are said to be this and nothing besides. So an atrocity totalizes, under its own aspect, the affliction of those who perished. It takes what it speaks of to be all there is to speak of when it comes to history's calamitous events. It presumes to have no outside — or if it has one, it isn't thinkable; it isn't something to which one could attend in mourning. This atrocious construction is generally retrospective: the afflicted don't themselves construct it, since it operates by means of a count-as-x that goes on in hindsight, and it is more or less completed, producing a largely closed sense of the atrocity and its constitutive events, in the count-as-one of x.

An atrocity gives the impression of being sufficient with respect to what has happened. To those who inhabit the relevant point of view, it doesn't look as if it leaves behind any excess. That this *isn't* the case is only shown when contrary points of view come on the scene. The dissensus about the fatality count in Sétif and Guelma doesn't only show that there are two different atrocities, one marked by the count-as-1,020 and the other by the count-as-45,000. It also shows that both of these atrocities have an outside — and indeed, a common outside. This is the affliction of those who perished in the violence which, one and the same, was suffered by each afflicted person. Both atrocities endeavor to make this affliction intelligible under an atrocious description or within the bounds of a formal order. But they do this through totalization and neglect, and it's in this sense that they stand in the way of an ethical attitude to the horrors of the past. For atrocity renders a genuine encounter with the other — the afflicted — unthinkable. The three terms of the three-as-one, recall, are always as one, inextricable from one another. The afflicted are only encountered as those who can be counted among the victims of atrocity, seen "for" those whose

vision is of atrocity. Since the other would be beyond the analogy, within the analogy it is the unencounterable par excellence.

There can be no other in the three-as-one; the "as-one" precludes this. There can't be anything different in kind from what is within the atrocity, held fast by it. Any other is off the table from the point of atrocity's constitution in the count-as-x. The other can differ only in degree from the self, as what's intelligible only in the sense in which it's "for" the self, made analogical. It may seem that I am making heavy weather over this. But there's a reason for that. This is how the forgetting of affliction characteristic of the three-as-one operates, and this forgetting is distinctive of the attitude with which I am taking issue. The production of atrocity — in the count-as-x and $x =$ one — essentially involves the neglect of affliction. The "for-y" quality of the analogy is imposed; the dead are seen to be fundamentally tied up with the sense made of them, and this forces them into a context or position that is the same as that of the living — a context that is not the afflicted's. To be sure, this doesn't appear to be an imposition from within the view of things that constitutes, and is then in part constituted by, the production of atrocity. But that is precisely the three-as-one's amnesia at work.

The position into which the other is put, under which they're in effect subsumed, is thought to be knowable by means of a sort of empathy. Since the other is already just what it is in relation to the self within the analogy, it is imagined that the self can step into the other's shoes, so to speak, without much of a problem. And having done this, the self can try them on for size. In this way, the living take themselves to be able to get a grip on those who died atrociously. Understanding seems to come easily. Yet the living can't empathetically get a handle on affliction itself, because this very empathetic "getting a handle on…" relies on the neglect of affliction. It operates only given a kind of lethargy. In this lethargy or forgetfulness, a supposedly easily acquirable understanding of analogy rids us of humility with respect to history's horrors.

The other and the self are each understood in their mutual indistinction. Empathy here turns on the introduction of a third

term, an analogical bridge, which lets the self to some extent step into the other's place.[5] At least, so far as the self is concerned. The third term is a "like" or "unlike" relation that an other is seen to bear to oneself; the other is seen, in virtue of their similarity to or difference in degree from oneself, to have a relational property (being like or unlike oneself in such-and-such a way or to such-and-such an extent) by means of which they're intelligible to one as such. The afflicted are perhaps *like* those who look back on them from the perspective of Radio Cairo, since both have dealt with the threat of European colonialism. Or maybe the afflicted are *unlike* those who look back from the perspective of the French government, since they don't share particular political beliefs. This "like" or "unlike" term serves to bridge the gap between the self and the other. This bridge is all that is needed to get analogical empathy going, even across great qualitative divides (as the manifest bridging ability of the "unlike"

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5   In his psychoanalytic self psychology, Heinz Kohut defines empathy as "vicarious introspection." When one empathizes, one vicariously introspects into the other; one tries the other's shoes on for size, by way of one's relation to the other and the qualities one sees the other to have. I compare this to Husserl's account of empathy in my "The Givenness of Other People," forthcoming. Kohut's self-psychological method of empathy is a clear example of the sort of analogical ethic — the conception of one's rightful relationship with other people — against which I am writing. It may be helpful to refer, when considering my talk of analogical empathy, to Kohut's essay "Introspection, Empathy, and Psychoanalysis: An Examination of the Relationship between Mode of Observation and Theory," *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association* 7, no. 3 (1959): 459–83, as well as to Heinz Kohut, *Analysis of the Self* (New York: International Universities Press, 1979), 176–77. There seems to me to be something similar in Graham Harman's development of his object-oriented ontology in ethics. Harman claims that the relation between oneself (x) and the other (y) exists as a compound object, $x–y$, which is morality's locus. Indeed, Harman tells us that "ethics is about the compound of subject and object." Here, I would like to dissent. Ethics is about how the compound of subject and object is insufficient with regard to the other; it is about how the other isn't merely an object for a subject. Graham Harman, *Object-Oriented Ontology: A New Theory of Everything* (London: Pelican Books, 2018), 107.

term brings to bear).[6] With the analogy in place, the seeming possibility of an empathetic grasp on the atrocious position of the dead leads us to further abandon the idea that atrocity has an outside. We take ourselves, within the three-as-one, to have come to terms with those who have died. And empathy makes it look as if we aren't missing anything in this. But we have forgotten the actual affliction of ordinary people.

The self and the other are seen to exist only within the bounds of their empathetic relationship, which is evidently geared toward the self who presumes to empathize with the afflicted. The self is set as the norm, the constituting center, in relation to which the other differs only by a given degree. The other orbits the self, as it were. The three-as-one doesn't admit of any genuine alterity that would precede the position of the analogy's terms *as terms.* It takes the relation between the terms, centered on the self or the living, to be primitive. And so, it forgets affliction.

The topology of the three-as-one is the shape that the community of the living and the dead takes in neglecting affliction and attending instead to atrocity. But I want to suggest that remembering affliction doesn't mean merely negating the three-as-one, flying out and into the void. It isn't an abdication of the task of coming to grips with history's horrors. Rather, the remembrance of affliction leads to a community of the living and the dead (that is, an encounter between them) that has a different, and to my mind morally preferable, shape. I will call this the topology of "the two." This topology is prior to the three-as-one, as affliction is to atrocity, and it is foreclosed to those who inhabit the totalizing analogical schema that gives rise to and is carried by the vision of atrocity.[7]

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6   This being so, empathy may still be harder to start, and one may consequently be able to hold on to more humility, in cases where the other is seen to be very unlike — even if still different in degree from — the self. But this isn't always the case; sometimes, great differences in degree seem to motivate pernicious forms of xenophobia and the like.

7   There are three distinctions, similar in a number of ways to the distinction I've drawn between affliction and atrocity, that may be profitable to

6. The Topology of the Two

The topology of the two is the space in which I encounter an other who isn't me or of me. It is the space in which I come up against an outside I cannot hope to assimilate or incorporate. The two is the shape of an encounter in which transcendence comes to pass.

