Emmanuel Levinas and René Girard:
Religious Prophets of Non-Violence

Robert J. S. Manning

Department of Philosophy, Quincy University, Quincy, IL, manniro@quincy.edu

Abstract

This paper analyzes the work of Emmanuel Levinas and René Girard and argues that both of them have as their central problem the phenomenon of human violence and both try to address this problem from their own religious tradition, Jewish for Levinas, Christian for Girard. They both pursue the concept of nonviolence to an extreme point in what each calls saintliness or holiness and both can be considered religious prophets of this extreme version of nonviolence.

Keywords

Emmanuel Levinas; René Girard; Martin Heidegger; violence; ethics; Judaism; Christianity; nonviolence; saintliness; holiness.

Introduction

There can be little doubt that Emmanuel Levinas and René Girard are two of the most important religious intellectuals of the second half of the 20th century. Indeed, given how their reputations and their influence has so vastly expanded during the last two decades, one could easily make the argument that Levinas and Girard are the two most important religious intellectuals of their generation.

In this paper, I do not make a case for that view but rather consider these two intellectuals together and discuss what both of them have in common because as different as Levinas and Girard are, they have very fundamental concerns and attributes in common. More specifically, I argue that both Levinas and Girard are from the very beginning of their work and entirely throughout it extremely concerned with the problem of violence. In short, both Levinas and Girard have the very real phenomenon of human to human violence always at the very center of their work. Secondly, they both address the problem of violence out of their own profound immersion in the intellectual and spiritual depths of their own religious tradition, Jewish in Levinas' case and Christian in Girard's. Noting simply that Levinas is a Jewish thinker and Girard a Christian one advances us very little in terms of understanding the rich similarities and differences between the two. But understanding how Levinas addresses the problem of violence from the depths of the Jewish tradition and

Girard addresses the problem of violence from the depths of the Christian tradition sheds considerable light on the richness and the fruitfulness of both the similarities and the differences between these two religious intellectual giants of the late 20th century and on why the work of each of them is so important to us today. What is more, both Levinas and Girard at the end of their work are preoccupied with the figure and the concept of saintliness or holiness. Certainly, what Levinas and Girard mean by saintliness or holiness is different, but what brings them together is that for both Levinas and Girard the core or the center of saintliness and holiness is a radical commitment to and practice of nonviolence. Thus, I contend that Levinas can rightly be described as a Jewish prophet of nonviolence and Girard can rightly be described as a Christian prophet of nonviolence.[1]

Before we bring Levinas and Girard into comparison and conversation, we have to concede that though these two great French speaking intellectuals had much in common and could have had a rich dialogue with one another, they led oddly parallel lives with little or no intersection. The two were less than twenty years apart, with Levinas born in 1906 and Girard born in 1923. In fact, Girard was born on Christmas Day and Levinas died on December 25, 1995 so in fact Levinas died on Girard's 72nd birthday. Levinas, though born in Kaunas, in what is now Lithuania, spent nearly his entire adult life in Girard's native country of France, settling there permanently in 1945 after his four years of captivity in a German POW camp for French Jewish prisoners in Germany. Of course, Girard, though French, went to the United State for graduate studies in 1947 and spent almost his entire adult life in the United States and died in California in 2015.[2] So these two great French speaking religious intellectuals who could have had such a rich and interesting dialogue with one another actually had almost no intersection with one another, though there was at least one great opportunity that was missed. Girard says in his last published work, *Battling to the End*, that Levinas was interested in Girard's work and wanted to converse with him in the 1970s but that Girard at the time was intimidated by Levinas' work and passed on the opportunity.[3]

One can only speculate on what drew Levinas to Girard, but it is quite reasonable to think that it was their mutual interest in the problem of violence. Certainly, for both Levinas and Girard by the 1970s their published work had made apparent to everyone that they were both centrally concerned with the problem of violence. I will demonstrate this by discussing first Levinas on violence and then Girard on violence before moving on to

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[1] By religious prophet, I mean a person who speaks powerfully from a profound immersion in a religious/spiritual tradition and/or experience. A religious prophet makes us feel challenged by and addressed by the power of that religious tradition. Terry Veling speaks for many Levinas readers who refer to Levinas as a prophet when he says "Levinas helps us feel again *what it is to be addressed.* His writing comes to us as a prophetic appeal that is deeply shaped by the Hebraic tradition." Certainly, many of Girard's readers have this same experience of being addressed by someone speaking powerfully from the spiritual and intellectual depths of Christianity. See Terry Veling's fine book on Levinas written out of a profoundly appreciative Catholic spirituality titled *For You Alone: Emmanuel Levinas and the Answerable Life* (Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, 2014), 23.

[2] Both Levinas and Girard were philosophers in exile from their native lands. For a very insightful argument that the experience of exile was deeply interwoven into Levinas' entire philosophical work, see the fine study by Abi Doukhan titled *Emmanuel Levinas: A Philosophy of Exile* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012). Christian theologian Steve Webb writes more critically about Levinas' concept of exile: "Does Levinas come too close to accepting exile as the permanent state?" See Steve Webb, "The Rhetoric of Ethics as Excess: A Christian Theological Response to Emmanuel Levinas", *Modern Theology* 15/1 (1999): 1–17.

[3] René Girard, *Battling to the End*, trans. Mary Baker (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2010), 71.

discuss how each addresses the problem of violence from his own specific religious tradition.

I. Levinas on Violence

For the great majority of his life, Emmanuel Levinas was a little-known French academic. In the last decade of his life interest in his work started to grow significantly and has grown exponentially in the two decades since his death so that now there are literally hundreds of books written about his work and there is a great deal of interest in him across a great number of disciplines.[4] With such celebrity and interest in him by so many different people, has come perhaps inevitably a certain amount of simplification and distortion of his work, most often in the form of what might be considered a taming of Levinas' thought. In this age where we celebrate difference and seek to have a respectful and nonviolent relation to every possible other, Levinas is often celebrated as a high priest or chief rabbi of our new ethical sensitivity to the Other.[5] Levinas' philosophy is often seen as a guide to a more ethical relation to others and is reduced to a Sunday School preaching about being kind and sensitive to others; such a tamed reading of Levinas is certainly supported by several occasions during interviews with Levinas during the last twenty or so years of his life where he is asked for examples of the ethical responsibility to the face of the other he discusses in his philosophy and he responds by pointing out every day acts of kindness and courtesy like holding a door open for someone and saying "après vous[6]". If Levinas's work is understood in this tamed way, his work seems to have very little to do with the reality of physical violence and may even be a long, overly complicated, poetically beautiful evasion of the continuing horror of human violence in the world.

