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ROSENZWEIG'S PHILOSOPHY OF TRANSLATION

ROSENZWEIG'S THREE-SENTENCE SUMMARY



Like Rosenzweig's philosophic system as a whole, his philosophy of translation is difficult to summarize. Yet Rosenzweig himself summarized it in a letter he wrote on 1 October 1917 to his baptized cousin, Rudolf Ehrenberg. In this letter Rosenzweig compresses into a few words principles of translation that he, in relation to his own experience, had been developing since 1913: "Translation is after all the actual goal of the mind [*Geistes*]; only when something is translated has it become really *audible*, no longer to be disposed of. Not until the Septuagint did revelation become entirely at home in the world, and as long as Homer did not yet speak in Latin [*lateinisch*] he was not yet a fact. In a corresponding way, also translating from person to person."¹

All the components of Rosenzweig's philosophy of translation are concentrated here. The aim of this chapter is to unpack and analyze these ideas and to support them with other of Rosenzweig's writings. These principles grew directly from Rosenzweig's contact with the Jewish-born, Christianity-embracing professor of law and history, Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy. From this contact Rosenzweig took his momentous decisions to turn from monologic to dialogic thinking, to develop a systematic philosophy that expressed this view of life, and to live this philosophy as an observant Jewish man. Because of the role Rosenstock-Huessy played in the formative years of Rosenzweig's speech-thinking orientation, some of the analysis

will focus on this formidable professor's incontrovertible impact upon his student and subsequent friend.

Before embarking on the more detailed analysis and expansion, sentence by sentence, an overview of the general thrust and sense of Rosenzweig's principles will first be supplied. At this stage, the highly important aspect concerning his notion the "one language" will also be introduced.

The first sentence states that the goal of the mind is translating. "Mind" here carries with it as well the connotation of spirit [*Geist*], something more than an intellectuality based on reason alone. The effect of not achieving this goal of translating is the silencing of the original speech. This silencing is avoided only when someone other than the speaker hears the speech. Once heard, once audible, the speech is "no longer to be disposed of". When a person translates another's speech, the mind's activity of that other becomes *audible*. The purpose behind the goal of the mind rest on two minds for speech to attain a fully audible stage, but the responsibility is the translator's. Translating is equal to speaking as the means by which the mind's goal is reached. Neither the goal nor the purpose can be achieved in isolation. The original speech of one mind, sometimes unwittingly, depends on the translating mind of another person. It is the translator, not the original speaker, who brings the original speech into audibility. One's own speech is not ultimately one's own; it belongs to those who translate it, and then to still others who hear the translation. Even one's own speech is not originally one's own. It derives from others' speech.

The second sentence states that written texts become facts in the world because and only when they are translated from the original language into a foreign language. Committing speech to writing, as did Homer in poetic form, for example, does not preserve that speech in the sense of its assured perpetuation. Writing is a form of solitary expression that remains solitary until or unless heard by another's ear and spoken by that other's mouth. Even when one writes, for example, a letter, an essay, a book, a poem specifically intended to or for another or others, the writing depends on that other or those others in order to become a fact. Rosenzweig's famous letter to Meinecke ² is an example of unheard speech which, in Meinecke's hands at least, did not become a fact. I shall be quoting and discussing this letter at length within a few pages. Writing down one's speech is a

means by which thought formulated at that moment can be frozen until reaches an ear to melt it into the river of life. A letter is not complete, truly audible, until answered. A book not read, a letter torn up unopened, a thought spoken to bewildered ears and uncomprehending eyes is frustrated into nonfact, alienation from the world. That which is a fact or at home in the world is that which is open, in which innumerable others may partake.³

Rosenzweig offers two examples, Homer and the Septuagint, and refers to their respective initial translations from the original into a foreign language. These examples are significant. Both texts grew up indigenous to a nation of people. The writers of these texts examined and narrated their people's history amid their own people. These writers were not intending objectivity in a modern historian's sense. In their observations the writers themselves are consciously members of their nation. The national history of which they tell, moreover, includes the people's relationship with and understanding of the divine.

Written texts like Homer's and the Septuagint can be seen, before translation, as a type of solitary expression by and for one body of people. After translation into a foreign language, not only a form and content of expression, but a whole people, and their own understanding of divine revelation, are translated into a new language and people. Only then does this people's "revelation" come to be "in the world," at home, a fact.

Expansion of language, and widening of the mind, therefore, takes place on the part of the translating nation, not on the part of the nation in which the original arose. The translated-into language, as well as the original, changes. The original changes in that it experiences a new stage of its life in the translation. The translated-into language experiences its own growth. Rosenzweig's first sentence states that translating [*Ubersetzen*], not translation [*Ubersetzung*] nor to be translated, is the mind's goal. Rosenzweig's examples indicate that translation spans not only from nation to nation, but from civilization and from religion. Intergenerational speech is possible only through translation. Greece did not preserve Homer: Rome did. Moreover, because Homer and the Septuagint have come to be still alive today in numerous other languages, the proposition is implied here that one translation generates others, but that without that first translation any utterance will die.

The third “sentence” defines translation as an act that also operates within the same language, and not solely as an act that takes place between languages. The ideas of permanence and of factuality of person relate to everyday speech between humans. The human comes to be at home outside himself and a preserved fact only when translated by another. Hence one person’s audibility and facticity depend first upon speech and second upon another’s ear and mouth. Audibility holds the meanings of both being hearable and voiceable at once. Audibility, then is an objective fact that comes to be once the time-requiring stages of speaking, hearing, translating, and responding have each taken their place. In other words, reality comes to be through the course of time, and truth depends upon its discovery in time. That is why Rosenzweig was wont to quote from Goethe:

Why is truth so woefully
Removed? To depths of secret banned?
None understands in time! If we
But understood betimes, how bland
The truth would be, how fair to see!
How near and ready to our hand!⁴

Unlike Goethe, however, the last of the great pagans, Rosenzweig welcomed time and had faith in the not-yet. In his reassessment of faith in autonomous reason, Rosenzweig reoriented his thinking according to the principle that cognition is nourished by time and cannot remain independent of it. The world has a real beginning, middle, and end in creation, revelation, and redemption. Knowledge operates under this time-oriented framework.

This third sentence implies something else that is connected with views of time: the notion of there being ultimately only one language. The next chapter will address exclusively that integral aspect of Rosenzweig’s philosophy of translation, which here is only implied. In the *Nachwort* to the Halevi book, Rosenzweig is explicit: “There is only one language.”

By coupling the idea that the mind’s true goal is translating with the idea that translating takes place also for those who speak the *same* (linguistic) language,

Rosenzweig is hinting here at that notion he develops elsewhere: while there are many utterances, only one language really exists. That is, first, Rosenzweig is drawing a direct parallel between language and person. His ratio is: one language: another language: one person: another person. Second, if audibility occurs only when speech is received in translation by another, then the issue here is understanding one another in the profoundest sense. The understanding takes place in time, and must have a future thrust: one speaks, *then* another translates. Third, under the framework of creation, revelation, and redemption, the ultimate vista is therefore a conclusion of time and of speech: the silence of understanding and peace. Translating is connected inextricably with a view and an aim to play a role in bringing about that final peace. Translating leads not toward a single linguistic language but toward multiple languages, each of which will have itself become the one language. Although the next chapter will try carefully to attend to several of Rosenzweig's writings in order to develop a clearer statement of the notion of the one language, here a few more remarks may at least lay a foundation for that discussion.

The true disparity of speech and understanding does not arise between languages themselves, in themselves. Apparent disparity, on the most surface level, is only technical. What makes the variously spoken languages of the word truly disparate is that each of the various languages is at various stages of speaking, or bringing to expression, its full potential. The fact that what different languages (or persons) say can be, and is, translated into another individual's or nation's or culture's different language or into another individual's speech of the same language, illuminates that fuller statement being implied here. As will be fully discussed later, Rosenzweig holds that *each* language holds in germ the capacity to speak the revelatory word of God. Thus the emphasis is on the essential oneness of all languages, not on their disparateness. In order to translate another's speech with a view toward this oneness, the aim, then, is not that everyone speak, say, English, but that each language bring to bloom its *own* capacity to speak the One Word of Truth. Any one language's (or person's or people's) utterance of divine truth in the world's necessarily manifold expression of it is neither a disparity with, nor an essential superiority over, other languages (or person or peoples), but instead only temporary apartness until each language fully develops its seed.

Speech before translation cannot be related to anything beyond the speaker; it starts as speech separate from everyone but not as a disparate entity. Disparities, multiplicities, and fragmentedness do not occur in any one language. Disparity arises from unattended and untranslated solo utterance that seek or demand hearing, and yet are denied translation by the target language. These fly away as bits of a solitary mind; if they do not disappear, they land on misbegotten places and cause abominable transgressions. The goal of the mind, again, is to translate, not to be translated. The goal is one of absolute nonaggression, of welcoming inclusion. The slave's outcry against aggression upon the dignity and inherent freedom of the human being is an example of utterance often denied translation. Yet the Afghans once refused to translate the Soviet demands: an example of aggressive will forcefully aiming to be translated. What should be translated, eventually will be. What should not be, will eventually die. Whether worthy or not of translation, nothing is translated without the readiness and receptivity on the part of those who are to be the translators. Be that as it may, language itself stands firm. That all language can come to comply with its needs and desires to import new speech into itself whenever it is receptive and ready to do so, proves this. In speech-thinking, language is seen as a whole, or to-become-whole.