In the two, the other is absolutely unrelated to me. My encounter with the other doesn't hang on empathy, for there isn't an analogical bridge between us across which I might empathize; there is no room for a "like" or "unlike" relation in the two. I can't try the other's shoes on for size; I can't even make out their shoes. In the three-as-one, there are three terms — the self, the other, and the analogy as a whole — which are counted-as-one under the aspect of the third, the analogy or atrocity. In the two, there are two terms — the self and the other — which are different in kind from one another yet nevertheless encounter each another. They do this directly in the space of the two. It is in this way that I, in the two, am exposed to the other in their very otherness, without their subsumption under my categories of understanding or what is familiar to me. There isn't a third under which the two terms could be counted-as-one, seen to be mere relata in a relationship taken to be primitive. The other in the two is whatever it may be. It isn't "for" the self. Affliction is not transformed into atrocity, and we needn't give up the endeavor to come to terms with the violence of our history: the two is very much a topology of the encounter, but one that

consider further: Levinas's distinction between the saying and the said (in *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence,* trans. Alphonso Lingis [Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1998]); Henry's distinction between the flesh and the body or self-affection and noetic-noematic givenness (e.g., in *Incarnation*); and Lacan's distinction between the real and reality. This isn't the place to try to carefully articulate the similarities and differences between these distinctions, though I hope to do that in future work. But let me just say this. In regard to the relationship between affliction and atrocity, it might be particularly interesting to think about how the former term in each of these distinctions undermines or undoes the latter term, while in one sense still preserving it as so undermined or undone.

doesn't operate via analogy and empathy. This is why inhabiting it by way of remembrance, calling it to mind moment after moment, makes possible vigilant attention to affliction.

In dwelling in the two, I respond to the other's call as whatever it may be. I don't seek to comprehend the other "for" me, as a term of the analogy centered on me. I abnegate to the other, and there's no symmetry between us. I don't demand reciprocity. I am responsible for the other in the two, called to be hospitable to that which is at an undecipherable height. I welcome an other whose sense isn't of an order with which I am acquainted or comfortable. The two doesn't look like home. But the comfort and regularity of the three-as-one mask a certain angst. In seeing atrocity in affliction's place, we miss something excessive — the affliction itself — which nevertheless calls us to bear witness to it. So in the regularity of atrocity, in our forgetfulness of affliction, we feel in some way unable to really get a grip on the suffering that flesh and blood people endured, the suffering from which many of them perished. Seen in this light, our mourning appears to miss something. We feel an angst: this is the ache of our neglect. In attending to it, in following it and coming to see it as such, we can exit the three-as-one and inhabit the two, facing affliction head on, encountering the afflicted in earnest in our open exposure to them. We can encounter them in our responsibility to bear witness to what they themselves underwent, not just to our vision of atrocity.

An attitude to the past's calamities that sees them under the aspect of atrocity rests on the construction of an analogy relating those who perished and a specific narrative of their affliction. The affliction of the ordinary people who suffered in Sétif and Guelma is subjected to the operation of the count-as-x, which produces the unique number of the death toll. This number signifies and helps to carry the sense of the atrocity under which the affliction is, through this process, subsumed. Affliction is primordial in relation to atrocity. It precedes atrocity and is the material with which atrocity is built. And it is obscured — forgotten — in atrocity's construction. Atrocity is the original suffering of those who died at Sétif and Guelma, outside

any analogy, made analogical. It is their agony transformed into the qualitative intensity of a particular persecution situated in a social and political context. That is to say, an atrocity is the apparatus within which those who aren't counted become simply what they are for those who count in the operation of the count-as-*x*, or for those who inherit this count and its sense. So atrocity is affliction become more or less than what it is, no longer what it is in itself. It's a sort of horror produced analogically in relating a communal or political narrative to those who perished such that the two can't be understood in separation from one another. This production goes on in a communal operation of quantification: the count that quantifies and houses a certain qualification in a given number. This operation yields the correlation of the living's narrative and the dead, clothed in number, which comes to stand in for and gives sense to affliction; the correlation permits no excess beyond what's counted-as-*x* and then counted-as-one, beyond what has already been qualified under the banner of atrocity or has been given its adjectival mark, "atrocious."

So we can say that atrocity is affliction converted through the count-as-*x* into a number that admits of no excess, in which the meaning of some historical horror is to be definitively made out. The afflicted other is ensnared, made into a sort of finite, totalized idol of itself. It is the sense made of it. The other is transformed into only what is correlated with and inextricable from the narrative of the affliction that has befallen them, and all this is within the overarching analogical structure of the atrocity.

When this analogical structure, in which there are three terms (self, other, analogy), is taken to be prior to the two, the three-as-one is the result. The three are then counted-as-one, and this involves the neglect of the two. There can't be a two in which one could dwell, for the three-as-one is taken to come first, and it precludes the two from the start. The forgetting of the two here is twofold: one forgets the two in taking the three-as-one to be primary, and then one forgets this forgetting; this is essential for the maintenance of this position. The inhabiting of the three-as-one is in this sense a lethargy with respect to

the space in which the genuine other — who isn't determined by some identity perceived by me or attribute discerned by me — condemns me on pain of angst (that of leaving something out of my mourning) to a non-relational or asymmetrical abnegation. To live in the three-as-one is to look away.[8]

Communal attitudes with respect to the horrific events of history take an analogical form. Their topology is that of the three. There are two terms, the living and the dead. And then there is the dual bridge between them:

1. the sense the living make of the dead, and
2. the way in which the dead's suffering affects how the living set out to live.

Now the three, insofar as the two is neglected, is counted-as-one. The dead are taken to be inextricable from, and even identical to, the sense the living make of them. The dead can't exceed this, at least not in being thought. But the three needn't be counted-as-one. Instead, it can admit of excess: namely, the excess of the two, which one can acknowledge as preceding the three. When this acknowledgment takes place, the two and the three — the topology of ethics and the topology of community — can conceivably coexist.[9] But this coexistence can happen

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8   There are two sets of remarks by Emmanuel Levinas worth considering in light of what I'm arguing here. First, those regarding the way in which the height of the other person, their infinite distance from me and the fact that I'm irrecuperably responsible for them, is encountered in their hunger and poverty, their insufficiency and nakedness. This might be compared with the way in which the afflicted person's otherness reveals itself as a destitution, as an inadequacy, within the sphere of analogy. See Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority,* trans. Alphonso Lingis (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969), 117, 200. Second, it's worth considering those remarks made by Levinas about vigilance and insomnia, and their role in moral experience. See Levinas, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence,* 87. On insomnia in particular, see Emmanuel Levinas, *God, Death, and Time,* trans. Bettina Bergo (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 207–12.

9   The relationship here between the topologies of the two and the three bears some resemblance to the relationship between nonstandard philoso-

only when the two is taken to be the primordial topology. That's the only way for the three to not be counted-as-one. When the two is acknowledged as preceding the three, the three isn't totalizing, which means that the two and the three can then coexist (since there's room for the two prior to the three). If the two and the three are considered simultaneous, or if the three is given primacy and thereby counted-as-one, the other is replaced by an analogical idol: the other who's "for" the self, and nothing besides. The afflicted are taken to be nothing other than what they are under an atrocious description. If the two comes first, however, the afflicted are first what they really are, and only then are they—very partially, we'll acknowledge—the sense that's made of them. This permits an apt humility regarding the sense we make of the past's horrors. We introduce the possibility of real fallibility, so far as atrocity goes, in introducing the impossibility of getting a complete handle on affliction under an atrocious aspect. But this doesn't preclude a grip on affliction itself, which is precisely what inhabiting the topology of the two, prior to the three, enables us to get.