Of course, if we remember the facts of Levinas' own personal history, he seems an odd person indeed to produce a philosophy that can be reduced to the Sunday School preachment of be nice to others and that has little or nothing to do with the cruel reality of human to human violence.[7] Like nearly all European Jews of his generation, Levinas was very affected and damaged by the only too real reality of physical violence. Levinas was raised in a Jewish family in Kaunas, which after World War One became the second city of Lithuania. Lithuania became very quickly engulfed by what became known as the Holocaust; its Jewish community suffered the highest murder rate, about 95%, of any country occupied by the Nazis, and most of Lithuania's Jews were dead by the end of 1942 and many of them were killed in the most violent way by their Catholic Lithuanian

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[4] Adrian Peperzak in the collection of essays he edited under the title *Ethics as First Philosophy* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 3, says: "Before 1961, Emmanuel Levinas was hardly known outside a small group of French philosophers working mainly in the field of phenomenology and existentialism." Colin Davis, in his *Levinas: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), 6, makes the point that reference to Levinas is now required in many fields.

[5] Diane Perpich notes that in France more than 40 books with the word *alterité* have been published since 1994. See Diane Perpich, *The Ethics of Emmanuel Levinas* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), 17.

[6] One example among several would be when Levinas states in the interview titled "The Philosopher and Death": "To recognize that I let the other—whoever he might be—pass before I do, that is the ethical." See this interview in the collection of interviews titled *Is It Righteous to Be?*, edited by Jill Robbins (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 129. Similarly, Sandor Goodheart reports that when he was greeted by Levinas at Levinas' apartment in Paris he said to Goodheart: "I have been thinking that hospitality, the welcome, politeness, is everything." See Goodheart's *The Prophetic Law* (East Lansing, Michigan State University Press, 2014), 198.

[7] See Solomon Malka, *Emmanuel Levinas: His Life and Legacy* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2006).

neighbors.[8] Levinas himself was living in France after 1925 and was imprisoned in Germany during the war and was completely unaware of what was unfolding in the "bloodlands" of Eastern Europe.[9] His entire family in Lithuania was murdered during the Holocaust. Levinas does not refer directly to this very personal history very often,[10] and certainly the most important and well known reference is his dedication to his work of 1974, *Otherwise Than Being, or Beyond Essence*: "to the memory of those who are closest among the six million assassinated by National Socialists, and of the millions and millions of all confessions and all nations, victims of the same hatred of the other man, of the same anti-Semitism."[11] And then in Hebrew he lists the names of those who were closest to him of the millions of victims of the National Socialists, his parents, his in-laws, and his brothers.

This dedication in the later work and knowledge of this personal history should help us see and be more aware of the many very direct references to physical violence in the great work of 1961, where Levinas' famous phenomenology of the face is most fully presented, *Totality and Infinity.*[12] In this classic text most often read as a great testimony to the reality of ethics, goodness, responsibility, justice, hospitality, etc., language about violence, menace, even murder abounds. Though this more negative and haunting language is ever present in *Totality and Infinity*, it does tend to get drowned out and rhetorically overwhelmed by all the positive language about the face, ethics, goodness, etc., all of which Levinas will also describe by the word "glory." This happens to such an extent that the negative, haunting language is often hardly noticed by readers of the text.[13] But this more troubled, haunted language about violence and murder remains like a minor key in the text and we need to hear it if we are to understand how Levinas in his work is trying to address the only too real reality of physical violence. There are three major ways in which this more haunting language about violence is woven into and always around the constant main themes of *Totality and Infinity* concerning the face, ethics, responsibility, etc.

First, as Levinas describes the epiphany of the other to the self in *Totality and Infinity,* what is revealed to the self is not only ethical responsibility, justice, goodness, etc., but is the

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[8] In her fine study, *The Massacre of the Jews of Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Gefen Publishing House, Ltd., 2008), 22, Karen Sutton writes that the majority of Lithuanian Jews perished during the six months period starting with Operation Barbarossa on June 22, 1941 and that "the atrocities began right away, as Lithuanians slaughtered Jews by so-called cleansing operations. One month later, the Germans halted these spontaneous and sporadic killings and replaced them with the first systematic mass murders in occupied Europe."

[9] See Timothy Snyder's now classic treatment of the incredible violence in the '30s and '40s in Eastern Europe titled *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin* (New York: Basic Books, 2010).

[10] Levinas does say in his interview with Francois Poirié that "I myself was not at Auschwitz, but finally I lost my entire family there." See this interview in *Is It Righteous to Be? : Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas*, 77.

[11] Emmanuel Levinas, *Otherwise Than Being, or Beyond Essence*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1998).

[12] Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity,* trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1969). Some Levinas scholars do not even mention Levinas' own personal tragedy within the Holocaust, and most just give it a passing mention in a sentence or two. There are several people who try to address the issue of the relation between the Holocaust and Levinas' philosophy. See especially "Levinas and the Holocaust: A Reconstruction" by Bob Plant in *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* 22 (2014): 44–79 and the chapter on Levinas in *The Twilight of Reason: W. Benjamin, T.W. Adorno, M. Horkheimer and E. Levinas* by Orietta Ombrosi (New York: Academic Studies Press, 2011), 166–211.

[13] Perhaps the most important exception to this in Levinas scholarship thus far is Jill Robbins' fourth chapter, titled "Visage, Figure: Speech and Murder in *Totality and Infinity"* in her fine book on Levinas and literature titled *Altered Reading* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999).

self's own cognitive thrust into the world as a reducing power that is itself a violent grasp on things and is at least initially the attempt to grasp onto the other person as simply another thing in the world. According to Levinas, the self is a grasping, violent power that reduces all that it encounters to, as Levinas describes it, "more of the same." The self as reducing, grasping, violent, power meets what Levinas calls "absolute resistance" in the face of the Other: "The face resists possession, resists my powers. In its epiphany, in expression, the sensible, still graspable, turns into total resistance to the grasp" (*TI,* 197). He describes the epiphany of the face as an "action upon my freedom [which] puts an end to violence…" (*TI,* 203). This absolute resistance the other offers to my powers "resists the suppression of the other by the grasp, by the hold, or by the vision that grasps before the grasp" (*TI,* 303) The self as a violent power that reduces all otherness to more of the same, the self as reducing, grasping, violent power, Levinas refers to as "my emprise over the things" and "the freedom of a moving force." Without the ethical epiphany of the Other, the self as freely moving, reducing, violent force is capable of anything. Levinas describes it as "this impetuosity of the current to which everything is permitted, even murder" (*TI*, 303).

