

THE DRAMA OF THE SELF-BECOMING: TRANSFORMATION OF JUSTICE IN LEVINAS' ETHICS

Irina Poleshchuk¹

Abstract

The article discloses the formation of justice in its connection to responsibility, pain, suffering, pardon and temporality. At stake Levinas' idea of subjectivity in a modality of one-for-the-other challenged by the appearance of the third party in the face-to-face relation. One of the important emphases is put to the role of an intimate and singularized justice rooted in proximity and τὸ δεῖν, its unique role in forming ethical subjectivity. With the third party subjectivity fully acquires its dramatic changes since doing justice comprises a complexity of ethical responses which slightly move from the ethical to the political and community and then back to the ethical. Here, the main claim is a temporal disjunction of justice in relation to others. The impossibility of doing justice and getting pardon of acts that have had unjustified intentions are described as undecidable just because of its disjointed content.

Keywords: Levinas, Derrida, justice, intimate justice, disjuncture, time, pain, pardon, forgiveness, subjectivity, responsibility.

Introduction

In Levinas' ethics the formation of the self is tightly connected with being responsible and doing justice to the other. However, the development and becoming of subjectivity in relation to the other being takes dramatic steps because the signification of being-for-the-other presupposes varieties of how Levinas develops a meaning and a role of justice. In *Totality and Infinity* justice is still a singularisation of face-to-face relation with the unique other while in latest works (*Otherwise than Being or Beyond the Essence*² and *Difficult Freedom*³) Levinas specifies justice as temporalisation of pardon which is strictly bound to the third party.

In this paper my personal challenge is to investigate how and why the meaning of justice changes with the appearance of the third party and what dramatic outcomes it brings for the subjec-

¹ Irina Poleshchuk – PhD in Social sciences, docent at EHU (Vilnius) and University of Helsinki.

² Levinas E. *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*. Trans. A. Lingis. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981.

³ Levinas E. *Difficult Freedom*. Trans. S. Hand. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990.

tivity as being one-for-the-other. One of my contributions to the understanding of justice in Levinas' works is a concept of intimacy of justice in experiencing pain, suffering and death of the other. Furthermore I would discuss the connection between justice, the pardon and time. Here, my own emphasis will be on the temporal disjunction of justice in Levinas' philosophy.

One of the surprising interpretations of responsibility in *Totality and Infinity*⁴ is how its dimension changes from love towards justice. Levinas claims responsibility to be finally accepted and realized as justice and not as love.⁵ In being responsible love would primordialily signify doing justice. In everyday language one might understand a face-to-face relation with the other as based on love which simply includes emotions, affectivity and responsivity. However, Levinas points out that there is a danger to ascribe «a feeling of the other» to being-responsible-for-the-other rather than to see an unconditional command of the other's face in it. Thus, Levinas' need to turn love to the other into the command, or, an experience of loving the other would necessarily have a content of command. Love does not flow from heart feeling and sympathy. The command to responsibility coming to the subjectivity in the face of the other does not rest on some personal preferences for the unique other and it does not have ultimate and unconditional responsibility. The face commands me to respect the other not according to any specific personal tendencies but simply because the face addresses me in an absolute categorical way. The wish and the rights of the other come before my own, independent of any possible disposition or freewill. In his work *Difficult Freedom* Levinas repeatedly accentuates the absence of empathy and emotion in relation with the other: doing justice to the other means to respect him/her as the ultimate other but also accepting his/her will and demands before one's own. The definition of justice as the other's due is, thus, an absolute and inescapable command.⁶

Obviously the foregoing account of responsibility for the unique other in the face-to-face relation is not yet the last act in one's experience of being responsible. I suggest that besides the responsibility which befalls to me and comes through the other, there is yet another responsibility which I might call as responsibility in the third person, i. e. responsibility initiated by the emergence of the third one into intersubjective relation. This responsibility for the third is strictly bound to Levinas' reading of justice:

«Becoming conscious is motivated by the presence of the third alongside the neighbor approached. The third is also approached; and the relationship between the neighbor and the third cannot be indifferent to me when I approach. There must be justice among incomparable ones»⁷.

⁴ Levinas E. *Totality and Infinity*. Trans. A. Lingis. Pittsburgh: Dusquesne University Press, 2004.

⁵ Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, op. cit., p. 82.

⁶ Levinas, *Difficult Freedom*, op. cit., p. 18.