The direction for language growth then is more one of apparently, or presently, different languages moving together than one of veering apart. This converging is not a matter of merging languages. That too plays a part, but far from the major one. This part of merging is an apparent role, an effect more than an intention. Nor is the converging a matter of languages confounding or dissolving themselves into a total: instead, when a language incorporates into its own speech something spoken previously, or already, by a foreign language, the translating nation or person is giving birth to more of its potential. The seed was not implanted by but was already in the language which is doing the translating. But the translating language is giving birth to something really new in the world. That newness bonds for all time the two languages involved, but this is not the important thing. The important thing is that the birth-giving language has changed.

The following chapter will further explore this idea that each language has the potential, through its own seed, to become the one language, while at the same time remaining within the multiplicity of languages. And should this potentiality be

realized by every language, speech would no longer be necessary. All would have been both communicated and agreed upon. Discussion of the idea that a continued multiplicity of languages does not disturb or contradict the notion of there being at the same time a one language remains the next chapter's task.

Passages from Rosenzweig's other writhing clarify and substantiate the principles and beliefs blueprinted in the three sentences. Rosenzweig himself upheld, tested, claims to have verified, and certainly further learned from his philosophy throughout his lifetime: during his major translation feats– the Jehuda Halevi poetry and the Bible translation with Buber and in his administrative and teaching duties at the Lehrhaus, as well as through his friendships. Since all that Rosenzweig wrote after 1913 was written not only consciously to other specific people but also as a conscious response to what was said before him, it is to be understood that underlying any examination of the principles is the fact that correspondence is a never-absent feature of speech-thinking.

The first sentence: Translating is after all the actual goal of the mind; only when something is translated has it become really audible, no longer to be disposed of.

If the mind's purpose and aim is to translate, then to think only in solitude would be contrary and a hindrance to that goal.

Translation in part involves communicating and being communicated to in written or oral speech. Speech, whether isolated in the mind, spoken speech that involves sound, or written speech that involves the eye, remains incomplete without another's mind that will respond: it remains abstract, disconnected from reality. Through communication, speech can be said to become concrete. Along these lines, Alexandre Derczansky offers a good starting point from which to consider the term speech-thinking: "Pour Rosenzweig, le discours n'est pas une matière abstraite, mais un souci communicative don't les raisons lui sont internes et non pas extérieures..... Il insiste également sur le rapport de la parole et du langage et donne à la pensée le statut de la parole. C'est là d'ailleurs la raison pour laquelle il forge ce mot: Sprachdenken." ⁵ Speech-thinking, however, is more than communication, more than concrete. Communication can be one-directional: transference or informative communication, as in news broadcasts, brochures,

pamphlets, lectures. Speech-thinking between any two human beings, whether or not the same generation, whether or not they meet face to face, involves change on the part of the one addressed, *because* of being addressed. But between two live, face-to-face interlocutors the roles of the one who is speaking and the one who is addressed not only alternate, but appear to intermingle. The one who speaks is also listening for his cues as to how and what to speak to his or her listener. The speech of the one who is speaking at the moment is drawn out by one who is listening at the moment. Speech-thinking, in its intergeneration sense, between, say, Homer and a senator in Washington, might, through the *Iliad*, alter the senator's views on human nature and war, leaving him questioning whether war is glorious or tragically futile. If the senator speaks and thinks differently thereafter, he will to some degree, have become a speech-thinker. He has experienced transformative communication. A sentence in E.V. Rieu's introduction to the *Iliad* nicely distinguishes between informative and transformative communication: "I would rather have the *Iliad* than a whole shelf of Bronze-Age war-reports, however accurate."⁶ While Derczansky is right to distinguish between abstract and concrete, he does not penetrate into the spiritual aspect that, according to Rosenzweig, can accompany the concrete. Moreover, by stopping at the notion of the concrete, there is the risk of objectifying speech and language into mere tools. In an impassioned, biting passage, which for all that is not devoid of humour, Rosenzweig write:

"Inadequacy of languages," "limitation of thought", "our sensory experience," finally as a highlight the "God" formed by man in his image – this is how a theological problem is dealt with today! Even if we grant the soundness of these "theoretical-knowledge" imperfection (I frankly do not understand with which language, which thought, which experience we can compare our language, our thought, our experience in order to be permitted to confer upon them the grade of unsatisfactory), even if we grant that: in which other science is it permitted to place "theoretical-knowledge" lamentation instead of honest striving after the understanding of the facts themselves?⁷

The mind's intended mark lies beyond itself. The mark is relationship with God, other people. The mind misses its mark if it forgets God, other people, or even

itself. Authentic thought drives toward expression. It does not reside enclosed and uncommunicative alone in any single mind. The mind's solitary speech will be "disposed of," die, unless heard, translated, and spoken into the language by another mind. Only the mind of another person or people can verify and vivify, renew and further engage one mind's speech and thereby bring it into truly vocal language in which yet others may partake. If the goal of the mind is mistaken as the desire to render one's own speech permanent, that view is merely an egotistical extension of the isolated mind. Such "permanence" that has no lifelines to other speaking minds is indeed only stagnation. Communication through translating, that is, through effort on the part of the hearer, who, having heard another is transformed and now speaks anew, is a communication that creates a permanence in the world. By "permanence" I wish to convey the precise meaning of "staying through", remaining, enduring, during world-time. Such permanence resides in the world only because and when it is no longer locked in a mind, whether that mind is the mind of a person or a nation or a community. This sort of communication reaches from outward, centres itself in a person or in a nation or community, and speaks again outward into the world. This speaking outwardly is an orientation for someone and to someone other than self.

The simplest and most accurate meaning of "to translate" is to understand what another is saying and to be able to express this in one's own modes of speech. Understanding is always the first step – and the last. In a letter to Rosenstock-Huessy dated 24 July 1918 Rosenzweig reveals, in the live and specific context of friendship, how for him translation is not a matter of reiterating in synonymous words what the speaker says. Yet to speak within a language requires a base of synonymy that functions as common ground. Synonymy means that the frame of reference is already firmly established: ready availability of synonyms means that what is being said has already been translated and is already a fact upon which both parties rely. Differences will arise from this ground, but not necessarily disparities:

You have been able to speak the language of your faith nearly unconstrained, in the certainty that I would be able to translate it for myself. And the simple solution to the puzzle lies there. Our faith (and therefore our works as well) is different. If faith were something absolutely separate, we would really not be able to say a

word to one another. Translation wouldn't exist either. But faith is nothing beyond hope. And hope we have in common, both since our faith is different and because it is. The common property of hope enables me to translate your faith into my language. And therefore we can really speak of those thing "of which it is worthwhile for men alone to speak". You are utterly forgetful – or you would still have recalled another line of poetry in which all this was said shortly and well: "My enemy in space, my friend in time."⁸

A distinction is made in this letter between faith and hope. What makes translation possible between Jew and Christian is not faith. This difference in faith will remain until the end of time. But faith is not "absolutely separate." Faith is not the ultimate in inter-human and God-human relationships. The common property of hope that ultimately faith will not matter, although it does matter now "in space," is that which transcends different faiths and that which thus makes translation both possible and imperative. With the synonymous base of hope, the two people can speak. From always requires space: Judaism and Christianity each take their place in space, and translation is not intended to render sameness in space. Hope requires not space, but time. Thus, the actual common base that permits translation is time. Faith that operates without hope promotes faith only: that is, form and not ultimately the one God. Faith without hope promotes differences that lead to disparity. Such hopeless faith forgets time. It forgets to believe that time has a beginning and will have an end. To hope and to pray for that end is the ultimate of faith: that there will be a Last Day, and that there will be peace.

Translated, words become "audible." It is with good reason that, in some circles, much has been made of Rosenzweig's and Rosenstock's relationship.⁹ Because their correspondence provides a lively example of speech-thinking and at the same time the content addresses the method itself, it is rightly taken seriously by scholars. This correspondence, moreover, offers a glimpse of how true it is that Rosenzweig's philosophy sprang from life, from experience, and led back "into Life."¹⁰

This sort of communication to Rosenstock-Huessy, or to anyone, would have been barred from the Rosenzweig who had followed Hegel, Rosenzweig the assimilated Jew who had fancied Judaism a quaint relic in modernity and belief in God not

possible to any intelligent twentieth century person. Let us take a brief backward glance at the transitional and transformative period of Rosenzweig's life in which Rosenstock-Huessy played the major role. This will be helpful because it shows not merely the influence that Rosenstock-Huessy had upon Rosenzweig, but more importantly some of the stages that take place self-consciously in a speech-thinking encounter.

The foregoing letter excerpt is a piece of a conversation between a certain Jew and a certain Christian. Rosenzweig and Rosenstock-Huessy did not speak to each other like this at the start of their relationship. During 1912 and 1913 the two men engaged in almost daily discussions concerning the inadequacy of "university" philosophy with regard to human spiritual life. Rosenstock-Huessy had personally solved the problem in his own life led as a Christian, which Rosenzweig had come to respect. Rosenzweig, on the other hand, was speaking from the standpoint of the intellectual with a dilemma. After a heated conversation in July 1913, Rosenzweig decided to take up his own Jewish path toward Christianity, through the Jewish calendar for one year, which would, he believed, prepare him for baptism. Rosenzweig describes that evening in July 1913, in that famous passage in which he highlights the unreality and hypocrisy of dualizing oneself between a person of faith and one of reason.