This takes us to the second and most important way in which the reality of physical violence is constantly woven into Levinas' positive and beautiful language about the Face, ethics, responsibility, etc. The face of the other does not only call me into question and call me to goodness, ethics, justice, responsibility, etc., all this that Levinas says seemingly hundreds of times in *Totality and Infinity*, but he also says the face incites in me the temptation to murder, to completely negate the infinite otherness of the Other, which overwhelms me and panics me. This absolute otherness of the other panics my power, "paralyzes the very power of power," and creates in me, according to Levinas, the temptation to total negation, to murder. As Levinas intriguingly says, "The alterity that is expressed in the face provides the unique matter possible for total negation" (*TI,* 198). When the absolute otherness of the other confronts me, writes Levinas, an absolutely extraordinary thing happens to my power: "the depth that opens in this sensibility modifies the very nature of power, which henceforth can no longer take, but can kill" (*TI,* 198). The absolutely, infinitely other is beyond my power to take, to reduce, to bring back into the realm of the same, but in that epiphany, is not only the awareness that I can kill it but the temptation to do it. I can totally negate it through murder. This is why Levinas says "Murder is a power over what escapes power." Only murder "lays claim to total negation" (*TI,* 198). To kill, says Levinas, "is not to dominate but to annihilate." And I can wish to annihilate only what panics my power, overwhelms it and paralyzes it. This is why Levinas says the other is the only being I can wish to kill. This is the climax of the extraordinary paragraph in the section titled "Ethics and the Face" where Levinas explains how the face of the other incites in me the temptation to murder: "I can wish to kill only an existent absolutely independent, which exceeds my powers infinitely, and therefore does not oppose them but paralyzes the very power of power. The other is the sole being I can wish to kill" (*TI*, 198).

In the two hundred pages of *Totality and Infinity* that precede this extraordinary paragraph, Levinas has stated the positive side of the encounter with the face, how it founds ethics, responsibility, goodness, etc., a hundred times, and he will go on to state it a hundred more times in the last hundred pages of the text, but here in this extraordinary passage we hear directly this very important minor key insistently played in this text and throughout Levinas' work about the reality of physical violence driven to its utmost, to murder. That "the Other is the sole being I can wish to kill" or that "Violence can aim only at a face" is something he insists on in *Totality and Infinity* without repeating it a dozen, let alone hundreds of times. But it is very important to hear this minor key about violence, even murder, if we are to understand Levinas' philosophy correctly. What is more, though

Levinas' philosophy certainly develops and changes over the many years of his writing, he states several times even in very late interviews exactly what he states for the very first time in *Totality and Infinity:* "The Other is the sole being I can wish to kill."

Murder, in fact, has everything to do with the third way in which Levinas's positive, even glorious language about the face, responsibility, ethics, etc., is crossed and haunted by the reality of physical violence. This third way concerns the extraordinary presentation Levinas offers in *Totality and Infinity* of the self's awareness and fear of its own death. He begins by saying that "the whole philosophical and religious tradition" interprets death in two ways, as a passage to nothingness or as a passage to another existence…" (*TI,* 232) But here Levinas tries to think the significance of death differently, from the self's relation to the Other. According to Levinas, knowledge of my death is one and the same with fear of my death, fear of my very being, and this fear comes from the threatening, menacing appearance of the Other. He makes very clear how he is interpreting death differently than Heidegger does in *Being and Time* when he writes: "My death is not deduced from the death of the others by analogy; it is inscribed in the fear I can have for my being" (*TI*, 233).[14] And according to Levinas I have fear for my being because of the other, the other as threat, menace, and possibly as murderer. In death, says Levinas, I am exposed not to my ownmost possibility which will eventually come for me in some unknown time in the future, as Heidegger says. No, Levinas' interpretation of the death of the self for itself, involves threat, menace, violence, and murder: "In death I am exposed to absolute violence, to murder in the night" (*TI,* 233). Death approaches, says Levinas, "in the fear of someone" (*TI,* 234). The Heideggerian *I* that is projected toward the future, says Levinas, "is overturned by a movement of imminence, pure menace, which comes to me from an absolute alterity" (*TI,* 235). Fear for my own being rooted in fear of the other person as violent and potentially as murderer is entirely absent from Heidegger's famous presentation of the significance of death, but is at the very center of how Levinas in *Totality and Infinity* interprets what death is for the self*:* "In the being for death of fear I am not faced with nothingness," says Levinas, "but faced with what is against me, as though murder, rather than being one of the occasions of dying, were inseparable from the essence of death, as though the approach of death remained one of the modalities of the relation with the Other" (*TI,* 234). The violence of death, writes Levinas, "threatens as a tyranny, as though proceeding from a foreign will" (*TI,* 234). Levinas makes absolutely clear that his own interpretation of the significance of death for the self has everything to do with the fear of real, physical violence even up to its limit in murder: "Thus the fear for my being which is my relation with death is not the fear of nothingness, but the fear of violence—and thus it extends into fear of the Other, of the absolutely unforeseeable" (*TI*, 235). His analysis of death shows clearly how his language is haunted by the reality of physical violence and murder: "Murder, at the origin of death, reveals a cruel world, but one to the scale of human relations" (*TI,* 236).