The number generated in the operation of the count-as-x traps the afflicted in a system—of sense, explanation, and mourning—in which they can differ only in degree from those who are set as the norm of the analogy, the constituting center or mean of the atrocity: the living. For the French colonial government, those who perished at Sétif and Guelma were the 1,020, just as they were the 45,000 for Radio Cairo. But what are they themselves, as ordinary people who endured substantial trials and died in appalling violence? What are they besides these numbers, beyond analogy? And how can we think the af-

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phy or non-philosophy and philosophy in the work of François Laruelle. See, especially, François Laruelle, *Principles of Non-Philosophy,* trans. Nicola Rubczak and Anthony Paul Smith (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013). Similarly, it's somewhat comparable to Lacoste's distinction between being-before-God (or *coram Deo*) and Heidegger's Being-in-the-world. See Jean-Yves Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute: Disputed Questions on the Humanity of Man,* trans. Mark Raferty-Skehan (New York: Fordham University Press, 2004).

fliction of these people without regard to what they're taken to be or to count as? How can we understand them in distinction from what they are for the apparatus of atrocity under which they've been subsumed and within which they've been numerically crystallized as the 1,020 or the 45,000? How can we unthink the distortion of the atrocity's count-as-x and $x =$ one so as to come to terms with affliction itself?

7. Counting, Angst, and Christ's Crucifixion

Within the topology of the three-as-one, affliction is understood as atrocity, with no outside. It is given sense by a body count, in which that sense is symbolically housed. The count-as-x introduces a third term or set of relations that conjoin those who aren't counted and those who count such that each term is indistinguishable from its sense within the greater milieu (the analogy itself). The terms are only thinkable as parts within the whole, in view of the whole.

There are a great many historical examples of this: affliction is qualified as atrocity by way of an operation of counting. A number is introduced, which stands in for and serves to aid in making sense of affliction. The affliction of the Shoah, for instance, is signified numerically by the count-as-six-million. The Shoah's affliction itself is subsumed under its correlated numericity. Five million is the unique number of the Thirty Years' War. The Cambodian autogenocide is counted-as-two-million. And the Black Death, which took so many lives in Paris, is given analogically by the number 50,000. We see this pattern — the application of a count-as-x to the suffering within a situation as it is seen from a specific point of view — just as much with pestilence and plague as with autos-da-fé, burnings at the stake, and drownings in the trials of witches. The massacre that took place at Columbine High School is symbolized by the number 15, which stands in for it. This is less what it is (an atrocity) than the Salem witch trials, symbolized by the number 20, which is still less what it is than the violence that took place in Sétif and Guelma — which, symbolized by the number 1,020 or 45,000, is

therefore more what it is. Atrocity is the numbering and qualification of affliction such that it can be more or less what it is. But this has a price: the resultant atrocity is only a shallow image of the affliction, a hollow idol or statue. The actual affliction is reduced to what can be numbered and qualified, rendered intelligible. In failing to acknowledge the count's excess, and in failing to get a non-atrocious grip on that excess, we are left with a sense of history's horrors as intelligible. But this sense is skin-deep. Our understanding of these horrors is facile at best, and it is often much more seriously warped by the thought that our vision of atrocity is wholly adequate to the relevant affliction.

The application of the count-as-*x* to the suffering seen within a given situation is commonly a response to rather acute trauma, or to the memory of this trauma and how it affected one or those proximal to one. In this way, one attempts to cope with what has occurred. But it is a coping strategy with pernicious repercussions.[10] The numbering that crystallizes the atrocity *qua atrocity,* such that it is at least to some degree more psychologically bearable, leads to a condition of angst in which that crystallization in number seems inescapable, exhaustive, and basic. Mourning comes to seem always incomplete. It looks always to be missing the real substance of what has happened, the affliction itself. One is left with a shallow number, a comprehensible but inevitably cursory sense of a set of violent events. This sense always appears to lack depth. For despite the sense made of af-

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10 To reiterate: I don't say that this strategy involves a choice to neglect affliction. For if one knew that one was forgetting affliction (in so choosing) and instead focusing on atrocity, this forgetfulness and the resultant focus would be rather partial. The coping strategy I have in mind here isn't so much a choice as a failure to see or remember, one that in fact makes sense in the wake of traumatic events. So we need to be *reminded* to attend to affliction, and then we need to work to maintain our vision of it, to stay vigilant. One can't see affliction and *with it in view* choose to see atrocity. The strategy I have in mind, then, isn't something one decides to pursue with a full view of what it entails; it's only seen for what it is once one remembers affliction, thereby coming to see what had previously gone on as neglect.

fliction as atrocity, the flesh and blood people who were actually afflicted are nowhere to be found.

The coping strategy that simplifies what has happened by making an analogical construction (the atrocity) look exhaustive of the sense to be made of some horrific set of events (through neglect) leads to a kind of chronic angst: we can't figure out how to truly encounter the horrors of the past, or those who really suffered them, and this affects how we're able to live in light of what has happened. We create atrocity in the count-as-x in part to endure our apparent exemption from tragedy, to relieve the disquiet of the time after a cataclysm that's not quite our own. The count is an attempt to make atrocity as much our own as is possible. But we alleviate the fear and trembling of facing up to affliction in this manner only at the cost of angst. The dreadful stasis of the number of a body count, the fixity of the atrocity and its narrative, seems to cure the fear that we too are merely pathetic flesh, or that the other's affliction is ours too, since we are responsible and already exposed in the other's suffering. But it does this by aiding us in forgetting both the self (the living) itself and the other (the dead), helping us to turn away from the two and toward the three. It makes it easier for us to take the three to be primary and so to totalize it as one. We trade the risk of having to come to terms with who we are and who the afflicted were, the risk of abnegation in the two, for what at first glance looks to be the comfort of analogy. We trade this risk for what's definitively circumscribed. But really, we trade it for what turns out to be a condition of chronic, seemingly inexorable angst. The view according to which there's nothing imaginable outside the atrocity, beyond the scope of the analogy, is certainly a cure (however short-term); but it has a price that proves to be disastrously high. As with autofiction, the solipsism in which everything has to be related to oneself in order to be comfortably intelligible winds up being stale and angst-ridden.

Once we've taken it on, it is something we try — without at first knowing how — to escape.[11]

Consider the Shoah, a set of horrors we're often wisely counseled to never forget. The affliction of the Shoah, in the operation of the count-as-six-million, becomes something that is no longer the suffering of ordinary people (whatever they may be) who are distinct from the sense the living make of them. It becomes an atrocity, in what I'll call the "as such" mode. The Shoah is taken *as such,* in its entirety, to be the atrocity made of it. Nothing of the affliction of the Shoah is seen to transcend the atrocity. The affliction becomes clothed in the numeric, which is the result of the count-as-x, and it is rendered univocally intelligible, which is the result of the $x =$ one. The number, x, is the totalization of the affliction in quantity, by way of which it is qualified under an atrocious description (counted-as-one). Hence, it is a totalization of the afflicted as what they are "for" the living who look back on them from a particular point of view. The afflicted are just the totality of what bears the relevant "for" relation (this can be made up of whatever set of "like" or "unlike" relations) to those who retrospect and see an atrocity. The affliction of ordinary people "as they are" becomes the atrocity of victims "as such." I will contrast the "as they are" mode of these people with

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11   For some criticisms of the contemporary trend of autofiction, particularly in French literature, see Sandra Laugier's interview with Tristan Garcia in *BOMB* 114. Autofiction is a genre or style of writing that imagines that a writer should stay within their own context, or should write only about what they know, not going beyond the limits of the familiar or self-same. As a style of writing, I don't think that autofiction is universally objectionable. But I find the idea that one can't or shouldn't seek to write about what one isn't personally acquainted with, that one can't or shouldn't want to write about others, profoundly objectionable, both because it turns fiction into solipsism, ruining much of what's absorbing and edifying in literature, and because it sets up a putative norm without any argument. One might compare what I say here, too, with Derrida's famous statement that "there is no outside-text." See Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology,* trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2016), 158. I develop the claim that a seeming lack of any outside leads to a condition of angst, and that this condition can be abrogated in abnegation, in my forthcoming *Angst and Abnegation.*

their mode "as such," which is just to contrast the afflicted with those seen to be victims of atrocity while stressing that the same people are essentially at issue on both contrasting sides.

