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The Limit of Ethics – the Ethics of the Limit

Abstract

What is the role of philosophy in dealing with a morally horrifying history? To be more specific, what can philosophical reflection do when we ask about the religious in responses to morally horrifying atrocities? I'll argue that a philosophical approach does not consist in some sort of applied philosophy, but, on the contrary, in asking basic philosophical questions once more, from the beginning, as it were. The sense of a philosophical approach is itself challenged. It will consist in asking what is at stake for us, as humans, in confronting a morally horrifying history. What is at stake is precisely our notion of what it is to be human. In this sense, philosophy is reflective human self-understanding. I'll argue that this approach implies reformulating the normative dimension of what it is to be human, and will take as my lead the notion of the limit, as an issue between ethics and religion. The paper will proceed in the following steps: 1 Describing the *aporetic* situation. 2. Responding to the *aporetic* situation. 3. Ethics as an ethics of the limit. 4. The limit of ethics? 5. Ethics of forgiveness – ethics of resentment? 6. Améry's essay on resentment. 7. Religion, or: Beyond imagination? 8. Ethics and Religion. 9. Ambiguity of religion. 10. Reformulating the normative dimension.

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1979-1986	Research/senior research Fellow, Department of Philosophy, University of Copenhagen
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Grøn has given numerous invited lectures and papers. His publications are mainly on the theory of subjectivity, philosophy of religion, ethics, hermeneutics, phenomenology, Kierkegaard, German Idealism (Schelling, Hegel), modern German philosophy and theology, modern French philosophy, Aristotle, Nietzsche.