II. René Girard on Violence

If Levinas' treatment of the haunting reality of human violence is a minor key we must hear in his symphonic tribute to the face, ethics, goodness, etc., René Girard's concern for the reality of violence is always the major key in all of his works, whether they be primarily

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[14] For an extended discussion of the way Levinas interprets death differently than Heidegger does, see my *Interpreting Otherwise Than Heidegger: Emmanuel Levinas' Ethics as First Philosophy* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1993). Girard also has a very anti-Heideggerian view of death that includes fear of death as fear of vengeance and violent death. Girard's constant concern for violence leads him to mock the concept of death as "fear of nothingness." See Girard's *The Scapegoat* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1986), 135.

about literature, anthropology, or religion. From his first writing all the way though to his last one, Girard is always preoccupied with the constant reality of human violence, and we can understand his work only if we understand how he is constantly grappling with violence, its origins, its resolution, and its constant return in human societies. One could well argue that the central mission of all of Girard's work is, as he says, "to expose to the light of reason the role played by violence in human society."[15] It would probably be impossible to overstate how important a role Girard believes violence plays in human society.

Girard's preoccupation with violence and his belief as to the absolutely central role violence always plays in human society traces all the way to the very basis of Girard's thinking in his famous mimetic theory. Girard's most basic theory is a theory of the origin of human desires. Our desires are not innate to ourselves but are copied or imitated from others. This means that rivalry and contestation are as fundamental to and accompany the phenomenon of human desiring and acquisition. As Girard explains in his famous essay "Mimesis and Violence": "If the appropriative gesture of an individual named A is rooted in the imitation of an individual named B, it means that A and B must reach together for one and the same object. They become rivals for that object.[16]" When B becomes an obstacle to the appropriate gesture of A, this makes A desire the object all the more, meaning A now also imitates the desire of B, and now both A and B are caught up in a rivalry that is mimetic. Each desires to remove the other and each imitates the other's desires and actions to do just that. Girard believes violence is inherent in this mimetic desire, but each mimics the violence of the other and in this process violence continually escalates. As Girard explains, "each tries to push aside the obstacle that the other places in his path. Violence is generated by this process; or rather violence is the process itself when two or more partners try to prevent one another from appropriating the object they desire through physical or other means" (*GR,* 9). Not only is this process of mimetic desire inherently violent but because the parties mimetically repeat each other's violence, the violence that arises from and is fueled by mimetic rivalry continually increases. As Girard argues, as mimetically rivalry increases, the attempt to remove the other grows more and more forceful and violent: "Violence is mimetic rivalry itself becoming violent as the antagonists who desire the same object keep thwarting each other and desiring the object all the more. Violence is supremely mimetic" (*GR*, 12–13).

For Girard, mimetic rivalry and its inherent and unfolding violence form the very core of Girard's understanding of human animals. His anthropology is a very dark one in the sense that it is permeated with human violence. His view is so dark that how mimetic rivalry leads to human communities and not simply to chaos and destruction is a genuine question. Here we then get an even more profound awareness of how Girard is, as he says, trying to expose how central a role violence plays in human societies because Girard maintains that the solution for mimetic rivalry and its heightening violence is itself violence. Arguing against a Kantian or Hobbesian view that human violence eventually leads to a repudiation of violence through something like a social contract that limits violence, Girard argues that what limits the violence within human communities is violence itself. This, of course, is the second major step of Girard's mimetic theory: what Girard calls "the scapegoat mechanism.[17]" Girard believes that human communities throughout the world over and

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[15] René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. P. Gregory (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1977), 318.

[16] See Girard's 1979 essay "Mimesis and Violence" reprinted in *The Girard Reader*, edited by James Williams (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Co., 1996), 9–19.

[17] See especially Girard's *The Scapegoat* and *Violence and the Sacred.*

over again dealt with the problem of mimetic rivalry and its attendant increasing violence through the murderous sacrifice of a scapegoat, an innocent victim regarded as guilty by the community who sacrifices him or her. The sacrifice of the innocent scapegoat is the climax of the mimetic rivalry within the community, which had been extremely divisive but becomes unitive when the violence within the community gets foisted upon the sacrificial victim. The mimetic violence may "suddenly become unitive and solidify an entire community against a single victim.[18]" When mimetic violence becomes sacrificial violence, says Girard, "human divisiveness can suddenly become the strange and terrifying glue of human communities" (*CT*, 96). This strange glue is a violence that actually limits the violence within communities in that "unanimous scapegoating effectively transfers to the victim all the societal tensions and aggressions that divide the scapegoaters, and it truly reconciles them. In other words, it puts an end to the crisis with which all accounts of scapegoating begin" (*CT,* 98).

Of course, Girard famously discovers the scapegoat mechanism everywhere at the core of all the mythologies of various cultures across the globe and at the very origin of religion, and to find the scapegoat mechanism at the origin of mythology and of religion is to find violence at the origin of mythology and religion, violence that Girard argues again and again must have been real, physical, historical violence rather than simply fictional, magical, symbolic, or literary. This of course is the argument concerning the centrality of violence to human experience and human community that he makes in his two famous works *Violence and the Sacred* and *Things Hidden from the Foundations of the World.[19]* The scapegoaters themselves cannot explain why they are reconciled to one another by foisting their violence on the scapegoat and

> "they attribute it to its only possible cause in the context of their total experience, the scapegoat once again. This is why, in the end, an effective scapegoat is necessarily perceived as a divinity who came down incognito from heaven to visit the community. The mysterious visitor treats the people very harshly at first but ultimately rescues them from all harm. That is the reason archaic scapegoats are regarded as divine saviors, divine ancestors, or full-fledged divinities" (*CT,* 99).

Through the scapegoat mechanism, the violence of the community "devolves onto a single victim," and the murder of this victim reestablishes social order through violence. This purging of communal violence has such positive results that the community begins to divinize the victim, investing him with sacral power. "' To sacrifice', explains Girard, means 'to make sacred.' In broad outline, this is the mythical structure of the primitive cultures and religions, the foundational act of which is the lynching or the expulsion, real at first, and later symbolic, of an innocent victim" (*CT,* 23-4).[20]

Myths which exhibit traces of this early collective violence in communities, argues Girard, do not tell the truth about the violence. They lie and hide their own violence by

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[18] See Girard's comments in his dialogue with the Italian Catholic philosopher Giovanni Vattimo in *Christianity, Truth, and Weakening Faith: A Dialogue*, trans. William McCuaig (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 96.

[19] René Girard, *Things Hidden Since the Foundations of the World*, trans. Stephen Bann (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987).