From within the analogical structure of an atrocity, it doesn't seem sensible to so much as inquire as to whether the afflicted person as they are is in fact totalized, crystallized in the number of the fatality count. It doesn't seem to make sense, either, to ask whether they are beyond the analogy, themselves indifferent to it. The question of whether the person as they are, as afflicted, is totalized doesn't so much as come to mind. After all, the number of the person as such — one out of 1,020, say — stands in for the person as they are; it is taken to be primary, originary. The afflicted person's indifference to the atrocity's number, the distance between the real person who is afflicted and the person who is one out of 1,020, can only be seen in the remembrance of the topology of the two. For in inhabiting the two, one can look toward the atrocity's number with a certain indifference, attending instead to the afflicted as they are. One catches sight of those who aren't counted in a recollection of the two, against the amnesia that enables and results in the three-as-one and the angst that manifests within the analogy counted-as-one. Indifference to the three-as-one is possible in connection with an attitude for which atrocity doesn't suffice. One sees atrocity to be lacking, emphasizing the angst of the three-as-one, and one then follows this to the recollection of the two — the exit from analogy. The remembrance of the afflicted person, against atrocity's angst and neglect, in a sense mirrors the afflicted person's own indifference to the atrocity's number (which will only be constituted in hindsight).[12]

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12 In *After Finitude,* Quentin Meillassoux writes that what is beyond the correlational circle — for us, beyond the topology of the three-as-one — in some sense resembles the "great outdoors" sought by pre-critical philosophy, that "outside which was not relative to us, and which was *indifferent* to its own givenness to be what it is, existing in itself regardless of whether we are thinking it or not." The idea of indifference here is this. What is beyond the correlation between thinking and being, what exists whether or not we are thinking or positing it, is in a certain sense indifferent to us, foreclosed

I want now to turn to a particularly salient instance of the count-as-*x*, which is the root of much of its cultural and historical resilience as a method for comprehending great suffering. I have in mind the crucifixion of Christ, or the sense that was made of it by those who came after Christ. We can pull the affliction apart from the atrocity quite easily in this case. On the one hand, there is Christ's suffering itself. Christ, a flesh and blood person, bore the cross. On the other hand, there is the Pauline application of the count-as-*x* to this suffering such that it is transformed into an atrocity. This is the generative process through which the apparatus of Christianity as an analogical system (I'll come to this shortly) is produced. In this light, we can see the resurrection and ascension of Christ as the atrocious aftereffects of his affliction. They are the resultant narrative events of the count-as-*x*'s application to a crucifixion which, as affliction, stands beyond any narrative that might be attached to it by the living. The count-as-*x* is applied by Paul to the affliction of Christ, which yields a count-as-one; $x = $ one, and this "one" is the identity of Christ — the univocal set of qualities given analogically ("for-*y*") — as he is "for" Christians, within the analogy as a whole (Christianity). In being applied to Christ's affliction, the count-as-*x* yields the atrocious figure of Christ "for" Christians within Christianity. I will refer to this figure as "Christ-in-Christianity." First, this figure is "Christ-for-Paul."

Now the conversional road to Damascus that follows, and the spread of Christianity which follows that, is predicated on this primary conversion: that of the crucifixion into the ascension, that of the affliction of Christ himself (I will refer to him as

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to the determinations of thought. In being ourselves indifferent to such determinations, in treating the analogical with a certain ascesis, and as I'll suggest in showing a particular sort of hospitality to the other person as an other, we can get a grip on what is beyond the three-as-one. As Meillassoux's outside stands apart from what's inextricable from thought, the afflicted person is, beyond the analogical, foreclosed to our attempts to make sense of the past through a count of bodies and atrocity's constitution. Quentin Meillassoux, *After Finitude: An Essay on the Necessity of Contingency,* trans. Ray Brassier (London: Continuum, 2008), 7.

"Christ-without-Christianity") into Christ-in-Christianity. For it is through this conversion that Christ the afflicted is counted-as-one, a conversion to which the events of the resurrection and ascension narratively attest. Christ is counted-as-one in the construction of the analogy we call "Christianity," an analogy in which Christ himself can't exist as distinct. There are three terms in it: Christ, the Christian, and the dual bridge between them (Christianity). Christ is "for" the Christian, made intelligible as Christ-in-Christianity under the aspect of a narrative of atrocity (and salvation). The Christian is "for" Christ; she makes her life in the light of what happened to him and the sense she has made of this. Neither term can be thought in separation from the other; all are understood only within the analogy, Christianity itself. But this means that there is, to put it crudely, no Christ in Christianity. There's only Christ-in-Christianity in Christianity, and that isn't the same thing. Christ-without-Christianity, like the afflicted, is forgotten in the constitution of atrocity or Christ-in-Christianity. The ascension, as the end to which the crucifixion (understood atrociously) points, is the narrative result of the Pauline application of the count-as-one, which turns Christ as someone who suffered affliction into the primary symbol of a new analogical schema: Christianity. The last is, as it were, made first.[13] Christ is then only what he is within Christianity's apparatus, from which he can't be separated. He is merely Christ-in-Christianity.

This figure, who is in the "as such" mode identified above, gets in the way of an ethical impulse in humanity that I believe is among our most admirable: attention to the afflicted, hospitality to them as they are — or to put it instead in somewhat apophatic terms, the welcoming of those who transcend atrocity. In our neglect, Christ-without-Christianity as an example of the flesh and blood afflicted person to whom we might attend (which could figure in moral education and practice) is replaced by Christ-in-Christianity.

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13 "So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called but few chosen." Matthew 20:16 (King James Version).

This is representative, in a historically and culturally formidable way, of the forgetting of the two in favor of the three, which is thereby counted-as-one. The humility with which one answers the call of another, with which one welcomes a stranger at the door or faces the afflictions of the deceased, is replaced with egoistic projection, empathy, and the grafting of analogical relational properties (or "likes" and "unlikes") onto the stranger whose face one doesn't recognize. The ordinary person as they are, who can be afflicted and isn't counted, who is foreclosed to analogy and indifferent to their atrocious position, is forgotten in the movement from the two to the three-as-one. One potent example of this is the movement from the crucifixion, the affliction of Christ-without-Christianity, to the ascension, which is predicated on the atrocity in which Christ is intelligible as Christ-in-Christianity. That atrocity is the product of the count-as-one, and it in turn makes possible the Pauline conversional project, since it constitutes the analogy — Christianity — within which the converted are to identify themselves as a term, as Christians.