In that night's conversation Rosenstock pushed me step by step out of the last relativist position that I still occupied, and forced me to take an absolute standpoint. I was inferior to him from the outset since I had to recognize for my part the justice of his attack. If I could then have buttressed my dualism between revelation and the world with a metaphysical dualism between God and Devil [he meant to say if he could have split himself into two halves, a religious and a worldly one] I should have been unassailable. But I was prevented from doing so by the first sentence of the Bible. This piece of common ground forced me to face him. This has remained even afterwards, in the weeks that followed, the fixed point of departure. Any form of philosophical relativism is now impossible to me.

11

Three months later, in October 1913, Rosenzweig observed Yom Kippur as a Jew on the way to baptism. That day's experience led him to decide to remain a Jew, or

more precisely, to become a believing, observant Jew. Fearing after his decision that he was not yet strong enough in his power to speak as a Jew in the face of Rosenstock's power to speak as a Christian, Rosenzweig interrupted relations with Rosenstock-Huessy. But by December 1916 Rosenzweig could write: "The real adventure and achievement of the last few months was for me my correspondence with Rosenstock. You know (or should be able to know) that I expected, dreaded, and postponed the inevitable second discussion with him since November 1913. It was to be the test of my new life... Now the task is completed."¹²

This new life was the life of the speech-thinker, the philosopher who was also man of faith, not outside his philosophizing but in its very core. This new life involved rejecting the arena where solitary thought was the professed norm – the German university. This is expressed in Rosenzweig's letter of August 1920 to his former history professor (1908-10), Friedrich Meinecke, who had offered Rosenzweig a professorship at the University of Freiburg. By this time the *Star of Redemption* had been completed, the Lehrhaus had been operating under Rosenzweig's leadership since 1 August 1920, the Patmos Circle was meeting and publishing, and Rosenzweig had lived through seven Jewish calendar years.¹³ What Rosenzweig wrote to Meinecke manifests a sense of the apologetic,¹⁴ perhaps in the foreknowledge that still Meinecke would not be able to translate who Rosenzweig had become into his own life.¹⁵ The letter's language indeed remained foreign to Rosenzweig's former professor. It has often been quoted; it seems again and again worth reading. It displays Rosenzweig's trust in the powers of speech, but perhaps as well a degree of naïveté?

In 1913 something happened to me for which *collapse* is the only fitting name. I suddenly found myself on a heap of wreckage, or rather I realized that the road I was then pursuing was flanked by unrealities. Yet this was the very road defined for me by my talent, and my talent only... I felt a horror of myself... Amidst the shreds of my talents I began to search for myself, amidst the manifold for the One. It was then... that I descended into the vaults of my being, to place whither talents could not follow me; that I approached the ancient chest whose existence I have never wholly forgotten, for I was in the habit of going down at certain times of the year to examine what lay uppermost in the chest: those moments had all along

been the supreme moments of my life... (This time, however, my hands dug deeper, bringing up armfuls of treasures.) These, indeed were my own treasures, my most personal possessions, things inherited, not borrowed! By owning them and ruling over them I had gained something entirely new, namely the right to live—

and even to have talents; for now it was I who had the talents, not they who had me... I had turned from a historian (perfectly “eligible” for a university lectureship) into an (utterly “ineligible” philosopher. The one thing I wish to make clear is that scholarship no longer holds the centre of my attention, and that my life has fallen under the rule of a “dark drive” which I’m aware that I merely *name* by calling it “my Judaism.” The scholarly aspect of this whole process – the conversion of the historian into a philosopher— is only a corollary, though it has furnished me with a welcome corroboration of my own conviction that the “ghost I saw” was not the devil; it seems to me that I am today more firmly rooted in the earth than I was seven years ago. The man who wrote *The Star of Redemption* to be published shortly by Kaufmann in Frankfurt – is of a very different caliber from the author of *Hegel and the State* [Rosenzweig’s dissertation]. Yet when all is said and done, the new book is only – a book. I don’t attach any undue importance to it. The small – at times exceedingly small – thing called [by Goethe] “demand of the day” which is made upon me in my position [as head of the Jüdisches Lehrhaus] at Frankfurt, I mean the nerve-wracking, picayune, and at the same time very necessary struggles with people and conditions, have now become the real core of my existence – and I love this form of existence despite the inevitable annoyance that goes with it. Cognition no longer appears to me as an end in itself. It has turned into service, a service to human beings (not, I assure you, tendencies). Any kind of tendentious work is not only distasteful but downright impossible to me. Cognition is autonomous; it refuses to have any *answers* foisted on it from the outside. Yet it suffers without protest having certain *questions* prescribed to it from the outside (and it is here that my heresy regarding the question seems to me worth asking). Scientific curiosity and omnivorous aesthetic appetite mean equally little to me today, though I was once under the spell of both, particularly the latter. Now I only inquire when I find myself *inquired* of. Inquired of, that is, by *men* rather than by scholars. There is a man in each scholar, man who inquires and

stands in need of answers. I am anxious to answer the scholar *qua* man but not the representative of a certain discipline, that insatiable, ever inquisitive phantom which like a vampire drains him whom it possesses of his humanity. I hate that phantom as I do all phantoms. Its questions are meaningless to me. On the other hand, the questions asked by human beings have become increasingly important to me. This is precisely what I meant by “cognition and knowledge as a service”: readiness to confront such questions, to answer them as best I can out of my limited knowledge and my even slighter ability. You will now be able to understand what keeps me away from the university and forces me to follow the path I have chosen: not an extreme degree of consciousness [Meinecke thought that Rosenzweig was suffering from post-War disillusionment, and had entered a “spiritualized” form of Judaism] (lucidity of this kind I can only summon when I am called upon to vindicate myself, as I am now) but precisely that “dark drive” to which you appeal in your letter... Now a great weight has been lifted from my heart, for when we parted in Berlin I was extremely distressed over my failure of communication.¹⁶

Rosenzweig had arrived at the conviction that Hegel represents the “last philosopher” of a 2500–year tradition. He had achieved the zenith of the solitary mind’s excursions. From Iona to Jena, philosophical dialogues, according to him, had been “fixed”: the outcome was known at the beginning because they were the “dialogues” of a single mind, self speaking with self.¹⁷ Rosenzweig’s own life of speech-thinking, steadily developing from 1913, convinced him that solitary thought does not take into account full reality. Nor is it capable of arriving at human truths that reflect the divine Truth. The relating of one’s thought within one’s life is a test of the verity of the mind’s concepts.

To Meinecke, Rosenzweig reports that “cognition and knowledge,” while autonomous – and by implication, because autonomous – are not ends in themselves. Cognition and knowledge that come to be contained in the fortress of the human mind are to stand in readiness of service to those outside who have their questions to ask, as well as in openness to the possibility of shaking the fortress of the mind’s foundation by answering those questions.

Those who are outside the mind's fortress and are asking the questions, as humans, not as scholars, are the ones who lead us to the achievement of the mind's true goal. Autonomous knowledge that delivers up its "findings" as an unalterable package upon those outside and upon whom, moreover, the "right" questions are imposed hinders human growth of knowledge of reality and truth. Reality and truths come to be known only in experience with others, and those others define our questions: "Now I only inquire when I find myself inquired of," Rosenzweig writes in that letter.¹⁸ Thus cognition and knowledge become a service.

An especially sensitive and insightful Rosenzweig scholar, Michael Oppenheim, observes that Rosenzweig's own experience in and through conversation enabled him to learn of and to promote the power of dialogue: "In later years Rosenzweig could speak of the immense possibilities of a meeting between people, when both stand facing one another with trust and openness, because he had experienced all of this with Rosenstock."¹⁹ Oppenheim also highlights the speechthinker's profound trust in coming to learn truths derived from the life experience of ourselves and of others: "The importance of recognizing the bridge between life and thought was once underscored by Rosenzweig in a statement he made about the great nineteenth century figure, Soren Kierkegaard. Rosenzweig wrote that "behind each paradox of Kierkegaard one sees biographical *absurda*, and for this reason one must *credere*." Here Rosenzweig, in a brief allusion to Tertullian's maxim, gives expression to one of his most characteristic ideas: the verification of concepts takes place in the *life* of the thinker."²⁰

In order to be translated the mind that is inquired into must disclose itself and be able to reveal itself. Second – and simultaneously – that mind, expressing itself in written form, must display a vulnerability which a specific other can tap: the inquirer, who finds himself at a specific moment in need of hearing the original. And third, the mind inquired into must be amenable to being received – not necessarily or even usually simultaneously – by that other. Rosenzweig is speaking from the point of view of the translator. This is to be stressed. The mind's true goal is translating, he writes. It is not to seek to be translated. The human reaches outward to hear what is outside the self, does not (merely) thrust her-or himself out to be heard. Thus for the mind to achieve its true purpose it would have to take the part of the listener. In this role as listener, the listening mind takes an even

more active part than the speaker. Once interested in or attune to any originating speech, God's or another human being's, the listener, in order to become translator, must seek or be open to self-revealing on another's part. He must attract the other's speech toward his own, and into it, dissonant or foreign-sounding his own speech may at first appear in his translating efforts. He must especially attempt, then, to incorporate that other's speech into his own language. The incorporation eventually dissolves the apparent dissonance. The original is not subsumed into the new language. It has rather expanded it, given it a fresh, healthy, new moment of growth.