[20] Levinas shares Girard's suspicion about the deep connection between violence and the sacred. Levinas writes: "the sacred that envelops and transports me is a form of violence." Quoted in Steve Webb, "The Rhetoric of Ethics as Excess: A Christian Theological Response to Emmanuel Levinas" 2.

portraying the scapegoat as guilty and hence deserving of punishment. Mythology does not reveal but hides the great extent to which humans are mimetically violent. Only if we understand Girard's view of mythology and of the rootedness of primitive notions of the sacred in the communal violence foisted upon the scapegoat can we then fully appreciate how significant is the Bible in both Testaments for Girard. The Bible counters mythology by revealing the innocence of the victim, taking the victim's side as it were, and thereby revealing to humanity all the violence which it has committed and of which it is capable. Girard constantly refers especially to three specific stories in the Hebrew Bible, or what Girard still refers to as the Old Testament, the story of Cain and Abel, the story of Joseph and his brothers, and the story of the Suffering Servant in Isaiah 53, to argue that the Old Testament though in an ambiguous way takes the side of the victim, reveals the victim as innocent, and thereby sheds light on the continuing problem of human violence. What the Old Testament does in an ambiguous way the New Testament does in a clear and unambiguous way, argues Girard, because Jesus, whose violent death the mimetically violent crowd calls for, is shown in the gospels to be the completely innocent victim of human violence. This is why in the Passion the truth of human violence is "put on display in its entirety" (*CT,* 25). We have always had crises with one another and we have always found and killed and then divinized scapegoats without knowing what we were doing. "Christ's passion," argues Girard, "shows us what we were doing and does so in stark terms: Jesus is an innocent victim sacrificed by a crowd…" (*CT,* 26). This is why Girard believes Christianity changes everything, because now

> "we can no longer pretend not to know that the social order is built upon the blood of innocent victims. Christianity deprives us of the mechanism that formed the basis of the archaic social and religious order, ushering in a new phase in the history of mankind that we may legitimately call 'modern'" (*CT*, 26).

Girard, of course, becomes and for most of his published work is a committed Roman Catholic and for him Christianity does change everything. To Girard, the Christ Event is of monumental significance for humanity in offering it a chance to understand and renounce its own violent tendencies. This does not mean that Christianity has been victorious at this. Girard not only fully recognizes the increase of human violence during the two millennia of the Christian era but concedes that Christianity has made the problem of human violence both better and worse. Christianity has warned humanity about the ways of its own violence but it also took away the scapegoat mechanism through which humanity over and over again violently solved the problem of its own violence. Christianity, Girard argues, "deprives human societies of the only kind of peace they enjoyed under the old scapegoat dispensations" (*CT*, 106). Christian revelation, Girard remarks forlornly in his last work, has failed because "we have not been Christian enough[21]". The failure of the Christian era has only exacerbated the problem of violence, and this is why violence has gotten worse and increased in intensity during the Christian era. "As soon as the Passion teaches them victims are innocent," Girard says in a very despairing passage, "they fight. The Passion leads to the

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[21] Girard seems to have become less optimistic over the years about the extent to which Christianity has positively affected the course of human violence. One can see this in his *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World.* His increasing pessimism is clearly reflected in these comments from his last work, on Clausewitz, titled in English *Battling to the End.* Interestingly, Levinas seems to have shared Girard's pessimism about this when he wrote: "The world was not changed by the Christian sacrifice." Quoted in Steve Webb, "The Rhetoric of Ethics as Excess: A Christian Theological Response to Emmanuel Levinas", 13.

Hydrogen Bomb" (*BE,* 198). There is, in fact one passage from the Bible that Girard quotes more often than any other, and he reads this as a warning from Jesus that the problem of violence will get worse in the future because Jesus has revealed the end of the efficacy of the scapegoat mechanism: "I bring not peace but a sword. [22]"

So as convinced a Christian as Girard is, he is not blind to but very concerned about the escalation of human violence during the Christian and modern era. What is more, his last work testifies to the fact that as he himself prepared for his own personal end, what worried him most was the troubling future of ever escalating human violence. The English title of this last work, *Battling to the End*, has to be understood in at least two ways. First, it refers to Girard himself, who will battle with and oppose human violence up until his own end, as he would argue every Christian must. Second, the title unfortunately also refers to humanity, which will battle until its own tragic end in apocalyptic violence and destruction wrought not by a god but by humanity itself, which will literally battle to the end. Girard has faith in Christ and in the revelatory call of Christianity to renounce our own violence, but he certainly does not have faith in humanity to heed this call, and unfortunately in this last work the reality of human violence as it continually escalates troubles Girard completely and has the last word. "We have to accept," says Girard, "that history is finite" and that "violence is our ultimate and last Logos" (*BE,* 48).

III. Levinas and Girard as Religious Intellectuals

Levinas and Girard not only were centrally preoccupied, as late 20th century intellectuals, with the reality of human violence, but they also have in common that they tried to respond to this overwhelming problem of violence from their own situatedness within their own religious traditions. In short, they addressed the problem of human violence as religious intellectuals, Jewish in Levinas' case, Christian in Girard's, and they attempted to draw from their own religious traditions intellectual, ethical, and spiritual wisdom to confront the overwhelming reality of human violence.

Levinas, of course, had two distinct bodies of writing he produced in his lifetime, philosophical writing such as his two masterpieces, *Totality and Infinity* and *Otherwise than Being, or Beyond Essence*, and several volumes of intriguing commentaries on the Talmud and other writings on specifically Jewish topics and concerns. Levinas always insisted upon a separation between these two bodies of writing and, what is more, he always claimed that in his philosophical writing he was doing philosophy, not theology. That there could be a more than being, or a beyond being, or an above being, or an otherwise than being, he says in *Totality and Infinity,* "does not come from theology." He says this refers back to the Platonic notion of the Good "and it therefore should not be traced back to any oriental wisdom" (*TI,* 218). However, several times he discusses the need to translate Biblical wisdom into the language of philosophy, which is to continue the work of the Septuagint and translate Hebrew into Greek.[23] Writing for those Levinas scholars who are convinced that Levinas's philosophy is Jewish philosophy, the well-known Jewish scholar of both Levinas and Girard, Sandor Goodheart, argues that Levinas' philosophy is "a translation

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[22] The significance of these lines for Girard is great. Within this line is expressed for Girard Christianity's prediction of its own failure with respect to the issue of human violence. This is connected to his interpretation of the Apocalypse. See, for example, René Girard, *Battling to the End*, 47.