⁷ Levinas E. *Basic Philosophical Writings*. Ed. by A.T. Peperzak, S. Critchley, R. Bernasconi. Trans. the editors et al. Bloomington: Indiana University

Apparently in this passage Levinas brought to the fore a new reading of subjectivity as being one-for-the-others which I guess comprises a different modality and outcomes than being one-for-the-other.

To clarify the ethical subjectivity as being-for-the-others I will take the following steps. First, I will articulate the role of intimate justice in face-to-face relation with the other by discussing the meaning of pain and death in face-to-face relation. Second, I will move towards an interpretation of justice in relation with the third and I will show its structural undecidability. I should also mention that a theme of political dimension and its connection to Levinas' philosophy of justice is not a main subject of the current paper. However, I will touch upon it since the political initiated by justice brings conceptual differentiations for the subjectivity as being-responsible-for. As follows, I will problematize and envisage a possibility of pardon and its temporal issues for the subjectivity. The main topic of discussion in the last chapter will be the disjunction of time in modality as being one-for-the-others.

The intimacy of responsibility and justice: pain of death and suffering

The intimate face-to-face relation between the subjectivity and the other initiates a closed community which includes exactly two who are committed to each other. These two are withdrawn from others and from the rest of the society in their common enjoyment of each other. Then in this case responsibility will not bear meaning of being an unlimited and unconditioned one. The presence of the unique epiphenomenal other is the only event which is counted for the subjectivity. In *Totality and Infinity* and in *Difficult Freedom* Levinas agrees that in this intimacy there is a lack of universality of responsibility, and, as a result, a formation of signification of the ethical is never completed.

However, I accentuate that the face-to-face relation with the unique and certain other implies a singularized form of responsibility as being the-one-for-the-Other which, in its turn, introduces an intimate justice. I suggest that this idea is explicitly developed in late work *Otherwise than Being*. The intimacy signifies immediacy of touching and of the contact in which the meaning of sensibility is coming into light. Here the subjectivity enters into the contact with the other as otherness and as being the only one here and now for the other: «As signification, the-one-for-the-other, proximity is not a configuration produced in the soul. It is an immediacy older than the abstractness of nature. Nor is it fusion; it is contact with the other. To be in contact is neither to invest the other and annul his alterity, nor to suppress myself in the other»⁸ and «the a priori horizon which already puts the τόδε τι back into a whole, into a conjuncture or a correlation»⁹. The τόδε τι particular this one, is a core of the intimate justice; the one, this singularity is shaped in intimacy of

Press, 1996, «Essence and Disinterestedness», p. 122.

⁸ Levinas, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, op. cit., p. 86.

⁹ Ibid., p. 86.

being-for-the-other and doing justice for the other. My emphasis here: in this responsive relation the justice bears a meaning of singular justice to the other.

The appearance of the third party disturbs the singularity of the contact and deprives the subjectivity of the uniqueness of touch. I give an example of the situation of the dying other. This particular event discloses the other in all its vulnerability and exposure. The other lies down appealing to me and asking me to stay with him/her as death looks into his/her eyes, even though there is ultimately nothing that can be done but to answer with the intimacy of touch. Levinas says in «Intentionality and Sensation» one has to answer «here I am» and to «hold hand» tightly lightening death and making it more bearable. With the other's death befalling subjectivity, the gesture of being hospitable and giving hand becomes a genuine intimate justice. As Levinas puts it: «it becomes a duty to non-indifference par excellence, one without any vestige of desire for returns, a non-reciprocal goodness which, compared with the inexorability of death, might even seem vain and conceited»¹⁰. This gift of gesture of being near and with, holding hand, and this welcoming the other in the last state constitute the highest intimacy of doing justice to the other.

But exactly at this particular moment the problematic aspect of ethical subjectivity as doing justice arises. Levinas brings into intersubjective relation the third party and, what we are faced with, is annulated or questioned subjectivity as the-one-for-the-other. In the situation of death the intimacy and singularity of responsibility disappears because of being faced with the third other: the affinity of gaze and touch is not so personal anymore since I feel the presence of the face of the third party by my back. The subjectivity is losing its modality of being the one who is holding a hand of the dying other here and now.

Certainly the same gesture of doing intimate justice happens in the situation of the suffering other. The suffering is always personified and has a concrete image. One might say that suffering does not strike a community or a society in the abstract manner but it is rooted in solitary and lonely being who is unable to escape it. Moreover, the other person finds herself as being totally enclosed within sick and diseased self. My main comment here would be on two sides of pain which, in a way, possesses the other. On the one hand, pain encloses the other within herself; the other is in its own body. On the other hand, the suffering is also a breakthrough in such a way that the other finds herself in an ultimate need of help. Here the responsible subjectivity as being this particular one-for-the-other manifests with all its power. Again, justice takes a form of intimate being-for.