When considering especially the written word and translating, we might amend that partial truth of *verba volant, scripta manent* [spoken words fly away, written words endure]. Permanence depends more upon whether a word reaches reception or not, and less upon whether it is spoken or written. But the written word, because captured in a visible physicality, does offer a type of permanence that is denied to the spoken word. The written word can be read by those outside the "intimacy" of two speakers, such as letter writers; or of the "one-way intimacy" that arises between one speaker, such as the bookwriter, and many readers. The permanence inherent in the written word is framed within boldness and daring on the part of the speaker: translated or not, there is a thereness to the written word, and this thereness is conducive to replay for the hearer, through rereading. Rosenzweig's spoken words *had* flown away from Meineck's understanding, but Rosenzweig's writing down what he had tried to communicate beforehand indicates Rosenzweig's courage in trying to communicate in such a way *ut scripta manent* [so that written words might endure].

It is the *reception* of a word, whether spoken or written, that perpetuates it, or its full spokenness with a view to permanence. Rosenzweig expressed this in a letter to Margrit Rosenstock-huessy, Eugen's wife, during the early stages of writing *The Star*, on 2 November 1918:

I have the greatest towards burning letters. I've never done it when it wasn't absolutely necessary. Words blow away or rather they transform themselves into answers. [*Wort* becomes *Ant-wort*.] But a written word, writing in general, means that the person wasn't satisfied with moments of looking at one another and the

present, but rather was creating permanence, bridges across the distances in space and time. Anything which has withstood this test, the test of small permanency, doesn't have to be scared of the large permanency – the most fleetingly written word has withstood it... One may forget a spoken word, but one has to preserve written ones, at least as long as one is “preserved oneself”, that is, as long as one lives. The human life is the large permanency of which the written word has brought its proof of capability by overcoming the small permanency. The letters that I have received from someone are to me like a piece of his life that has been given into my custody; I would feel as though I were dealing deathblows, were I to burn them; so I find it hard even with indifferent letters; I have even usually saved invitations, if they were in writing. The fleeting character, which even written words have, is accepted and dissolved in the answer, just as with spoken words. A letter which has been answered is not “too intimate” anymore. I approach a letter with hesitation and shyness only as long as it is unanswered; but regardless of what the answer is like, it admits the letter, eradicates its fleeting character, and what remains is a permanent one.²¹

It cannot be overstressed that this true goal of the mind involves dependence on another, and this dependence holds both for the one who is to be translated and for the one engaged in translating. A fully audible word is always reducible to two people, never to one. Between those two, the task is greater for the listener, the one translating. The speaker, the original, after all, is disclosing what he or she already knows at that time. He may struggle to express himself clearly; he may be speaking *to* someone specific; he may change his mind at another time and know something different or something more; he at least however knows what he *wants* to say. But he cannot force the translating activity to take place by another.

A new emphasis upon words themselves emerges. Only a word which is picked up by another or others than the one or ones who already know a given speech, and which is incorporated into another's language, only that word partakes in full reality and leads to truth. In connection with the stages of the word from utterance to translation, Rosenzweig wrote in his introduction to part two of the

Star, the section most evident and explicit concerning new turn in the speech-thinking method: "What was finished as thought reverts as word into a new beginning. For the word is mere inception until it finds reception in an ear, and response in a mouth."²² In book 2, part two, Rosenzweig concludes this idea:

"We will henceforth proceed from real word to real word, not from describing one species of word to another as we did in describing creation. This accords with the wholly real employment of language, the centre-piece as it were of this entire book, at which we have here arrived... we recognize the actual word... as word and response."²³

In word and response a two-step operation takes place in the responding alone. Rosenzweig tried to discover and to define an essential principle of translation in addition to the need for accuracy in any translated piece; he wrote on 10 March 1921 to Gershom Scholem concerning this.²⁴ Technically the art of translation can achieve error free success. Yet the translate piece may still be inaccurate from the point of view of the original. The following excerpt from this letter raises the notion that the translator engages in a special two-way listening: to the speaker whom he wishes to translate, and to the language into which he wishes to translate. This operation goes on in all translating from one mind to another, which is to say in all fully voiced speech, but the steps are particularly clearly noticed in translating from one language into another:

Only one who is profoundly convinced of the impossibility of translation can really undertake it. Not by any means of the impossibility in translation in general (that isn't the case at all; rather all life beyond one's own soul is conditioned by the possibility of this miracle, as you so rightly call it), but the impossibility of the particular translation he is about to embark on. This special impossibility is different in every case. In this case its name is: Luther. And not Luther alone – he is only the point of intersection where the newest and the oldest meet – but more precisely: Notker, Luther, Hölderlin. The German language, in the names of these three men, has become a Christian language. Anyone who translates into the German language must to some extent translate into Christian language... It will be most Christian of all for Christian texts, less so but still strongly Christian for the "Old Testament," much less with biblical passages that

been incorporated into the text of a basic prayer, even less for Bible quotations in hymnal prayers and, in fact, in hymns in general. Any arbitrary or deliberate evasion at all is impossible here.²⁵

Besides understanding the speaker, then, one must also be able to perceive the limitations of one's own modes of expression. One's own modes of expression can – indeed must – be stretched to accommodate the speaker in order for translation to be at all possible. If the stretching is not necessary, then what is being translated is nothing new in the translated-into language. German speakers had already been successful in stretching their language in this regard with respect to the Christian message.²⁶ Luther's Bible translation had brought Christian language indelibly into the German language. Anyone speaking something new into his or her own language, translating thoughts into truly audible word, must exercise this stretching of language. Three great German speakers, Notker, Luther, and Hölderlin spoke new spirit into German; they changed German for as long as it will be spoken. All heard new voices from outside their own minds, translated these voices, and spoke them into their own language. Hölderlin, with his exquisite poetry, not only composed a new German in terms in terms of content and style, at the same time he also introduced into German the spirit of Greek poetry by using Greek metre. Hölderlin's achievement was based on the meaning of translation in Rosenzweig's sense: he translated something other than, and addition to, words. Rosenzweig, in his *Nachwort* to the German translations of the poems of Jehuda Halevi, states that he has proved that Hebrew poetry can be translated into German in strict keeping with rhyme and metre; any future "translations" in the free style are simply, he says, laziness.²⁷ The spirits of foreign languages that have been translated into the German language are now never to be "disposed of." They have a permanent voice that lives in an expanded German.²⁸

The second sentence: Not until the Septuagint did revelation become entirely at home in the world, and as long as Homer did not yet speak in Latin he was not yet a fact.

This “sentence” refers to bridging languages by translation. To Rosenzweig all speech is translation.²⁹ He does not take the philosophical identity word “is” lightly.³⁰ He really does mean identification here. Thus all translation is also speech. Yet not all languages can be bridged at once, and no one can all at once speak all the languages of the world – and yet he can. Two enormously important aspects become more brightly visible now: the aspect of time, and the already mentioned aspect of the one language. As I have repeatedly said the discussion of the one language is being deferred until the next chapter. Crucial here, however, is that notion, alluded to above, that each language contains in germ the potential to speak the one language. It takes time for a seed to germinate and to grow.

In any discussion of time, considerations of grammar and tenses are helpful, if not needed. Since time is such an indispensable aspect in speech-thinking, Rosenzweig also calls his philosophy grammatical thinking. His preferred label is “absolute empiricism,”³¹ which purports Rosenzweig’s view of the concreteness of speech as an epistemological organon.

In the case of two individuals who are speaking face to face or even letter to letter the present tense may only appear to be predominantly at play. But the time element which entails all three primary tenses between two contemporary humans who speak to each other is just as important and just as necessary as it is when speech is spoken across ages. Rosenstock-Huessy’s motto “*Respondeo etsi mutabor* [I respond *although* I shall be changed], express the effects upon translators during and after their relationship with the one translated. A reorientation occurs. It is in this sense that taking time and another person seriously mean the same thing to a speech-thinker. This means that the tenses are not interchangeable. The present is based on a foundational past. The past is always projecting into a future. The beginning, middle, and end of a life are related to the beginning, middle and end of the world: creation, revelation, and redemption. We *live* in the middle, in revelation. On being asked what revelation meant to him, Rosenstock-Huessy replied to Rosenzweig: orientation.³² Rosenzweig adopted this meaning. The response and participation of the translator, as a listener into the past, and as a speaker in the present and into the future, always orient his present. In turn, the translator reorients the present of those who hear him creating new presents based on past and future.

Translating takes place in the present. The tenses are clear cut but on a continuum: an event that is past is a fact, not to be changed; an event that is present is that which is being experienced now; and an event that is to become or to happen is future. No event is without reference to time. No event, including the event of truth, can be designated simultaneously past, present, and future. Truth is not timeless.