[23] One example of this is in Levinas' Interview with Salomon Malka included in the volume *Is it Righteous to Be?*, 97: "I would say—and this will be a bit paradoxical—that philosophy can use religious experiences, but then it is already a Septuagint, which translates them into Greek. And, if you wish, the work of the Septuagint remains unfinished."

from the Hebrew into Greek, of the language of the ancient scriptural writings into the language of the university and the philosophers, from Plato and Aristotle to Kant and Hegel.[24]" Michael Fagenblat, who says that Levinas and his public statements minimzing the role of his Jewish background in his thought were similar to the dissimulating efforts of other French intellectuals influenced by their own religious backgrounds such as Paul Ricoeur and Jean-Luc Marion, describes the important role Judaism plays in Levinas' philosophy as "a little secret." He then adds that Levinas "was not much good at keeping secrets. [25]"

Indeed, any attentive reader of *Totality and Infinity* will readily agree that if Levinas is trying to keep his Jewish background and the influence upon him of Talmudic Judaism a secret, then he is really, really bad at keeping secrets. It is not only the frequent references to God in Levinas's first major text that makes one wonder about the role Levinas's Judaism plays in his philosophy. There are also frequent references to "religion," "holiness," "religious existence," and "monotheism." This is just the beginning of Levinas' revealing of his own secret. Before his devastating critique of Heideggerian ontology as a form of paganism, he writes of the hypocrisy and the "… rending of a world attached to both the philosophers and the prophets" (*TI,* 24).[26] In his discussion of the face of the otherthat commands us to responsibility, his most frequent references for the figure of the other are straight from the Hebrew Bible: "the widow, the orphan, and the stranger." Levinas in *Totality and Infinity* is at great pains to describe not the real impossibility of killing the Other, or the physical impossibility, but "the ethical impossibility of killing him in which I stand" (*TI,* 87). He describes the face as "the primordial expression" and "the first word", which is "you shall not commit murder" (*TI,* 199). That has to have a familiar Biblical ring to it to almost anyone![27] And once again, this command not to kill that speaks in the face, that is the face, is something he writes not once but over and over again. He also writes about the miracle and the marvel of creation: "The marvel of creation … results in a being capable of receiving a revelation, learning that it is created, and putting itself in question. The miracle of creation lies in creating a moral being" (*TI,* 89).

Of course, in *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas says over and over again that the miracle of creation as a moral self, a moral I, comes through the appeal to nonviolence that is the face of the Other. In using the resources of the philosophical tradition to try to describe this, he is clearly translating Biblical and Talmudic wisdom, Jewish wisdom, into the language of

[24] See Sandor Goodheart, *The Prophetic Law,* 224. This is of course not to say that all Levinas is doing is translating biblical ethical wisdom into the language of philosophy. Levinas is steeped in western philosophy just as he is in Talmudic Judaism and his unusual dual heritage as well as his very literary and creative writing style combine to make him the powerful and prophetic voice that he is.

[25] Michael Fagenblat, *A Covenant of Creatures: Levinas' Philosophy of Judaism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), 16. That Levinas desired to produce a Heidegger-inspired philosophy of *Dasein* in a Jewish mode and that he desired to this very early, even during his war-time captivity, is argued by Sarah Hammerschlag, "'A Splinter in the Flesh': Levinas and the Resignification of Jewish Suffering", *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 20/3: 389–419.

[26] Interestingly, Girard also criticized Heidegger's paganism and argued that he did not understand the Old Testament. See René Girard, *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World*, 263–282.

[27] Steve Webb, I believe, writes for many of Levinas' readers when he states of Levinas' language of the face of the other that says "Do not kill": "It seems to me that the reader cannot understand this emphasis in Levinas without placing it in the context of biblical Judaism." See Steve Webb, "The Rhetoric of Ethics as Excess: A Christian Theological Response to Emmanuel Levinas", 15. Diane Perpich, argues that "the tensions in Levinas' account of the face, and in particular the fraught nature of the question of authority or of how the face commands, are *constitutive* of the manner in which ethics is reconceived in his work." See Diane Perpich, *The Ethics of Emmanuel Levinas*, 54.

philosophy[28]. Levinas's philosophical work is rooted both in Husserl and Heidegger and in the Bible and the Talmud and is distinctively Jewish philosophy. From the depths of his own immersion not only in western philosophy but in his own Jewish tradition, Levinas offers us a Jewish philosophy that addresses directly what is now and probably has always been an overwhelming problem: violence. Speaking from the depths of his own Jewish tradition, Levinas tries to describe what there is in the world that is other than and counters physical violence even up to its limit in murder: the ethical responsibility for the other person that, Levinas argues, commands, establishes, and creates the very self.[29]

René Girard, certainly very much as Levinas does, addresses himself consistently and unwaveringly to this most important problem of human violence from the spiritual depths of his own religious tradition. The religious tradition that Girard is immersed in and draws from to confront the problem of human violence might best be described not only as Christian but as Judeo-Christian, as long as we understand by that term its traditional subordination of Judaism to Christianity, which Girard certainly repeats. Girard clearly states that what opposes the use of violence to curb violence, or in other words the scapegoat mechanism, is in his view not only Christianity but is the Bible itself and so is what Girard would defend as the Judeo-Christian tradition. For example, when Girard lists the three great moments in his thinking he discusses first mimetic desire and rivalry, second, the discovery of the scapegoat mechanism, and "the third great moment of discovery for me was when I began to see the uniqueness of the Bible, especially the Christian text, from the standpoint of the scapegoat theory.[30]"

If we are to understand Girard as a religious intellectual who addresses the problem of violence from his religious tradition, we must be clear that his religious tradition is the Judeo-Christian. It is extremely important to Girard that not only the Gospels and Christianity renounce violence and victimage, but so does the Biblical. Girard discusses over and over again stories from what Girard calls the Old Testament that reveal victimage, oppose violence, and take the side of the victim. A profound reflection on the ethical demands of this refusal of victimage and this revelation of human violence occurs, says Girard, "everywhere in the Bible." This happens in Job, in the Psalms, in the story of Cain and Abel, and above all in the two passages in the Hebrew Bible that Girard discusses constantly: the story of Joseph and his brothers and the story of the Suffering Servant in Isaiah: 53. Girard has such great respect for the power of these two "Old Testament" texts to reveal and renounce mimetic violence that when he is asked in an interview about them he says: "this is already the Gospel" (*GR,* 274). There can be no doubt that Girard throughout his work attempts to rejuvenate the very concept of the Judeo-Christian tradition: "Even well-meaning readers," Girard exclaims with some evident frustration in his last text, "still fail to follow me in my conviction that Judeo-Christianity and the

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[28] Jewish scholars who come to Levinas with a profound understanding of the Talmud and other aspects of the Jewish traditions have really been of great help to those of us who read and interpret Levinas without such knowledge. In addition to the Jewish scholars already mentioned, Sandor Goodheart and Michael Fagenblat, this would also include among many others Richard Cohen, Robert Gibbs, Claire Katz, Michael Morgan, Oona Eisenstadt, and Sarah Hammerschlag.