To conclude aspects of the singularized justice in the face-to-face relation I would accentuate the role of the third party: it revokes the very intimacy of justice and questions being-the-one-for. Is it a necessary step for Levinas to approach the ultimate and eternal responsibility? Or

¹⁰ Levinas E. *Ethics and Infinity*. Trans. R. Cohen. Pittsburgh: Dusquesne University Press, 1985. P. 119.

does he intend to move towards both, the ethical and political justice as inherent part of being responsible? These questions will be disclosed in the following pages. The next step I am taking to reveal the dramatic sides of responsible subjectivity is to show how the third party withdraws responsibility and forces the subjectivity to go through variety of ethical deconstruction to acquire new meanings of being-one-for-others.

The third party and justice

The emergence of the third party and necessity of doing justice to the third one brings us into the sphere of sociality and community. I suspect that by this set of concepts Levinas is purposefully throwing together two complex discourses: one is purely ethical and one is an attempt to move to the political, or, to get back to questioning the political. Two more points I would like to add and then to develop is that Levinas is conceptualizing a shading of justice, its inner disturbance and bringing into discussion traumatized subjectivity and not the other/others as it was in his early works.

Let me start with Levinas' thesis that an absolute close intimacy is never possible. The invisible presence of the third party always appears at the horizon of the modality of the-one-for-the-other. As Levinas puts it:

«The thou is posited in front of a we. To be we is not to 'jostle' one another or to get together around a common task. The presence of the face – the infinity of the other – is destitution, presence of the third party (that is, of the whole of humanity that looks at us)»¹¹.

The third party is always a necessary disturbance to test responsibility as doing justice for others. Neither subjectivity nor the other in relation of proximity is ever isolated beings but always stands in front of others.

It looks to me that Levinas' intention is to double two things: the response to the other and singularity of the face of the other, and, doing justice to the community (or, as well, giving response to the prophetic word). The third one has entered into the ethical relation and shackled it inside and turned it into a social and political one. The singularized relation with the other has now become a community of brothers – fraternity. Levinas states:

«Human fraternity has then a double aspect: it involves individualities whose logical status is not reducible to the status of ultimate differences in genus, for their singularity consists in each referring to itself... On the other hand, it involves the commonness of a father, as though the commonness of the race would not bring together enough»¹².

¹¹ Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, op. cit., p. 188.

¹² Ibid., p. 189.

In this passage Levinas tends to think together asymmetrical and symmetrical relation with the other and with others. Then, I would once again question: how in this balancing between asymmetrical and symmetrical would the concept of justice change? The command to justice coming from the third party transforms my ethical response to the other: it is challenged by the third one and, as I may suggest, is given back to me, returned by the third party as something which is «not enough». The unique sense of accomplishing responsibility by being present has to be reconsidered again.

Reading *Otherwise than Being* I was astonished by Levinas' definition of justice which takes a different shape in comparison to that one in *Totality and Infinity*. Levinas writes:

«Justice is necessary, that is, comparison, coexistence, contemporaneity, assembling, order, the *visibility* of faces, and thus intentionality and the intellect, and in intentionality and the intellect, the intelligibility of a system, and thence also a co-presence on an equal footing as before a court of justice»¹³.

What strikes me here is the reverse of the ethical relation so carefully constructed in previous pages. Subjectivity is not the unique and chosen one-for-the-other but the equal among others. Once again, we are back to intentional structure, to terms and definitions, and to equality and symmetry of the ethical relation as well as to place and location (*vs* non-place in proximity). Does Levinas purposefully deny the meaning of responsibility as substitution? Levinas continues:

«Essence as synchrony is togetherness in a place. Proximity takes on a new meaning in the space of contiguity. But pure contiguity is not a “simple nature”. It already presupposes both thematizing though and a locus and the cutting up of the continuity of space into discrete terms and the whole – out of justice»¹⁴.