Translating mediates events and understanding among human beings through time. The mediation of translation is the same thing that occurs in direct conversation within the same language. Timelessness is especially shunned by the speech-thinking method. Rosenzweig sees timelessness as the aberrational aspect to which thought aspires, what it purports to “have” and strives to “be” in its autonomous realms that go nowhere and thus become phantoms. For reality, for concrete reality, for the concrete reality of speech, time is required and welcomed. Thought, in that it relates to no tenses, is indeed timeless.

Timelessness, to Rosenzweig, must not be construed as eternity which has no access to temporality. Timelessness has a relationship with eternity only at the end of time. Eternity, during the span of revelation, is not the absence of time. The major difference between time and eternity is that eternity is not created, and time is. Time was created precisely in order to relate to eternity.³³

Eternity is that aspect of present reality that transpires in translating. How in the instance of translating does eternity transpire? Eternity of what? Eternity of language? Eternity of the original speaker? None of these. A present that links two people in translatable peace and understanding is a present that is also eternal. God is the sole element of reality whose essence is eternal: an eternal past in creation, an eternal present in revelation, and an eternal future in redemption. Eternity of the creator of language who transpires through his corollary creature time is that which is experienced in human speech through time. Through these creations, language and time, the creative spirit flows, for God the creator himself uses language. God lifted (lifts) himself out of his eternality, his essential realm, and acts in his creation time. The human, living in his “natural” time-span of life, experiences eternity wherein God meets time.

That fundamental problem Rosenzweig came to have with Idealism involved the correlation between language and death. Language could not offer Idealism what it

demands: calculability, finality, accountability. Language, “this voice, which resounds in man without apparent reason but the more realistically for that,”³⁴ cried out to the deaf ears of Idealism that death, being universal, is nevertheless not nothing: it is real, new, and individual in each case. A death – a life – will not be subsumed and reduced to an all. With its inherent relationship to time, language is also related to eternity. It is “a growth amidst all growing life [and] ... nourishes itself on language. Yet it is distinguished from this life precisely because it does not move freely and capriciously over the surface, but rather sinks roots into the dark foundations beneath life. Idealistic logic, however, thinks it must remain entirely in these dark subterranean foundations. Without knowing it, [Logic] thus rather drags the life of the above, into which it does not dare to grow, down into the nether world.[Logic] transforms the living into a realm of shadows.”³⁵

Only through the creative spirit can and do past, present, and future find for themselves a certain mutuality. Eternity *and* time, that is, the oneness of eternity and the plurality of the tenses, interconnect and are bridged by the creative spirit. Here there is no “versus.” It is truly a matter of “and.” Rosenzweig, among the several labels he reluctantly contrived for his new philosophy, also named it the “and” philosophy.

From the first sentence of Rosenzweig’s summary we learn that to him a permanence occurs whenever speech becomes audible. The intention of translating is not to render language permanent, but to fulfil it. At this stage we can better see that the permanence arising from translating is not a permanence of language itself or of anyone’s particular speech. The permanence is rather one of a mutuality of understanding, but a mutuality only in an imbalanced sense, only from the point of view of the translating language. The peace arrived at between two or more speakers, however momentary, endures as a peace which reaches an eternal plane and is eternally incontrovertible. The truth of peace remains as God’s Truth. When experienced and expressed in time, in the present, truth is thus also permanent in the sense that it endures beyond time, after the end of the world. Alexander Altmann summarizes this meaning of permanence, and underlines that neither truth nor eternity can be monologically or solitarily understood. Moreover, rather than perceiving present moments as touching upon eternity, the speech-thinker would contend that it is more accurate to say that truths touch upon and relate

permanently to eternity, but that truths can be reached only in the present, in present meetings. Altmann writes that according to speech-thinking: "Truth is revealed through speech as expressing the intercommunication of one mind with another. It is not the formal truths of logic in their timeless, abstract, systematic character that are really vital and relevant, but rather the truths that are brought out in the relationships of human beings with God and with one another – truths that spring from the presentness of time and yet reach out into the eternal."³⁶

Translating for Rosenzweig entails, therefore, certainly quantifiable accuracy, but much more important than that, the resultant transformations that comprise an irreversible growth in spirit of the language translated into. The growth in spirit is the growth in the expressibility of truth in a specific language. Rosenzweig would say with Rosenstock-Huessy that "speech is that energy which makes us partake in the six or seven thousand years of civilized life on earth."³⁷

In an essay titled "Scripture and Luther's Translation," Rosenzweig further elucidates the principle of permanence, as it relates to the translation of great literary works:

In a certain sense, every great work in one language can be translated into another language only once. The history of translation shows typical phenomena. First there are a number of interlinear translation, with the modest aim of serving trots, and free "creative" renderings that seek to make accessible to the reader the meaning – or what the translator considers the meaning – of the text. Then, one day, a miracle happens and the spirits of the two languages mate. This does not strike like a bolt out of the blue. The time for such a *hieros gamos*, for such a Holy Wedding, is not ripe until a receptive people reaches out toward the wing-beat of an alien masterpiece with its own yearning and its own utterance and when its receptiveness is no longer based on curiosity, interest, desire for education, or even aesthetic pleasure, but has become an integral part of the people's historical development... A good translator will translate the foreign book into something indigenous.³⁸

Thus, one language truly meets and mates with another, dependent upon the reaching out of the language ready to translate, to expand, to grow. That all

languages do not at once, do not now, meet each other – technically they can – is due not to a faultiness in speech's means of communicating thought. It is due rather to the requirement of time, to waiting for the right time when the common ground necessary for translation to take place, that base of synonymy, emerges: in the case of literary works, the creative spirit embodied in one language is yearned for another. "To need time means: to be able to anticipate nothing, to have to wait for everything, to be dependent on the other for what is ours. All this is entirely unthinkable to the thinking thinker, while it co-responds to the 'speaking thinker.' „³⁹

Thus the creative spirit is not a diffusive, nebulous breath that vaporously enweathes the world skimming worldly surfaces wherever it will. Rather it is *in* the world, *of* the world; created and creative. Language, like the world, is to be completed, to be realized. The creative spirit that bridges generations that the translator lures into his present, that yet reaches out to eternal and to the permanent, is in the world because it is part of the world's created composition:

The world is – a new feature! – composed of imponderables and ponderables, heaven and earth. Not, for example, as even the politician perhaps all too gladly would concede: heaven *has* created earth. No, it does not stand behind and leave to hell the entire foreground, rather heaven *and* earth, both created, from the "foreground". Power wants to gain everything by force. And precisely this – thought upon doves' feet – rules the world. The spirit... The peace of the seventh day, which yet itself is a work, itself only completes the creation: Power knows only of the world of six days. It would like to deny the Sabbath. But it belong to the world – to the created world. The day when there is no weighing, the day imponderables, of the positive rest – itself a part of creation. The peace which "belongs *to it*", as does the battle.⁴⁹

Thus the creative spirit is not a force: it does not impose itself upon listeners. The listeners will listen when they... will listen.

Introducing the word "spirit". Of *spiritual* is not the point... The spirit creates works. Wherein is it differentiated from artwork? Even the work of art *itself* as a

spiritual work – wherein does it differentiate itself from the same thing as work of art? As spiritual work it is *expansive*, not bound to the aesthetic effect. The spirit *inspires* everything. (Art *beautifies* nothing but itself.) A fully spiritual world would be “beautiful”... Against the notion of the “spiritual”: it involves a separation, just what the spirit may not claim. And what it yet cannot do without. It needs the non-spiritual – and yet may not leave it non-spiritual. At the end everything must be spiritual. (The spirit produces its audience.)... The soul, not the spirit is that which may lead out beyond the creation. The spirit belongs *to* the creation.⁴¹

“The creative achievement of translating can lie nowhere else than where the creative achievement of speaking itself lies.”⁴² To translate is to speak again. It is to renew speech, the truth that is unfolded in speaking. The responsibility of the translator is not merely to be true to the speech being translated: he or she is at the same time being faithful to and has faith in future speakers. Otherwise he would not translate formally. Furthermore, in translating formally, the translator expects response by future readers and speakers in their turn:

In speaking and listening, the “other” need not have my ears or my mouth – this would render unnecessary not only translation but also speaking and listening. And in speaking and listening between nations, what is needed is neither a translation that is so far from being a translation as to be the original – this would eliminate the listening nation – nor one that is in effect a new original – this would eliminate the speaking nation. These could be desired only by a mad egoism intent on satisfying its own personal or national life and yearning to be in a desert surrounded oasis. Such an attitude is utterly out of harmony in a world created to be not a wilderness but a place to contain every kind of people.⁴³

The second sentence has revealed many aspects of Rosenzweig’s philosophy of translation. Translating is not a self-contained act that functions as a transference of interior thought to another interior and setting it down as fixed. The translator is a responder: his or her own speech. The translator becomes part of a larger conversation. The task is to translate one person’s speech to others and *for* other

person's speech. Full reality of speech – anyone's speech, including God's – is not yet completed while language lives and grows. Thus it is impossible for any language to make final, definitive statements about reality in the present incompleteness of any single language. Every language's boundaries are still in the process of expanding from within, through its own speakers who have something new to say; and from without, through drawing in foreign speech which has not yet been expressed in the "mother" tongue, through translation. As long as there are still subsequent responders and rejoinders, no one human mind, no philosophic system or theological dogma can contain or control what "is." According to the speech-thinker, each human being, however, can partake in all speech that has ever been conversed:

The Scriptures constitute the first conversation of mankind, a conversation in which gaps of half and whole millennia occur between speech and response. Paul tried to find the answer to the question of the third chapter of Genesis [The Hiding of Adam from God after eating of the Tree of Knowledge] by questioning the words of the twentieth chapter of Exodus [The Giving of the Law]. Augustine and Luther repeated his answer, but each added his own answer to it. The former replied with his theory of the *Civitas Dei*, the latter with his *Epistle to the Councilmen*, in which he requested the establishment of Christian schools. In every instance a new phase in this conversation is introduced by translation, translation into the language of tragedy, translation into the language of the *Corpus Juris*, and into that of the *Phenomenology of the Spirit*. No one knows when this conversation will come to an end, but then, no one knows when it began. And so it cannot be determined by the peevishness, arrogance, or complacent cleverness of any man, but only by the will, the knowledge, and the wisdom of Him who wrought the beginning.⁴⁴

The third "sentence": In a corresponding way, also translating from person to person.