[29] Of course, it is important to note that Levinas draws from Talmudic Judaism and really not at all from the mystical tradition of Hasidism, which Levinas says is quite foreign to him. Steve Webb rightly points out that "the intimate and exuberant spirituality that is fostered by Hasidism" is another and a very different Judaism than the one Levinas translates into Greek. See Steve Webb, "The Rhetoric of Ethics as Excess: A Christian Theological Response to Emmanuel Levinas", 9.

[30] See the Epilogue to *The Girard Reader* titled "The Anthropology of the Cross: An Interview with René Girard", 262.

prophetic tradition are the only things that can explain the world in which we live" (*BE,* 196).

As powerful as is Girard's respect for the Hebrew Bible for revealing violence and taking the side of the victim, there is no doubt that he believes the Gospels and Christianity itself are the most powerful ways God has provided humanity to understand and to renounce its own violence. Girard is an unusually passionate and even evangelistic Christian intellectual; he even claims in his last work that "all of my books have been written from a Christian perspective" (*BE,* 196). Mimetic theory, he tells us, "is essentially Christian" and tries to "take Christianity to its ultimate meaning, to complete it in a way, because it takes violence seriously" (*BE,* 113). It would be very difficult to overestimate his esteem for Christianity and for the role Jesus plays in saving humanity from its own violence. To Girard, Jesus is the fullest and clearest expression of mimetic violence turned together upon the scapegoat who is obviously and completely innocent. The Gospels and specifically Jesus' passion reveal mimetic violence and the violent way societies have dealt with it and have put in on clear display for humanity for all time. Jesus dies the death of all innocent victims of all times and "unveils the unspoken innocence, the misunderstanding, hidden beneath the blood of history" (*CT*, 52). This revelation of the scapegoat mechanism is, according to Girard, God's work, for "no human could reveal the scapegoat mechanism." God revealed this through the life of his Son, and through the power of the Holy Spirit God founds the community of Christians, the community of those who renounce mimetic violence and follow the example of Jesus, the only one able to fully renounce violence. "Jesus alone acts as God wishes all humans would act. Jesus never yields an inch to mimetic pressure" (*GR,* 280).

Clearly, although for Girard the concept of the Judeo-Christian is extremely important and although in his work it becomes reanimated, Girard also demonstrates that this concept subordinates Judaism to Christianity and gives predominance to Christianity. Girard, despite his deep respect for Judaism and the Hebrew Bible, sometimes makes such exalted claims for Christianity that no Jew could possibly assent to them. Girard states in quite absolute terms the importance of Christ and the Christian community: "The fact that there is a new type of individual in Christianity is the most important thing in the world" (*GR,* 279). Christ as the suffering servant sent by God so obviously the innocent victim of human violence is certainly for Girard the center point of history, and he is so completely convinced of this that he can even state in his last work: "One can enter into relations with the divine only from a distance and through a mediator: Jesus Christ" (*BE,* 120)[31] Doubtless, in Girard we have the boldest Christian intellectual of our times directly drawing from the Gospels and his own interpretation of Christ and the Trinity to confront the problem that threatens the very future of the world: human to human violence.

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[31] One can only imagine how Levinas would respond to Girard here. My own suspicion is that he might respond rather sharply. I have pointed out that Levinas, when irked, tended to respond in curt and pointed remarks in my chapter titled "Getting to the Point of Levinas' Politics" in *Beyond Ethics to Justice Through Levinas and Derrida: The Legacy of Levinas* (Quincy, IL: The Franciscan Press, 2001). Perhaps Levinas might respond to Girard's language about the Passion of Christ with his own language about the "Passion of Passions," by which he meant the suffering of the Jewish people during the Holocaust. Levinas uses this phrase several times in the collection of interviews titled *Is it Righteous to Be?*

The common endpoint: nonviolence pursued to an extreme in Saintliness or Holiness

As we have seen, Levinas and Girard, these two immensely influential religious intellectuals, have drawn upon their own religious tradition to address head on what they both see as the overwhelming problem of our age: violence. They both draw wisdom from their own religious tradition to point the way to nonviolence, a way of living in the world that repudiates violence. For Levinas, this begins with recovering our awareness of the ethical significance of the fact that in being there are other human beings, my basic ethical responsibility for the other person that I did not myself choose but which comes upon me and creates me as a person called to renounce my murderous tendencies and to not kill the other person. For Girard, the way to nonviolent living is opened up by God's revelation in the Bible and most especially in the Gospels and the Passion of Christ. Girard believes that God has directly intervened in human history to warn us about our own violent tendencies. His divine voice speaks within the Biblical stories that reveal that the victim upon whom humans have foisted their violence is innocent. Girard with unabashed, even stentorian voice insists to violent humans and even more violent human societies that God has pointed the way to nonviolent living and that this way is the only way humans can avoid destroying themselves entirely through their own mimetic violence. Clearly, both Levinas and Girard speak from the depths of their own religious tradition to point the way to nonviolence. Both are rightly considered religious prophets of nonviolence.

