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**From the I of Apology to the Self of Expiation**

In *Totality and Infinity*, one of Levinas’ central theses is that the “I [*moi*]is an apology” (TI 91,TaI 118-19). This means that my singularity follows in the first place from another’s appeal, awakening me to responsibility. *Totality and Infinity* argues this through an exposition of the face to face: encountering another’s destitution, I am dispossessed of my egoism.

However, what is striking is the *absence* of this thesis in *Otherwise than Being*. Levinas speaks rather of the apology’s “disqualification” (AE 156,OB 121). The thought is that any apology I make to another surreptitiously reasserts my egoism. This does not mean that Levinas abandons his interest in the movement and meaning of apology. Rather, this means that he can no longer explicate it *solely* at the level of the empirical ego face to face with another.

In *Otherwise than Being*, Levinas’ thesisis that, even prior to the face to face, the I is *already* dispossessed. This is because the I is a self, which he conceives as “expiation” for another’s deeds, misfortunes, and even her faults (AE 148,OB 116).This paper’s objectives are three: first, to account for the shift from the I of apology to the self of expiation; second, to explain how personal identity must be structured to conceive the self as a “pre-originary *susception*” to another (AE 157-58,OB 122-23); finally, to invite a discussion about how this might impact our understanding of the movement and meaning of apology, particularly in the therapeutic setting.

Word Count: 247