At least two scholars have, understandably and to a degree justifiably, criticized Rosenzweig for not satisfactorily explaining human-to-human contact in speech.

Nahum Glatzer, in "The Concept of Language in Rosenzweig's Thought," states that from the supplementary essay to the *Star*, "Das neue Denken,"

One gains the impression that the *Star*, which uses the method of speech-thinking, is indeed concerned with the word exchanged between human beings... But when we go back to the *Star*, we are confronted with the fact that word, speech and language take place in the sphere between God and man... The most telling examples for speech-thinking Rosenzweig could offer came from the realm of man's relationship with the divine...

We may ask whether the change – from the religious meaning of language to the role of speech in inter-human relation – is due to a conscious development: It is not more than an attempt to make explicit in "The New Thinking" what lay dormant between the lines of the *Star*? This question I am unable to answer.⁴⁵

Rivka Horwitz, in her article "Franz Rosenzweig on Language," writes that according to Rosenzweig, "Every person is in the present moment, here and now, in the center of *his* time. In a meeting man's life is concentrated; his past as well as his future are with are with him. Rosenzweig thinks that man as a center orders the external world in accordance with his experience [*Star* 127-8]. Unfortunately, he did not develop this principal theme; he merely left it as an idea."⁴⁶

These criticisms point to the difficulties involved in any exposition of the vitality of speech-thinking. I shall not argue that Rosenzweig did indeed entirely surmount these difficulties in the *Star*. Yet, if only by a route beyond the gateway of the *Star*, it seems to me that Rosenzweig did find appropriate and successful ways in his attempt to "make explicit" "the role of speech in inter-human relations," and to "develop this principal them" of the human in the present and centre of his own time. While the critiques of Glatzer and Horwitz hold to a degree, I suggest that few attempts to make explicit the *Star*'s boundedness as philosophical system would have been untenable. For example, to generally describe interpersonal relationships that were not his own, and therefore events that he could not really know by experience, would defeat the very presence that Rosenzweig asserts. Nor would it have worked to describe those relationships that were his own and that he therefore did know by experience. With the tenet, as Horwitz stated, that a meeting

is in the present moment, how does one write a description in “merely a philosophical system,”⁴⁷ as Rosenzweig designated the *Star* to be, of something so present as live speech between an I and a You, without falling into the lie of the objective description for an event that is not a thing in the first place and defies objectification? If I would argue that Rosenzweig succeeded in making explicit the role of speech, I would do it from his reading of the Song of Songs as the “focal book of revelation.”⁴⁸ Buber, perhaps bravely, but in some places rather unfortunately has risked this attempt. His works have popularly been discussed in maudlin terms tending toward a general, universal, sentimental, pervasive “love” rather than toward the specific love from particular person to particular person to which the philosophy of experience attests. Beyond the gate of the *Star* Rosenzweig “described” inter-human speech in the only way it could and should be done: by simply doing it, in the writing of the *star* on army postcards, in teaching at the Lehrhaus, and in the testimony of his correspondence. I have already noted that he yearned to speak physically, but that his illness forbade it.

Interestingly, the criticism is not levelled at Rosenzweig’s really equally vague “descriptions” of divine-human speech. Just as Rosenzweig never described in objective terms any specific relationship between humans, including any of his own, he likewise never described on objective terms, that is outside the present moment, any human-divine encounter. While this lack of criticism in itself indicates that such speech experiences are readily understood or accepted, it also indicates that those ready accepters view human-divine discourse as radically different from speech between human and human. To the speech-thinker, human-divine conversation is the root of human-human speech, and is that which nourishes and authenticates all speech. Neither Glatzer nor Horwitz mentions the important and inseparable connection the *Star* elucidates between human-divine and human-human speech.

In meetings between two, whether between God and a human or being, or between two people, so much happens from gesture, glance, nuance, vocabulary confined to the particular two – with their inter twined past that involves only those two and with the double present that converge in the meeting – that it would be perhaps impossible and at least unseemly to attempt to offer descriptions to third parties. Like Anselm, Rosenzweig could only “philosophize about” events of meetings

between persons from immediate experience. He preferred speak *to* rather than *about* God, and in conversation with human beings, to permit God as a third speaker. Thus, Rosenzweig's reading of the Song of Songs as "more than simile" seems to me to offer an answer to Glatzer's and Horwitz's questions. Here, the human being, loved by God, aware of the love, and loving in return, finds she must break the love-circle in order to enlarge it. She must encounter her neighbour, and she must do so in such a way that she encounters him *with* God. It is from Rosenzweig's analysis of the Song of Songs that we learn he maintains that God is a partner in authentic inter-human speech.

A second partial answer to the two above criticisms lies in Rosenzweig's translation of the Jehuda Halevi poetry with the accompanying Notes. In the Notes, Rosenzweig *lives* with Jehuda Halevi as one lives with a person in the event of conversation. Rosenzweig listens *to* him in the translations, and speaks *with* him in agreement in the Notes. Halevi's poems are all either direct speech to God or theological and philosophical reflections. In the Notes Rosenzweig speaks not so much about Halevi as he does *to* the readers of the Notes. Rosenzweig includes Jehuda Halevi in his address to the reader, as if in a three-person conversation. To Rosenzweig it *is* a conversation involving three.⁴⁹ While the reader is the primary addressee, Jehuda Halevi appears to play the part of the one who in a live conversation would be participating by listening to the primary speaker and listener, and is yet included in the conversation by the speaker's frequent side-glances at him, the unspoken: "As you say," "I see you feel," "As you have experienced." Rosenzweig is asking, "Am I understanding you right?" to Jehuda Halevi, coupled with: "What do you say, Reader?" The reader is hearing Rosenzweig's words, but is constantly aware of their dependence on the one who "spoke" to Rosenzweig first in this conversation. Rosenzweig seems averse to categorizing, with one definition, inter-human speech and, with another definition, divine-human speech. The key to authentic speech, to Rosenzweig, is God's being there when human beings are in conversation.

Within one layer, Jehuda Halevi remains a real person who displays an integrity of experience and speech. His speech in the form of fixed, written words is not a text disassociated from a person. The text is more than the vehicle of his person; speech and person perform in mutuality: they are vehicles to each other. This

mutuality keeps Jehuda Halevi's presence intact. A history of the life of Jehuda Halevi, on the other hand, would not bring Jehuda's own presence to the reader. In another layer, Rosenzweig remains a real and separate person from Jehuda Halevi. "Not for a moment," Rosenzweig emphatically printed in his Afterword to the Notes, "do [these translations] want to make the reader forget that he is reading poems not by me but by Jehuda Halevi, and that Jehuda Halevi is neither a German poet nor a contemporary."⁵⁰ Translating another's words into one's own speech does not subsume the speech of that other's presence. Indeed, Rosenzweig opens his Afterword with the statement that his selection of poems wishes to give to the reader an idea of Halevi as great Jewish poet who composed in Hebrew. "So it was not my aim to make the reader believe that Jehuda Halevi composed in German, nor that he composed Christian church songs, nor that he is a poet of today, even if only a *Familienblatt* poet of today – all this as far as I can see the aims of my predecessors in translation, especially the most recent ones."⁵¹ Rather, the act of true translating expands, alters and orients the present of the one translating. The Notes, fixed in writing, ensure the presence of Rosenzweig in Germany of the 1920; poetry ensures Jehuda Halevi's presence in mediaeval Spain. The Notes constitute an example of applied speech-thinking because (1) they concretely demonstrate the step of translation prior to response, (2) the response derives from this step, and (3) thus two presents meet. A fuller consideration of these three important points appears in chapter 4.