Levinas, writing from what became for him over the years an extraordinary knowledge of and commitment to his own Jewish tradition, and Girard, writing from an extraordinary commitment to his Christian faith that only seemed to deepen and intensify with every year up until the end, both became religious prophets of nonviolence, both warning humans about violence, both pointing the way to nonviolence. What is more, both Levinas and Girard as prophets of nonviolence took upon themselves the intellectual and spiritual task of thinking about nonviolence taken to its extreme point. It is this common concept of nonviolent living taken to its most extreme that both Levinas and Girard seem to be preoccupied with in the last years of their lives. They both refer to this way of living that renounces violence in a radical manner as saintliness and holiness. These two religious intellectual giants of our own era perhaps have as a common endpoint refection on what it means to take nonviolent living to an extreme point, what it means to pursue the path of saintliness or holiness.[32]

Though Levinas and Girard seem to have a common endpoint in the figure of saintliness or holiness as nonviolence taken to its extreme, they of course think this extreme nonviolence, this saintliness or holiness, differently. For Levinas, my call to nonviolence, responsibility, ethics, etc., in the face of the Other, the command not to kill, is just the very first moment of my constitution as an ethical subject. From that first moment, there is a continuously increasing ethical responsibility that never leaves me alone and only increases as I respond to it. "My ethical responsibilities only increase as they are assumed," as he says over and over again in *Totality and Infinity*. My recognition of my responsibility to not do violence to the other person continually extends to my responsibility to care for the other, to make sure the other person is fed, clothed, safe, and of course my responsibilities are not only to one other person because, as he writes in *Totality and Infinity*, "The epiphany of the

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[32] One scholar who has recognized Girard and Levinas' common end point in reflection upon saintliness or holiness is Sandor Goodhart. In his *The Prophetic Law,* 204, he writes that "the end points of both writers would seem…fundamentally the same. They are both in the process of describing the passage from the sacred to the saintly or holy."

face … attests the presence of the third party, the whole of humanity, in the eyes that look at me."[33] So Levinas writes of our inexhaustible responsibility to all others which only increases when I recognize it and shows me the way to an ethical responsibility infinite, overwhelming, and infinitely overwhelming. To renounce violence, to take upon oneself nonviolent living, is for Levinas to recognize this impossible, ever increasing responsibility for everyone which obsesses me to such an extent that my very being in the world feels like a usurpation, as if just by living I am depriving another of a place and just by eating I am taking food from another's mouth. From the time of *Otherwise Than Being, or Beyond Being* onward, the one quotation Levinas cites more frequently than any other is the one he says he cannot forget: "My place in the sun. This is the beginning and the prototype of the usurpation of the whole world. [34]" This impossible, infinite, overwhelming, perpetual ethical vigilance and commitment to others is for Levinas nonviolent living taken to its extreme. Levinas several times late in his life refers to this as saintliness or "the adventure of a possible holiness."[35]

Of course, Girard, coming as he does from his own interpretation of the Christian story, thinks saintliness or holiness differently. Nonviolent living taken to its extreme for Girard is to imitate the perfect model of nonviolence, Christ. To pursue saintliness or holiness for Girard is a radical imitation of Christ, the most radical model of nonviolent living, and to do so in two precise ways: through *Kenosis* and through withdrawal from the world. As Paul says Christ emptied himself, so the person imitating Jesus and living out nonviolence radically empties herself of all mimetic rivalry, of all desires that are mimetic, that are simply imitations of other people's desires, and of all rivalry, competition, hostility, animosity, and of all desire to be imitated.[36] Radical nonviolence for Girard means a complete renunciation of the continuing vicious circle of mimetic violence.[37] *Kenosis* as Girard interprets it leads then to withdrawal from the world, as Jesus after the resurrection withdrew with the Father from the world. The person empty of mimetic desire withdraws from the world because there is no longer any desire, except the desire to avoid being the source of mimetic desire and rivalry for anyone else, which is one and the same with the desire to be with the Son and like the Son in all things. This is why nonviolent living taken to its extreme point in saintliness or holiness leads for Girard to complete withdrawal from this perpetually violent

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[33] See the section titled "The and the Others" in *Totality and Infinity*, 212-14. This is something Levinas says not dozens of times but only a few times in *Totality and Infinity*, but we must understand this to understand Levinas correctly.

[34] Just one of dozens of times Levinas cites this can be found in the interview titled "The Other, Utopia, and Justice" in Levinas' *Entre Nous,*trans. Michael Smith (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 231.

[35] Levinas' extreme version of nonviolence as saintliness has caused him to be compared with Gandhi. See especially on this point Victoria Tahmasebi-Birgani, *Emmanuel Levinas and the Politics of Nonviolence* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014). This extreme version of saintliness in Levinas has also led to him being accused of masochism. Simon Critchley argues that this is so and that we need humor to deal with the weight and traumatic nature of Levinas' view of the self. See Simon Critchley, *Infinitely Demanding: Ethics of Commitment, Politics of Resistance* (London: Verso, 2007).

[36] See Girard's discussion of *kenosis* in his dialogue with James Williams in *The Girard Reader*, 287. Interestingly, Levinas provides what could be considered a Jewish appreciation and interpretation of *kenosis* when he says that in ethical responsibility "I do not leave off emptying myself of myself" and when he declares: "I accept *kenosis,* absolutely." See these comments in Emmanuel Levinas, *Is it Righteous to Be?, 280.*

[37] Sandor Goodheart in *The Prophetic Law*, 189, says: "There is no ethical consequence to be gleaned from Girard's analysis, other than to end the violence, to *refuser la violence."*

world. "The aspect of Christ that has to be imitated," Girard writes in his last work, "is his withdrawal" (*BE,* 50–51).[38]

Both Levinas and Girard have now left this violent world. We are inheritors of these two remarkable religious intellectuals who were so concerned about violence and tried to address this great problem of all problems, human violence, from the depths of their own religious traditions. They both tried in their own ways to point the way outside and beyond all violence. They were, both together and yet very differently, religious prophets of nonviolence, even up to its extreme point in saintliness or holiness. Levinas's profound Jewish voice and Girard's passionate Christian one perhaps are our two most powerful contemporary voices who across all the violence of our world still speak to us of these old-fashioned things, God, ethics, nonviolence, even holiness.

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[38] A model of this withdrawal from the world for Girard is the poet Hölderlin, who left the world and lived in a tower in Tübingen for 40 years, thus withdrawing from "the mimetic giddiness of worldly existence." See Girard's discussion of Hölderlin in *Battling to the End*, 109–135.

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List of Abbreviations

BE: *Battling to the End.*
CT: *Christianity, Truth, and Weakening Faith.*
GR: *A Girard Reader.*
TI: *Totality and Infinity.*