The affliction of the crucifixion becomes an atrocity, which is the material cause of the ascension and for which the ascension is in some sense the final cause. Once again, the last becomes the first. Where there was an afflicted person, there is now a person inseparable from a narrative of their affliction, inseparable from those who tell this narrative and pass it on. Christ-without-Christianity becomes Christ-in-Christianity. And Christ himself is set to one side, since he falls outside the bounds of the operative analogy. Christ is made into the first principle of a new order, Christianity, and is thinkable only as positioned within that new order.[14] It is an order that he himself

14 Relatedly, Christ is often seen as the archetypal child, and thus as the seat of salvation insofar as the reproduction that brings about the next generation saves. His infancy is seen to represent deliverance. This Irenaean Christianity involves a sort of reproductive futurism, which always puts deliverance beyond what's presently possible (this is characteristic of any eschatological ethic). Salvation is imagined to be a work of time, and morality consists in a project of hope in some distant advent whose very

didn't know — indeed, couldn't have known. For atrocity is always constituted in retrospection, in attending to the afflicted as they are "for" the living or in the "as such" mode.[15] Christ exists, having been counted-as-one, only as the source of Paul's novel analogy, as what he is "for" Paul. Paul can instigate the spread of Christianity only because this has taken place, only because Christ is no longer himself. Christ who isn't counted is tied to the Christian (or originally, Paul) who counts, constituting an apparatus in which neither Christ nor the Christian can be thought in distinction from one another. Outside this relation, there is no Christ. Nor is there a Christian. Outside the identification of Christ and the Christian as terms, there is no relation (Christianity).

Here, we can clearly see the *prima facie* aporetic structure of analogy. The three of the three-as-one demands two terms — Christ and the Christian, say — themselves. It can't come into being without them. But the two terms demand the introduction of a third, without which they can't be thought. There is a way in which the two terms must be taken as primitive, and they then go on to be related. But, from the view on which their relation is primary, there's a way in which the terms couldn't be taken as primitive (or as non-terms). The two terms seem, at least, to cry out for analogy such that they can be made intelligible. They are thus counted-as-one. Yet the three-as-one,

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possibility grants signification to present action (including reproductive action). In §10, I argue that, contrary to this eschatological sense of salvation, deliverance is always of the order of the presently possible. So far as reproductive futurism in Christianity goes, we might also consider the symbolic work of the ritual of baptism as spiritual rebirth. Cf. Lee Edelman, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).

15 What's crucial in this retrospection isn't *temporal* (or spatial) distance. Atrocity can be seen at whatever temporal distance and can even be projected onto future possibilities. Instead, what's crucial is the sort of distance from affliction one finds in its neglect, a kind of *moral* distance from which other people look assimilable and their suffering quantifiable and comprehensible. When I say that atrocity is seen in "retrospection," I mean to suggest this distance: one sees atrocity essentially from afar, such that forgetfulness can come between one and one's vision of affliction.

in its angst and aporia, enjoins us to inhabit a two that it requires (as the angst and aporia show) but cannot remember.

8. No Matter What

The count-as-*x* forgets the two. In subjecting affliction to it, one neglects the primacy of the space in which one welcomes the other as they are — not because of their given qualities or re-lation to one, nor despite their position or identity within the analogical schema. One forgets the space in which one is hospi-table to the other without regard to what they are "for" one. I'll call the person who is forgotten, who is the other in the two, the person "no matter what." That's just to say that they aren't what one makes of them. They aren't welcomed *because* one appreci-ates their qualities, nor *despite* what one takes their analogical position to be — but rather, *no matter what.* When one forgets the two, one forgets the person no matter what, and then this forgetting.

I will call the mode of the other as they are, and not as they are "for" me or "as such," "the fashion of the no matter what." The other *in the fashion of the no matter what* is whosoever they are, beyond the analogy. They are the one I welcome in the to-pology of the two, the one who makes a claim on me, for whom I'm responsible, the one whose affliction I am to remember. This person is secondarily enmeshed in an analogical milieu, as Christ qua Christ-in-Christianity is, and the secondariness of this is often forgotten (yielding a three-as-one, or atrocity). But first, an ordinary person is no matter what. They are not placed in an analogy from the start, though this priority can be neglected.

So the person who is afflicted is a person no matter what, while the person understood under the aspect of atrocity is a person who is more or less than what they are, a person "as such."

Now the other person in the fashion of the no matter what is absolutely different from me. They are beyond any analogical net I can cast. Recall that I can't relate to the other in the two. I

am exposed to them directly, responsible, but without relation or reciprocity. I am here for the other, condemned to them. All I can say in the two is "here I am!"[16] Beckett tells us that we exist in the accusative case, for others, in the eyes of strangers or in responding to what they say.[17] But it is more than this. In the two, I exist in the dative case. I'm summoned by the other to be hospitable. I am not "for" the other in the sense of analogy's "for." Rather, I am this direct, non-analogical exposure to the other.

I am, from the very start, an exposure to the other — who's sometimes afflicted, who sometimes calls out for help, to whose call I am always already commanded to respond. In the two, I exist in the presence of what isn't me, what isn't of me, to which I can't hope to relate. I abnegate, welcoming the other person no matter what, attending to them as they are. This is the basis of any unselfish love.[18] The two is a space characterized by a welcome offered no matter what. The attitude that makes possible its inhabiting takes this shape: I remember the two and thus come to inhabit it with respect to others whom I no longer take to be totalized in whatever analogical schema. I thus see the others as they are, and I see affliction and can bear witness to it, where before I saw only atrocity, always tied up with myself.

In order to throw the axiom that structures the topology of the two into starker relief, an axiom I have been calling the "no matter what," we can consider the ethic in which it arises. I will call this the "generic ethic." We can think about the shape of a life dedicated to the hospitality that characterizes the two, a life in which one bears witness to affliction rather than atrocity. And we can further ask about how a philosophical exploration of this sort of life, a theoretical consideration of it, might go.

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16 Cf. 1 Samuel 3:4. See also Emmanuel Levinas, *The Levinas Reader,* ed. Seán Hand (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), esp. 104, 166, 182, 184, 207.

17 Samuel Beckett, *Stories and Texts for Nothing* (New York: Grove Press, 1967), 91.

18 I discuss hospitality and love in more depth in "On Neighborly and Preferential Love in Kierkegaard's *Works of Love," Journal of Philosophy and Scripture* 8 (Summer 2019).

A philosophical system, a set of views and a manner of approaching philosophical questions, is perhaps best differentiated from other systems by the question of what is at stake for it. For Descartes, it is the possibility of knowledge that is most at stake: knowledge of the self, the external world, God, and other people. *I think, I am.* For Michel Henry, like Descartes, it is also this possibility, and that of the self-impressional life that precedes it and is its condition. *I feel myself thinking, I am, and only then can I know about the world.* For Simone Weil, it is because I can act — and thinking is a sort of activity — that I am. I constitute what I am to be in the moment of action. For Kant, the thing that's most at stake is the limit, the law of thinking in the first instance (*quid juris?*), which prohibits the speculative diseases of the head and leads us toward a putatively preferable region of thinking. The ontological question (about the nature of things-in-themselves) is put on the table only as an empty possibility. Instead of asking about what something is, the critical philosophy tells us that we must instead ask about the possibility conditions for a thing to appear to us as it does. For Heidegger, it is being as such, and one's relation to it as Dasein, that is at stake — especially, it is the *question* of being, which has for so long been obliviated. There's a sense in which this is a return to the question of ontology, for we are to inquire into being itself. But we can only do this, we're told, through an existential analytic of Dasein. So being and thinking, as in Kant, are correlated in our being-in-the-world. We can only think being by thinking of ourselves, proceeding from thought (and always from within thought outward). For Quentin Meillassoux, what's at stake is the perhaps, a sort of chance or chaos (the only necessity). Contingency is absolute, and it renders instability itself liable to change. For Alain Badiou, we are after a new conception of being or what is, a new conception of the event or what happens, and an understanding of the relationship between these. What's at stake is the subject and its relationship — of fidelity or betrayal — to evental truths. For each of these philosophers, there is something centrally at stake, and they approach their investigations, in posing questions and setting out views, with

this in mind. There is something about which they endeavor to get clear, which structures the inquiries undertaken. Or to put it another way: there is some theme that gives their philosophical work a particular character and shapes the path it takes.