When Rosenzweig guided the first readers of the *Star* who misunderstood or did not understand at all what the *Star* was saying⁵² by pointing them to his Notes to the Jehuda Halevi poetry as an example of practical application of speech-thinking, it seems that few followed this guide-post. Rosenzweig remarked that he could understand how the *Star*'s audience was disappointed, but not the readers of the translated poetry with Notes, presented as they were "in a tempting hors-d'oeuvre format."⁵³ In "The New Thinking," he again tries to lead his readers, not only into and through his book, but beyond the last pages of the *Star*, which conclude with that well-known imperative "Into Life!" He encourages his first readers in this way:

Here the book ends. For what is still coming is already beyond the book, a “Gate” out into the no-longer-book. No-longer-book is the enraptured-terrified recognition that in this beholding of the “world-image in God’s countenance,” in this grasping of all being in the immediacy of a moment [*Augenblick*] and blink of the ye [*Augen-blick*] the borderline of humanity is entered. No-longer-book is also the becoming aware that this step of the book onto the borderline can only be atoned through – ending the book. An ending which is at the same time a beginning and a middle: to enter into the middle: to enter into the middle of everyday of life. The problem of the philosopher goes through the whole book, especially through the three introductions. Only here does it find its definitive solution. Philosophizing should continue further, indeed further. Everyone should philosophize some time. Everyone should some time look around from his own stand-and life-point. But this look is not an end in itself. The book is not goal which has been reached, not even a temporary one. One must be responsible for it instead of it carrying itself or being carried by others of its kind. This responsibility happens in everyday [*Alltag*] life. Only in order to recognize and to live the day as every-day [*All-tag*], the day of the life of the All [*All*] had to be traversed.⁵⁴

Notwithstanding Rosenzweig’s charge to move on, Nahum Glatzer legitimately writes: “But when we go back to the text of the *Star...*” Rosenzweig himself recognizes and distinguishes between the limitations and possibilities of speech within philosophical books and the living of a philosophy outside books:

The first pages of philosophical books are held in specially high esteem by the reader. He believes they are the basis for all that follows. Consequently he also thinks in order to refute the whole it’s enough to have refuted these pages. Hence the enormous interest in Kant’s teaching of space and time in the form [*Gestalt*], in which he developed it at the beginning of the Critique. Hence the comical attempt to “refute” Hegel from the first three strokes of his logic, and Spinoza from his definitions. And hence the helplessness of the general reader in the face of philosophical books. He thinks they must be “especially logical,” and understands by this the dependence of every following sentence on every

foregoing; so that therefore when the famous one stone is pulled out of a famous work “the whole collapses.” In truth that is nowhere less the case than in philosophical books. Here a sentence does not follow from the one preceding, but much rather from the one following. He who has not understood a sentence or a paragraph is little helped if he, in the conscientious belief that he must not leave anything behind that is not understood, reads it again and again or even starts over again from the beginning. Philosophical books deny themselves of such a methodical strategy of the *ancien régime*, which intends to allow no fortress left behind unconquered; they want to be conquered napoleonically, in a bold attack on the enemy's central force, after whose conquest the small border-fortresses will fall on their own. He who therefore does not understand something, most surely may expect illumination, if he boldly goes on reading. The reason for this rule, which is difficult to understand for the beginner, and, as the cases cited above show, also for many a non-beginner, lies in the fact thinking and writing are not one. In thinking one stroke really strikes a thousand connections. In writing these thousand must be nicely and cleanly arranged on the string of thousands of lines. As Schopenhauer said, his book wants to impart only a single thought which, however, he could not ever impart more briefly than in the entire book. When a philosophical book then is worth reading at all, then certainly it is only when one either does not understand or at least falsely understands the beginning. For otherwise the thought which it imparts is scarcely worth re-thinking [*Nachdenken*], since one plainly already knows it, if one knows right at the beginning “what this is leading to.” All this is valid only for books; only they can be written and read without regard for passing time. Speaking and hearing stand under other laws. Of course, only real speaking and hearing, not that sort which reviles itself as a “lecture” and during which the hearer must forget that he has a mouth, and becomes at best a writing hand.⁵⁶

Where *can* evidence of the laws under which speaking and hearing stand be found expressed in order further to reply to the criticisms of Horwitz and Glatzer? The *star is* concerned with but cannot demonstrate “word exchanged between human beings” any more than it can demonstrate word exchanged between human beings and God. Yet an understanding of what the speech-thinker means by human-to-

human speech, based directly as it is upon word between God and human, will result from a careful reading of the *Star's* consideration of human-divine encounters.

Until now reference to God as speaker has been minimal. But *that* God speaks bestows upon word the ability to breathe comfortably in both spiritual and worldly realms. Speech entails the concrete and the spiritual. Since in the method of Rosenzweig, speech is the commonly shared bridge of communication also between God and human, then trust in the possibilities of speech and language in inter-human speech is absolute. Moreover, within Rosenzweig's discussion of human-divine meetings, the principal theme Horwitz refers to – the human as the experiential centre of his or her time who thereby orders the external world – is indeed developed: “And language is easily trusted, for it is within us and about us; as it reaches us from ‘without,’ it is no different from language as it echoes the ‘without’ from our ‘within.’ The word as heard and as spoken is one and the same. The ways of God are different from the ways of man, but the word of God and the word of man are the same. What man hears in his heart as his own human speech is the very word which comes out of God's mouth.”⁵⁷

Since God speaks to all, and with absolute trust in language, each human must both speak to others in a way that translates the words of God that he or she hears and listen to others in a translating frame of mind.

God's primary speech addressed to the human, that is, God's self-revelation, gives the human purpose in and for life: through the mutually contingent imperatives common to both Judaism and Christianity – Love me, love your neighbour – the human is commanded to act for God and for other humans.

God's statements about himself never tell *what* he is, but always decree *that* he is, and *who* he is in relation to human: *your* God. Nor does God state the human *is* such-and-such, and the world *is* so-and-so. The creator of the world and of the human speaks in no logically static formulae. Rather, when the creator reveals, he relates to the world and to the human with the dynamics evoked by commands: “The imperative belong to revelation as the indicative to creation... As the object of experience... the noun ceases to be thing. It no longer exhibits the basic character of the thing, that of a thing among others. Now it is subject and hence something individual. On principle it occurs in the singular. It is something

individual, or rather someone individual. Just this was anticipated, in its turn, in the creation of man, the individual, the 'image of God.' ”⁵⁸

The point of creation is createdness, not contingency or derivation: thus each element – God, world, and human – stands on its own. For understanding reality, then, what each *is* becomes the less important question in the move from creation to revelation than what each *does to* the other and what each *is for* the other. The imperative is a necessary grammatical category to link God and human. God's primary commands, love me and love neighbour, at once create a relationship among the three elements.

Creation is the beginning of the world, and the world on general includes the world of humans as well as of other particulars. From the world's point of view, revelation is the midpoint; but from the individually named human's point of view, revelation is both the midpoint, because based on the past, and the beginning, because at revelation the human becomes human: he or she is addressed.

With the summons of the proper name, the word of revelation entered the real dialogue. With the proper name, the rigid wall of objectness has been breached. That which has a name of its own can no longer be a thing, no longer everyman's affair. It is incapable of utter absorption into the category for there can be no category for it to belong to; it is its own category. Nor does it still have its place in the world, its moment in occurrence. Rather it carries its here and now with it. Wherever it is, there is a midpoint and wherever it opens its mouth, there is a beginning. In the intricate world of things there was no midpoint or beginning at all; I, however, together with its proper name, introduces these concepts of midpoint and beginning into the world. In keeping with its creation as man and at the same as "Adam," the I is midpoint and beginning within itself. For it demands a midpoint in the world for the midpoint, a beginning for the beginning of its own experience. The I longs for orientation, for a world which does not just lie there in any old arrangement, nor flow past in any old sequence, but a world which supports the inner order inherent in the I's experience on the solid base of an external order... Thus both the midpoint and the beginning in the world must be must be provided to experience by this grounding, the midpoint in space, the

beginning in time. These two, at least, have to be named, even if the rest of the world still lies in the darkness of anonymity... the spatial taking-place of revelation and its temporal having-transpired live on today in separate media, the former in god's congregation, the latter in God's word: at one time, however, both must have been founded at a single blow. The ground of revelation is midpoint and beginning in one; it is the revelation of the divine name... For name is in truth word and fire, and not sound and fury as unbelief would have it again and again in obstinate vacuity. It is incumbent to name the name and to acknowledge: I believe it.⁵⁹

The name is of utmost importance. The name is particular. God calls upon humans one by one, calling each by name; and each human calls upon God in his or her individuality, from name to name. With name, the direction of movement from particular to universal is especially apparent and real. Neither the human nor God can be objectified when the name is in the vocative, and properly, the name is always only in the vocative. As God calls each by name, so the human is, one by one, to call each human in his path – his neighbour – by name. The specific other insisted upon by speech-thinking is derived from and based on this calling by God. Regions of anonymity in the world are dark regions to the speech-thinker, regions not yet lightened in love. Whatever, accords with a proclamation of God's name is true speech and worthy – needful – of translating. What gives a person the key to recognizing the proclamation of God's name in others' speech?

According to Rosenzweig, we can all know what is to be listened to and translated by attending to our hearts. The capacity to translate and the judgment of the worthiness of speech – our own or others' – does indeed come from recognition of words that have already been spoken into the human heart by God. In the course of listening, when something faintly recognizable beats in our hearts, something as yet unuttered by our mouths strikes a chord of recognition of the divine word that has already been spoken into the heart, then that which is recognized is speech that becomes our enthusiastic goal to translate.