Here, justice enables equality of terms and as being-together-at-the-place that misses an idea of proximity as something out of the place.¹⁵ Does the concept of justice brought by the third party cancel or limit the idea or responsibility as something which is always to come to be accomplished? There is therefore a gesture which reverses responsible subjectivity: it is once again faced by the birth of appeal coming from the third party that is from others. Levinas continues on this matter:

«There is betrayal of my anarchic relation with illeity, but also a new relationship with it: it is only thanks to God that, as a subject incomparable with the other, I am approached as an other by the others, that is, “for myself”. “Thanks to God” I am another for the others. God is not involved as an alleged interlocutor: the reciprocal relationship binds me to the other man in the trace of transcendence, in illeity. The passing of God, of whom I can

¹³ Levinas, *Otherwise than Being*, op. cit., p. 157.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ See, for instance, p. 86–87 in *Otherwise than Being*.

... speak only by reference to this aid or this grace, is precisely the reverting of the incomparable subject into a member of society»¹⁶.

Levinas develops an important point here: subjectivity becomes an other among other. It is on this issue that I want to make a few further comments.

The justice brought by the third party introduces changes into the concept of proximity; the relation to the third is a reciprocal one. Thus, proximity does not command me as one-for-the-other because otherwise there will be no problem to commit the justice for the singular other in the face-to-face relation. However, doing justice to the third party combines two unique senses – being at the place but also being at non-place. As Levinas puts it, justice is «an incessant correction of proximity»¹⁷. To describe it in a different way, there is always a combination of community and co-presence with transcendence of the face.

It seems that Levinas entitles subjectivity to demand justice to itself and to address the other because it is now equal one to the other. In this situation the entrance of the third party or others design a relation of comparison and reclaim comparability of terms. It is important to understand a meaning and a role of others' presence: by entering into the relation between the subjectivity and the face of the other the third one betrays an anarchic and immemorial content of responsibility; responsibility which befalls subjectivity before it is aware of it, which is foremost any decision of free will. Often on the pages of *Otherwise than Being* Levinas repeatedly accentuates the meaning of the ethical in the face-to-face relation as one which is incomparable and even untranslatable. But, with the third one the ethical is disrupted by the necessity of doing justice. The face-to-face relation is obsessed by the "cry of justice". Ethic and justice trouble each other but also they trouble my vision of the other. How does it happen? In proximity the face of the other remains epiphenomenal, it is neither too close nor at a distance. However, the third one is close enough to be visible. I might see the third other but in a so called spectral flow as de-facing and splitting of the face into countless faces. In his work *Éthique et expérience* dedicated to Levinas' understanding of politics Gerard Bensussan describes this process as «de-visagement», that is a face of the other which is fading away or dissolving into multiplicity of others but its trace is still shining through.¹⁸

One of the supporting arguments in Levinas' favour, and, at the same time, clarification of Levinas' need to keep an infinite responsibility in doing justice I find in Derrida's article *Remarks on deconstruction and pragmatism*:

«I would say, for Levinas and for myself, that if you give up the infinitude of responsibility, there is no responsibility. It is because we act and we live in infinitude that the responsibility with regard to the other is irreducible. If responsibility was not infinite, if every time that I have to take an

¹⁶ Levinas, *Otherwise than Being*, op. cit., p. 158.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Bensussan G. *Éthique et expérience*. La Phocide, Strasbourg, 2008. P. 36.

ethical or political decision with regard to the other, this was not infinite, then I would not be able to engage myself in an infinite debt with regard to each singularity. I own myself infinitely to each and every singularity. If responsibility was not infinite, you could not have moral and political problems. There are only moral and political problems, and everything that follows from this, from the moment when responsibility is not limitable»¹⁹.

Derrida advocates Levinas' intention to acknowledge a presence of transcendence even in relation to the third. The singularity of everybody is shimmering in the face. The infinite responsibility arises only if one's experience is singular: a concrete appeal of the other or others directed toward subjectivity. But in this context justification bears a complex meaning. As Critchley remarks: «It is because responsibility is infinite that the decision is always undecidable»²⁰. Why doing justice becomes undecidable? One possible answer is that Levinas attempts to find a sophisticated balance between the ethical – keeping a transcendence of the face of the other in an intersubjective relation with the third other –, and the political. Thus, I would suggest the infinite responsibility turning into impossibility to decide and to receive a pardon. It is a dramatic performance of becoming the ethical subjectivity while being in relation with the other and others.

Once again I refer to Levinas' definition of justice:

«Justice only remains justice in a society where there is no distinction between those close and those far off, but in which there also remains the impossibility of passing by the closest; where the equality is borne by the inequality, by the surplus of my duties over my rights»²¹.