For the generic ethic, which seeks to get clear about the topology of the two and the shape of the life of the person who inhabits it, what's at stake is abnegation. The project is to offer a new conception of allegiance, a sense of what it would mean to vigilantly recollect the two and to thereby avoid the angst of the three-as-one. Often, this angst is produced in the following way. We take on an ontology that forbids the existence of genuine others, since those with whom we relate can only be made sense of (we come to believe) insofar as they're correlated with us. We can't hope to think things-in-themselves, so the alterity of other people is only ever conceivably relative to us. Yet our ethical sensibility demands the existence of real others. The categorical imperative requires that, all else aside, we treat other people in a certain way. In Aquinas, one finds talk of virtuous relations to others. And in Bentham, one finds a clear concern with how one's actions affect other people. Our ethical sensibility (whatever framework for thinking about normative ethics is on offer) seems to demand others who can't be thought, at least insofar as we inhabit a three-as-one. So it isn't surprising that this results in a condition of angst, as our sense of the good forces us to run up against the cage of the ontology we've taken on, in which other people aren't really other. Those philosophical systems that operate with a three-as-one structure rule out the existence of any other, but very often they still demand that we treat the other in a given way, with reference to certain principles or maxims or virtues. This generates a condition of angst, since in moving from ontology to ethics we seem to require others whose existence has already been called into question, and at the very best set to one side or bracketed, from the start. The generic ethic instead proceeds from ethics, beginning with the two — the primordial ethical scene — and the welcoming of the other for whom one is called to responsibility. In remembering the two, one comes to inhabit it anew and again, and the angst of

the mixture of a three-as-one with an ethical wish to treat supposedly nonexistent others in a certain way is abrogated.

A philosophical elaboration of the generic ethic involves, then, a new thought of devotion or welcoming, in some sense a new thought of piety.[19] For it, the question at hand isn't about freedom but fidelity, not choice but commitment: the commitment to a hospitality to others that makes freedom in the social world then conceivable.[20] It is in the three-as-one, after all, that one is unfree, tied always to the other, subsumed always under the operative analogy, identified as a mere analogical term. The generic ethic asks, what would it mean to welcome not just the old friend but also the absolute stranger? Would it be a sentimental vision in which one must capitulate one's self to the stranger's identity, giving in even when they, say, harm others? Or would it be a welcoming only of the non-qualitative stranger, the stranger beyond the analogy, and in that sense a non-capitulation to those present elements which, as qualitative or analogical, then impose qualities on others?[21] How can we

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19 For as Simone Weil writes, "Today it is not nearly enough merely to be a saint, but we must have the saintliness demanded by the present moment, a new saintliness, itself also without precedent." Simone Weil, *Waiting for God,* trans. Emma Craufurd (New York: Harper Perennial, 2009), 51. We are in need of a new ethic for a new guard and a new age, which in truth is always a new way of remembering, of fixing one's eyes upon the good.

20 Cf. Levinas, *The Levinas Reader,* 210n10: "Freedom means, therefore, the hearing of a vocation which I am the only person able to answer — or even the power to answer right there, where I am called." See additionally Levinas, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence,* esp. 123–24.

21 To be sure, abnegation to others no matter what often demands that we *don't* capitulate to the acts of analogical quality-imposition in which some other engages. Hospitality demands that we don't tolerate totalization, and in fact hospitality to the totalizing other demands that we reject his totalizing, that we take a stand against it. For example: if we are going to welcome a transphobe and someone who is transgender, we'll have to fight in the name of the no matter what against the imposition of qualities (the transgender person "for" the transphobe, say) in which the transphobe engages in their hatred. Abnegation isn't a passivity opposed to taking a stand; it's not a weakness that would somehow prevail over force, or a pathos that disavows power or strength. It often requires that, in showing a hospitality to the totalizing other, we don't capitulate to their totaliza-

abnegate to the stranger, welcoming them in a no matter what fashion, without regard to their relation to us or their place in some analogical schema? These are the questions that the generic ethic has to ask.

Setting aside, for a moment, talk of qualities, topologies, and so on, the question for the generic ethic is altogether straightforward: what would it mean to live with allegiance to other people as others, to live hospitably and welcome in a no matter what fashion? To put it another way: what would it mean to live in steadfast devotion to flesh and blood strangers, who are infinitely different from oneself?

The main axiom of such an allegiance or devotion, of an abnegation that bears witness to ordinary people and their possible affliction, is the "no matter what." Being *in the fashion of* the no matter what means being outside any analogy; being ordinary, flesh and blood, not "for" the other terms of an atrocity, not counted-as-*x*. In the topology of the two, I welcome another *no matter what,* without regard to the positions they occupy in whatever analogies. What I welcome no matter what is the other person no matter what, the person who isn't a term of an analogy. So the no matter what structures the topology of the two, defining how the self in the two relates, via a welcoming of absolute alterity, to the other. Welcoming no matter what is relating to what's utterly exterior; it is a relating that is wholly non-analogical (and so in a certain sense, non-relational). The no matter what describes the piety of the space in which I encounter an other who can't be assimilated to what's self-same, an other who isn't different only in degree from the norm that I

tion. Even St. Paul tells us that there's beneficent combat. In the abnegation of the generic ethic, resistance to quality-imposition is the other side of responsibility and hospitality; non-capitulation is one's response to the particular situation of abnegation to another who engages in colonizing acts of quality-imposition on their own others. Here, it is the imposition that is refused so that each other can be welcomed as they are. I discuss this at greater length in "To Not Lose Sight of the Good: Notes on the Zapatismo Ethic," *Religious Theory,* January 2020, http://jcrt.org/religious-theory/2020/01/14/to-not-lose-sight-of-the-good-notes-on-the-zapatismo-ethic-part-1-matt-rosen/.

am. This is an other for whom the addition of analogical qualities is a subtraction of alterity. In placing the other under an atrocious description, I take away their infinite alterity — or I presume to do that. This subtraction is a move from infinity to finitude, from the real otherness of other people to the finite bundles of qualities under which I subsume them. The resultant others "for" me are not others at all but of the same. In this way, I forget the other who is in the fashion of the no matter what, who precedes and is foreclosed to the other "for" me. Inhabiting the two consists in remembering this originary other and my abnegation to them, my responsibility to welcome them without regard to any analogy.