Where does Levinas bring us in his reading of justification? Indeed what is astounding in all these approaches to justice is the crucial antagonism of the ethical and the political. However it seems to me doubtful that Levinas is willing to move towards reconsideration of political ontology. To explain this I follow Critchley who affirms that questioning political is strictly bound to essence of philosophical language.²² Levinas opens up a political discourse within ethical responsibility but his understanding of justice does not really show a concern for transformation of society, norms and law but reconsiders a language of philosophy. Therefore he accentuates:

«Philosophy serves justice by thematizing the difference and reducing the thematized to difference. ...Philosophy justifies and criticizes the laws

¹⁹ Derrida J. Remarks on deconstruction and pragmatism // S. Critchley, E. Laclau, R. Rorty, Ch. Mouffe (eds.) *Deconstruction and Pragmatism*. Routledge, 1996. P. 86.

²⁰ Critchley S. *Ethics-Politics-Subjectivity. Essays on Derrida, Levinas, and Contemporary French Thought*. Verso, 2009. P. 108.

²¹ Levinas, *Otherwise than Being*, op. cit., p. 159.

²² Critchley S. *The Ethics of Deconstruction. Derrida and Levinas*. Purdue University Press. 1999. P. 234–236.

of being and of the city, and finds again the signification that consists in detaching from the absolute one-for-the-other both the one and the other»²³.

The pardon and justice should happen within philosophical language at first, which is a context for questioning and for doing justification. It is important to accentuate that in Levinas' understanding of justice the political seems to be deeply rooted in language of philosophical critique. He sacrifices a responsible subjectivity as one-for-the-other and, probably, one-for-others in order to question the political and to find justification within philosophical language.

Doing justice to others entails another important core – getting forgiveness. Forgiveness, or pardon are discussed by Levinas in the light of temporality together with a role community plays in it. I will disclose his relation of justice, pardon and temporality and their outcomes for the subjectivity in the last part.

Justice, pardon and temporality

In his further analysis of justice Levinas finds a character of irreversibility in the relation to the third party. There is always a possibility of injustice that I can commit to the other person. Then, the question is what conditions are necessary for receiving a pardon. If it is commonly understood that the injustice we are doing in our live might be determined by our intentions guiding the acts in question. Now, coming back to Levinas, one could see that the conditions necessary for a genuine, legitimate and complete pardon may be fully open to one another. When being in an intimate relation with the other the subjectivity commits injustice against the other, this pardon is available for me only in the form of judgment of my actions. Only after I confess my fault the other can grant me forgiveness.²⁴

However, because the intimate relation is in fact involving the third one who is facing me from within different temporal flows, the injustice which I have done the other person facing me and now will also have consequences for the other others. The sense of the act goes beyond the present intention. It would probably acquire a temporal significance which cannot be enclosed within the life of subjectivity. My actions, then, can be unjust without me willing intended it. Levinas describes this situation as so called «social faults». There he states: «The intention cannot determine the action to its most distant consequences, and still the ego knows that it is responsible for them»²⁵. To put it otherwise, there are always ethical consequences for others issued from my being-responsible-for-the-other.

The problematic aspect with the social fault befalling responsible subjectivity is that it cannot be pardoned since it belongs to the different

²³ Levinas, *Otherwise than Being*, op. cit., p.165.

²⁴ Levinas E. *Collected Philosophical Papers*. Trans. A. Lingis. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1987, «The ego and the totality», p. 30–31.

²⁵ Levinas, *Collected Philosophical Papers*, op. cit., p. 32.

order that just the pardon. With a social fault the examination of moral norms and rules as well as intentions have no meaning. Levinas explains it as following:

«“I never intended this” is in vain excuse of subjectivity wishing to remain within the safe and comfortable circle of an intimate relation. An examination of one’s explicit intentions can provide no assurance against the injustice visited on the absent third person (or to be visited on her in the future) by the actions in which those intentions are incarnated. The ego who commits this injustice cannot own up its unjustifiability because he has no knowledge of the injustice committed, and he is therefore unable to repay those who have suffer it. Moreover, it is also impossible for subjectivity to receive the other’s forgiveness because that other does not know who has committed the offense»²⁶.

Accordingly subjectivity just does not have access to the past of others which has never been present for it and neither it can enter the futurity of its action valid for future others. In other words, the futurity of its response to the other is never possible for the subjectivity since it never knows the validity of forgiveness coming from the third party in future.

This brings us to what Levinas calls the «the truly social»: not the intimate face-to-face relation with the other but the open relation of temporality between the subjectivity and the other wherein the third person is interlocutor (also an eschatological one) from the past and from the future. In the same spirit Derrida claims that to act in the name of justice means to do justice not only to the living other but also to the dead one and to the unborn one. Thus, responsibility will not be restricted to the present and living other:

«To try to accede to the possibility of this alternative (life and/or death), we are directing our attention to the effect or the petition of a living-on or survival (*une sur-vie*) or of a return of the dead (neither life nor death) on the sole basis of which one is able to speak of ‘living subjectivity’ (in opposition to its death)»²⁷.

Here I find a problematic aspect of time of justice. There are not only the third party facing me but also future and past others whom subjectivity is responsible for; who, repeating Derrida in *Specters of Marx*, approach subjectivity as ghosts others in the name of justice.

Commonly speaking justice refers to a concrete reality. At this point I would like to address Hamlet’s story so often quoted by Levinas in works from different periods. His main claim – relation to the other is doing justice which means, first of all to be responsive. But, doing justice is not just accepting the radical alterity of the other; it is to split one’s self and to disjoint one’s self. This is what Derrida and Levinas would call hospitality and welcome of the other. Then, the next step would be to

²⁶ Levinas, *Collected Philosophical Papers*, op. cit., p. 29.

²⁷ Derrida J. *Specters of Marx*. Trans. P. Kamuf. London and New York: Routledge, 1994. P. 187.

accept this disjointed one's self.²⁸ This act describes not only a hospitable subjectivity but also one who is fair and righteous. Derrida states:

«If right or law stems from vengeance, as Hamlet seems to complain, can one not yearn for a justice that one day, a day belonging no longer to history, a quasi messianic day, would finally be removed from fatality of vengeance»²⁹.

Hamlet's task, who is an ethical hostage of/for his father, is to bring the other's presence into the light and to bring it outside of oneself, beyond oneself: «Render to Caesar things which are Caesar's» (Gospels: Mark 12:17) and the same goes «Render to Ghost things which are Ghost's», to give to the ghost something which you don't have – time, or, to be precise, absence of time as an experience of a pure anachronism.

Getting a pardon from others and doing justice to others implies a modality of being marked by the time which temporalizes (χρόνος) itself as being before anything (αυα). It is time which does not belong to any lived acts. It is exactly temporalization before time starts to run for the ethical subjectivity. That is why subjectivity in the relation to others become «a being that is as it were no longer in step with itself, is out of joint with itself, in a dislocation of the I from itself, a being that is not joining up with itself in the instant in which nonetheless it is committed for good» (EE, 35). The subjectivity has to go beyond the event which takes place, the act of doing justice for others occurs in this possible «beyond»: from the futurity itself or from the immemorial past. It is a temporal disjuncture of justice since imaginary others, ghosts of the past and of the future are never accessible and do not guarantee the pardon.

To conclude I will draw upon the meaning of the present of justice. It is not identical to itself, and cannot be a conjunction of the past and the future. The time of justice is, as Derrida writes in *Specters of Marx*, is always *out of joint*³⁰. The justice brought by the third party is anachronical, it is out of time of realization and does not necessarily have a response, and thus, it turns to be undecidable.

To paraphrase Derrida, I would add that the ghost others are always ill-timed. Then, if one could take a radical claim, for Levinas doing justice would be an experience of impossible unless one thinks time of justice as messianic one, as donation of my present and as presencing the present of justification.

In the end, I would like to sketch the general picture of Levinas' position on justice. Responsibility is primarily defined as justice. However, I find different levels and shades of justice in modalities of subjectivity as being-the-one-for-the-other and as being-the-one-for-others. The first level is intimate justice initiated by proximity and horizon of τὸδε τι. It is questioned, disturbed and finally transformed by an emergence of the third party into face-to-face relation. The next level of justice we are dealing with is a conjunction of reciprocity in community and transcen-

²⁸ Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, op. cit., p. 27.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 21.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 27.

dence of the face; it is, so called, de-facing and spectrality of the face. This brings to the next argument: justification of others implies as well a community and political inside the ethical that seems to be a complicated combination for Levinas. The temporal feature of justice combines the imaginary others of the past and of the future making justification of one's own intention and acts hardly possible.

Following Derrida, I would assert that Levinas' justice bears meaning of undecidability also because of temporal origin. The third party originates an anachronism within justice and embodies a conceptual disjunction, the *out of join*. My emphasis would be sharply on a disjuncted justice brought by others into face-to-face relation that makes a pardon hardly possible unless we speak about messianic donation of time to ghost others of history and eschatology.