The generic ethic is *generic* in this sense: the other is not to be welcomed under the aspect of the particular, welcomed *because of* some quality deemed admirable or *despite* some attribute to be brushed aside. The other is welcomed *no matter what,* generically — but that's to say, in their singularity, as whatever they really are. In the generic ethic, genericity and singularity come together. Now for the generic ethic, which welcomes without regard to qualities or analogical positions, the no matter what is the axiom that founds and structures the topology of the two. This in turn makes possible a three, an analogy, that isn't totalizing or counted-as-one. The axiom of the two, in being remembered as primary, makes possible the coexistence of the two and the topology of the three; this three acknowledges the priority of the two, and it therefore doesn't see analogy as exhaustive (it is the shape an ethical community takes). There is a sense in which the generic ethic is thus pre-communal, though it is required for a particular form of the communal, namely, the three that can coexist with the two. The two of the consequent topology, a topology I'll call the "coexistent two-and-three," coexists as before, and then alongside, or as alongside because before, the three.[22]

22 There's a way in which the topology of the coexistent two-and-three that I'm elaborating could be understood as an attempt to resolve some of the aporetic tension in Leibniz's "Monadology." (Although, to be sure, this topology doesn't map neatly onto Leibniz's project.) The two of the topology of the two-and-three is something like the Leibnizian monad, insofar

The generic ethic is the ground in the last instance of a community that is open to others, hospitable, non-totalizing. It is what, at the end of the day, renders any community that acknowledges its priority inhabitable — and not only for those who are proximal enough to the operative norms to fit in.

The no matter what functions as a razor that cuts from the three-as-one to the two. Welcoming no matter what means remembering the person who is in its fashion, which then permits the coexistence of the two and the three in the topology of the coexistent two-and-three. The person no matter what is originary vis-à-vis the position of this person within an analogy, a position that becomes totalizing if it is taken to be primary or sufficient unto itself. So we can understand the operation of the count-as-*x* as an imagining of the three's self-sufficiency (counted-as-one), and as a condensation of this sufficiency in a number that gives voice to the atrocity and its meaning for the living. The thought that atrocity suffices for affliction is given in affliction's crystallization in the unique number of the fatality count. The count-as-*x* is a twofold forgetting of the primacy of the two, the ethical, as the topology in which the axiom of the no matter what is at work. One forgets the topology in which the self (the living) abnegates to the unassimilable other (the afflicted, the dead) who is a person no matter what, and then one forgets this forgetting. Welcoming no matter what cuts from the person as such to the person as they are. One gets a grip on the afflicted themselves only by way of hospitality. Forgetting the person as they are leads to an understanding of the other under the aspect

as it is self-contained and not open to determination by what goes on in the three; it has "no windows" (though it is where transcendence comes to pass). The three of this topology is the saturation of each monad with relations to all monads, which is total in the three counted-as-one but partial in the three of the two-and-three. The three conceives of its monads as "all windows," or even as *only* windows to other monads. I have been arguing for the coexistence of the two and the three insofar as the two precedes the three and is foreclosed to it (i.e., insofar as the saturation is seen as partial in the remembrance of the two). Cf. G.W. Leibniz, "The Principles of Philosophy, or, the Monadology (1714)," in *Philosophical Essays,* ed. and trans. Roger Ariew and Dan Garber (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1989), 213–25.

of the same, the analogical. The no matter what leads back from this atrocity to affliction. To inhabit the generic ethic is to keep this in mind, to vigilantly recollect the two and welcome the afflicted in the fashion of the no matter what.

9. The Crucifixion of Christ No Matter What

Now that we have a better grasp of the generic ethic, I want to return to that culturally and historically significant instance of the count-as-*x* which we've been considering: the crucifixion of Christ himself, whose being counted-as-one, originally by Paul, was in some sense the precondition of the ascension and Christianity's spread. The affliction of Christ's crucifixion is transformed into an atrocity such that the ascension can be made sense of. This transformation happens by way of an understanding of Christ as Christ-in-Christianity or Christ as such, produced in the count-as-one. An understanding of the crucifixion as atrocity follows this quantification, the identification of Christ as the atrocity's "one." So the count-as-*x* mediates between affliction and atrocity, producing the "one" of the ascension's Christ.

In a certain sense, Christ-without-Christianity, or Christ no matter what, is immediate. He is not mediated by the count-as-*x* and *x* = one, turned into the Christ-in-Christianity of the atrocity. Christ no matter what thus underdetermines or undermines what transforms him into someone in an atrocious position — the analogical Christ — which isn't himself in the fashion of the no matter what. The Christ who is just himself, who is afflicted without atrocity, is at an infinite distance from his mediated posture; Christ-without-Christianity is an infinity away from Christ-in-Christianity, since between these two is the gulf that divides the analogical from the non-analogical. Christ-without-Christianity is indifferent to his intra-analogical position. And the recollection of the two roots, for us, an attunement of indifference toward this position. This recollection is the application of the razor of the no matter what, which in a sort of ascesis strips away the analogical qualities of an ordinary

person so as to reveal their radical insufficiency from within the perspective of analogy — so as to reveal, in some cases, the afflicted as they are. This razor of absolute hospitality cuts away the self-indulgence in which one's attributive or empathetic view of the other is taken to suffice for the other as such. In the case we've been considering, that self-indulgent view is bound up with the analogical matrix of Christianity. It is a view of Christ as Christ-in-Christianity.

The crucifixion as the affliction of Christ no matter what is subject to the count-as-*x* by Paul. This is the production of the Christ who is Christianity's subject, counted-as-one within its analogical schema. Only after this production of the Christ subject can the ascension of Christ and the conversional road to Damascus take place, insofar as they are analogical events predicated on the inextricable correlation of Christ no matter what (the originary, flesh and blood person in the two) and Paul (the counter) in a correlation that comes to be known, in being inhabited by more and more people, as "Christianity." It is "for" Paul that the affliction of Christ becomes the atrocity at Christianity's heart. The road to Damascus is in this sense the road of affliction become atrocity. It involves the imposition of the analogical milieu of Christianity onto Christ such that there can be, for this analogy and its constitutive terms, no Christ himself. Christianity is, at bottom, the name given to the colonization of Christ by Paul and those who inherit and inhabit his construction.

Now that we have Christianity's topological structure in view, can we theorize instead with the Christ of the crucifixion, with that Christ whose affliction is foreclosed to the determinations of atrocity? Can we set aside the operation of the count-as-*x* and the production of the atrocity of Christ-in-Christianity? Can we be allegiant in thought to Christ as he is, rather than to Christ as such? Can we, to put it plainly, refuse to put the analogical before the ethical, refuse to forget the affliction of Christ in the neglect of the two and the inhabiting of the three-as-one?

Christianity as constituted by Paul is the analogical result of the count-as-*x* that renders Christ himself Christ-in-Christian-

ity and the Christian what they are merely "for" Christ. In the totalization of Christianity, the only existent sense of Christ no matter what is Christ as such. And the Christian as such can be the only existent sense of the Christian as they are. Christ-in-Christianity and the Christian-in-Christianity can't be thought apart from their relationship. Neither term can be understood beyond the limit of the analogy of Christianity itself. The atrocity of the mediated Christ is simply one of the correlate objects of an analogical construction built by a count. This atrocity's sense is crystallized in the unique number of x; in the case of the crucifixion, this number is one. The twice forgetting of affliction by those who count makes the position of affliction as atrocity within the analogical milieu intelligible — and angst aside, somewhat sustainable. Christ himself, though, is at a distance from the analogical position into which he's put as part and parcel of the three-as-one. Recast against the three-as-one from the two, Christ no matter what is infinitely other. We move from the three-as-one to the two by applying the ascetic razor of the no matter what, by recollecting the primacy of the two and our responsibility for the other in it. We thus move from Christ-in-Christianity to Christ-without-Christianity, the latter of whom is infinitely different from the former. The other in the two is absolutely other than what they are in the three-as-one. We see this in the recasting of Christ himself against his secondary (but forgotten as such and taken to be primary) position in the three-as-one.

The other is the organon of deliverance from atrocity, for the remembrance and witnessing of the analogical non-position of the afflicted Christ himself, who is indifferent to his position in the atrocity, delivers us from the three-as-one to the two. This is a deliverance from analogy and its angst. And in coming to remember the primacy of the two, we make possible the coexistent two-and-three (that is, the coexistence of the topologies of ethics and community), since the three can only coexist with the two in which there's a legitimate other, not different from the self only in degree, if it's seen to be secondary to the two. The messianic promise of Christ as a flesh and blood insufficiency

of qualities when seen from within the analogy is predicated on Christ in the fashion of the no matter what.[23] This essentially undergirds the qualitative accident of Christ-in-Christianity's analogical position. And what is salvation if not from the totalization of this accident (the thought that it isn't accidental but originary)? Salvation — from the angst in which history's calamities appear unmournable, unthinkable in themselves — is nothing other than deliverance from the crystallization of the affliction (and the afflicted person no matter what) in the atrocity's unique number. Bearing witness to the other's affliction — not as atrocity — is the praxis that gets this deliverance going and keeps it alive.

10. Exodus and Deliverance

In the Old Testament story of the exodus of the Israelites from out of their bondage in Egypt, we also find that the other, in a sense that's pivotal to the story, is the organon of deliverance. Moses has been called by God to go unto Pharaoh and to try to persuade him to release the Israelites from their servitude. He has been told that Pharaoh will deny this request, and that

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23 To be clear: Christ isn't *in* the fashion of the no matter, *in* the two or the generic ethic, as Christ-in-Christianity is *in* the analogy of Christianity. To separate these two senses of "in," recall the distinction I made previously between people *as they are* (who are afflicted) and people *as such* (who are seen under an atrocious aspect). In the generic ethic, one thinks alongside — in responsibility for, in abnegation to — the generic and singular person, the person as they are. The generic ethic isn't an analogy that contains, or claims to give exhaustive sense to, its terms (it doesn't have terms understood *as terms*). Christ is *in* the fashion of the no matter what in this weak sense of "in": when one welcomes Christ no matter what in the two, bearing witness to his affliction, one thinks alongside him, without subsuming him under the qualities of an analogy. Christ-in-Christianity is *in* Christianity in a much stronger sense of "in": he is seen to be *only* what he is *within* the nexus of Christianity. To put it another way, there's nothing that is seen to transcend the three when it is counted-as-one; but the other transcends the three in being in the two. This "being in" isn't the same thing as "being totalized by." It's a transcendence in and through an immanent topology.

it will be necessary to do God's wonders in order to convince Pharaoh, however momentarily, that he can't keep the Israelites in bondage. It is essential, in order for Moses to be able to re-lay the word of God to Pharaoh and demand the deliverance of the Israelites, that he be seen as other by Pharaoh.[24] Moses, who had been reared among the Egyptians, who had not known of his own ancestry, had to leave Egypt and go out into the de-sert in order to come back to Pharaoh as a stranger — not as an Egyptian. In Exodus, we read that God tells Moses: "Go in unto Pharaoh, and tell him, Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me."[25] Having been raised alongside Pharaoh, Moses must undergo his own exodus and return only years later, when he is truly exterior to Pharaoh and the whole Egyptian milieu. And even when he does return, he must — through enacting God's wonders — continuously sepa-rate himself from that milieu, continuously demonstrate that he is an outsider. He must not be like Pharaoh or of Pharaoh, assimilable, but present as another, as a new face. He can re-turn, to put it in the terms I have been suggesting in this essay, only when he is outside the analogical schema of the operative Egyptian three-as-one, beyond what's "like" or "unlike" Pharaoh

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24 The remembrance of the two is, in part, a remembering of that encounter with the other I am to myself (it may first of all be this). It's an encounter with transcendence that happens, as it were, in my very immanence. I am a stranger even to myself, and I welcome the stranger that I am to myself in a no matter what fashion in the two. I can forget this, and then forget this forgetting, failing to show myself hospitality and inhabiting a three-as-one with respect to myself. In this way, I can totalize myself and see my own affliction as atrocity. Or I can remember, welcome myself, and inhabit a coexistent two-and-three with respect to myself. This is the case in my relationship with myself, just as it is in my relations with others. Consider Christ's moment of kenosis: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Psalm 22:1 (King James Version). This moment of kenosis is one of abnegation, the response to the call of a stranger. But who's the stranger? It's Christ, of course. In abnegation to myself, I greet what, within me, is other than what I am. In this hospitality, in the two of himself in which transcendence passes through immanence, Christ can then say, "into thy hands I commend my spirit." Luke 23:46 (King James Version).

25 Exodus 9:1 (King James Version).

and different only in degree. Then, and only then, is deliverance presently possible. And Moses, as the other — indeed, the other of Pharaoh (qua Israelite, a doer of God's wonders) *and* the other of the Israelites he intends to work to save (qua Egyptian-reared, qua bringer of salvation) — is this deliverance's organon. In this case, as in the messianic case of Christ, it is what's first no matter what (Moses himself, Christ himself, the afflicted of Sétif and Guelma themselves), and then recast against its analogical position (against Moses "for" Pharaoh or "for" the Israelites, Christ-in-Christianity, those who suffered an atrocity) as other to it, that makes possible deliverance from analogy. And because the other is always present, because I can always remember the two in listening to the other's call and so inhabit it from out of the three-as-one, abnegation to the other precedes even my being-in-the-world or dwelling in analogies. I can remember the two's primacy and thereby inhabit a coexistent two-and-three.

Deliverance from the view of the Israelites' bondage in Egypt on which it's seen as an atrocity happens in the remembrance of the Israelites' affliction. Each year at Passover, Jews around the world don't say of the Israelites, "when *they* were slaves in Egypt," but rather, "when *we* were slaves in Egypt." The use of the first person here doesn't signify the empathy of analogy. It isn't that we are to step into the shoes of those who were slaves in Egypt, for this would just be to bridge the third person (*they*) and the first person (*we*) by means of constructing an atrocity: the Israelites "for" us, as it were. This isn't what's going on when it is said that we were slaves in Egypt. Rather, in bearing witness to the affliction of the flesh and blood people who were slaves in Egypt, we recollect *our* place in the topology of the two and see that it is *our* burden to bear. We don't empathize but abnegate. We disavow the notion of an atrocity that went on many years ago, that affected only our ancestors, and take up an affliction that is always very much alive: the affliction of ordinary people who can't be counted or rendered intelligible and thereby set aside, granted a final meaning, or else considered unmournable. We recollect the affliction that happened in Egypt, and we are thus delivered from the atrocity. We recollect the two

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in which we, condemned to abnegation, welcome the other no matter what, without regard to their position in some analogy. We recollect that we, like Christ-without-Christianity, are in the fashion of the no matter what, that we're first not analogical creatures, even if we secondarily assume analogical positions. We annul the condition of angst that characterizes the three-as-one in the remembrance of what really went on in Egypt, the remembrance of what really goes on today. And so, we treat the unique number of the count-as-x with a certain ascesis.

In the remembrance of affliction in the two, we recognize that just as the crucifixion's Christ is foreclosed to his position as the Christ of the ascension and conversion, so affliction is foreclosed to atrocity and stands apart from it. In moving from atrocity to affliction via an application of the razor of the no matter what, against the unique number of the count-as-x and $x = $ one, we recall the secondary nature of the atrocity and the number in which it is crystallized. The recollected two is an ethical space in which the self commends itself into the hands of the other, the victim of affliction whosoever they are, no matter what they are. For they are the organon of deliverance from atrocity, to whom one attends in remembering the two. This is a remembering of the self's abnegation to those who aren't counted, those who can't be counted because they are afflicted without atrocity.

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