How, then, does hearing an utterance from a source outside the heart but speaking into it spark recognition? Recognition denotes to know again, to meet again. Rosenzweig speaks of "hearing in the heart", and experience replaces logic as

primary source for knowing reality. One experiences hearing. One does not deduce or adduce hearing. It happens. Hearing one's name called initiates an experience for that particularly called person. Rosenzweig's contentions in the *Star* that one hears God's word in the heart and that revelation is both midpoint and beginning are phrased succinctly to a friend in 1921: "The Bible is precisely *in this way different* from all other books. All other books one can get to know only in reading them. What stands in the Bible one can learn to know in two ways: 1) in that one hears what it says, 2) in that one hearkens to the beat of the human heart. (Induction is both.) *The Bible and the heart say the same thing*. That is why (and *only* why) the Bible is 'Revelation.'"⁶⁰

An excerpt from Rosenzweig's "Scripture and Luther's Translation" is pertinent here also. Two ideas are presented: (1) that the human's life illumines the Scriptures, and not vice versa, and (2) that every human life belongs to everything in the Scriptures, but that not everything in the Scriptures belongs to each life. These two ideas emphasize the notion of translating from particular human to particular human, whether or not living in the same generation.

Modern man is neither a believer nor an unbeliever. He believes and he doubts. And so he is nothing, but he is alive. Belief and unbelief "happen" to him and all that he is required to do is not run away from what is happening but make use of it once it has happened...

Whoever lives in this way can approach the Bible only with a readiness to believe or not to believe, but not with a circumscribed belief that he finds confirmed in it... As a searchlight detaches from darkness now one section of the landscape and now another, and then leaves these again dimmed, so for such a man the days of his own life illumine the Scriptures, and in their quality of humanness permit him to recognize what is more than human, today at one point, and tomorrow at another, nor can one day ever vouch for the next to yield a like experience...

Luther reasoned that he must – on occasion – grant Hebrew a place in German, that he must expand his own language to accommodate Hebrew "instruction" and "solace of our conscious." Should not this same kind of reasoning beget new reverence for the word in us who do not know *what* words may, some day, yield

instruction and solace, who believe that the hidden sources of instruction and solace may flow from every word in this book?

And must not such reverence renew our reading, our understanding, and hence our translating?⁶¹

Since all of God's word is *intended* for every human, and yet since each hears it in measures and paces according to his own life's experiences, and further, since life's experiences are different, God's words by different humans. The differences in human speech do not necessarily therefore entail ultimate difference. Of the words Rosenzweig used for the *Star*, writes in "Das neue Denken":

But the "Jewish book"? [sic] as is indicated already by the title page? I would like to be able to speak as softly as the poet when he concludes his powerfully far-reaching fugue on the theme of the cosmic beauty with the unforgettable preface: It appeared to me in form of youth, of woman – to be able to say truthfully what I now have to say. I received the new thinking in these old words, thus I have returned it and passed it on, in them. There would have come to the lips of a Christian, I know, instead of mine, words of the New Testament, to a pagan, I think, surely not words of his holy books – for their ascent leads away from the original language of humankind, – , but perhaps entirely his own words. But for me these ones. And yet this is a Jewish book: not one that deals with "Jewish matters," for the books of the Protestant Old Testament scholars would be Jewish books; but one to which there come the old Jewish words for what it has to say, and precisely for the new things it has to say. Jewish matters are, as matters generally are, at all time past; but Jewish words, even if old, take part in the eternal youth of the word, and when the world is opened to them, then they renew the world.⁶²

Since God speaks to the human heart, whoever listens to the beats of his or her own heart will recognize divine speech (or otherwise) in others' lives.

Just as with translating between languages, where in each language all other languages already exist in potential, so with translating from person to person. Another's speech, when arising out of the human-divine encounter, may be seem

initially different from one's own, and hitherto unuttered in one's own language. Such speech of the other *can* nevertheless be translated: it is potentially present in every human heart's capacity for hearing all of God's word. It *must* be translated into the heart because God commands: Love as I have loved. The faint recognition happens because hearing God's word spoken by another human is to re-hear what God has already spoken. It is faint because it has not yet been actualized by having become truly vocal.

To translate from human to human, then, is to enact the commandment of love of neighbour.

Now this fulfillment of god's commandment in the world is not, after all, an isolated action but a whole sequence of action. Love of neighbour always erupts anew. It is matter of always starting over from the beginning... It must be an act of love wholly lost in the (present) moment... If it were to emerge as infinite affirmation, then it would be not an act of love but a purposive act. Then it would no longer emerge, fresh as the moment, from the volitional orientation of character. Rather its relationship to its origin in this orientation would one of subservience, conclusive and concluded once and for all.⁶³

To love outward to the whole world is to act in once solitary thought. "Love " here is merely a static attitude, an ineffective emotion – nothing unique, special, real, or eruptive happens.

In the "Urzelle" of the *Star*, written to his baptized cousin Rudolf Ehrenberg⁶⁴ in letter form, Rosenzweig's insights regarding love of neighbour tumble forth with a compelling swiftness of conviction:

The world whose sublime spirit teaches the human being to know the brothers in the forest and shrub, and bush and water and allows him nevertheless to feel bound herein and herewith directly that nothing perfect was given to the human being. Instead of these easily and cheaply found brothers everywhere, to whom he stands in "relationship," the human has in the "connection" in the first instance only *himself* as his own likeness; the word of neighbourly love, a well-tempered matter-of-course, here becomes a voice of trumpets, for it is not said to the human

in whose breast's purity surges an aspiration for voluntary *submission*, but to the deaf I, buried in its own I-ness, to this I, about which nothing can be presupposed except this, that it loves *itself*. But that is why, *after* this word has opened up the deaf ear, the human now recognizes in the neighbour now really the one who is like him, recognizes him not merely as B2, B3 and so on, as co-habiter of the same world... For he recognizes him only as It, only as his brother in the forest and grove in rock and water; rather I recognize that he *is not He She It, but rather an I*, an I like me, not a co-inhabiter of the same directionless and centreless space, not a travel acquaintance on the trip through time without beginning and end, but my brother, the consors [consort] of my destiny, for whom "things are" exactly as for me, who also sees only one track before him as I do; my brother not in the world, in woods and grove, in bush and water, but in Lord.⁶⁵

This recognition of which Rosenzweig speaks is the recognition that the eternal God has spoken as well to that other. That that other is also creature in creation, like him created by the creator, exactly *like* him, but not him. A bridge is required in order to awaken the recognition of the likeness, the recognition of the centred space in time. Time, but not the centres, will end. The end is the goal toward which all travel; the link between each distinct human being is the speech of God into the heart of each person. Before God's speech into the heart, the human cannot hear in love any other human being and thus cannot engage in authentic speech. Love of neighbour happens only after God has spoken to the individual, and happens because of this address, but the love of neighbour is nevertheless incumbent upon the individual human to fulfil. God does not create love between humans. He creates the possibility and commands its fulfilment. Just as God in present, centred revelation speaks to each human, one by one, and one to one, so love of neighbour is also "as I have you," to be brought about one by one, and one to one. In the *Star* this love of the specific neighbour is again stressed:

Precisely here in the commandment to love one's neighbour, his self is definitely confirmed in its place. The world is not thrown in his face as an endless *melée*, nor is he told, while a finger points to the whole *melée*: you. That is you – therefore

stop distinguishing yourself from it, penetrate it, dissolve in it, lose yourself in it. No, it is quite different. Out of the endless chaos of the world, one highest thing his neighbour, is placed before his soul, and concerning this one and well-nigh only concerning this one he is told: he is like you. "Like you," and thus not "you". You remain You and you are to remain just that. But he is not to remain a He for you, and thus a mere It for your You. Rather he is like You, like your You, a You like You, an I – a soul.⁶⁶

To Rosenzweig the self is an incomplete part of the human: it is what the human manifests before revelation. The self is incapable of love: it is capable only of soliloquy, of monologue, as the hero in pagan Greek tragedy. The Greeks, according to Rosenzweig, expressed the truth of the three elements of reality. But their definition of reality was limited and lacking because the elements were conceived in isolation and not in relation to one another. Without the correct designation of relation, the human – love – is incomplete. God's speech awakens the deaf and autonomously speaking self to become the hearing soul that is now capable of dialogue. "The blossoming tree of love always reaches towards animating love only with the buds that have already opened."⁶⁷ An opened bud is a soul, and a soul is one who is conscious of God and has experienced God. Only one who has experienced God can know her-or himself, and therefore others also, as souls. None of the three elements are or can ever be totally alone: they will always confront each other. And confrontation is always facing, always present. Thus Rosenzweig cannot explain, lay out flat, explicate, unfold present revelation. Nor can the Bible. Language, Rosenzweig asserts, is more than analogy, and more than true analogue. The presentness of our experience in present revelation is really as it is written in the Song of Song. It is speech speaking.

"The analogue of love permeates as analogue all of revelation,"⁶⁸ not as a pointer or indicator, rather as direct lover to the beloved. The I and Thou of human discourse is the I and Thou between God and human. In language the distinction between immanence and transcendence disappears. The Song of Songs is an "authentic," that is "worldly" love lyric, and for this reason, genuinely "spiritual."⁶⁹

Abraham J. Heschel, who views time as Rosenzweig does, in distinguishing between time and space, notes: "Exclaimed Rabbi Akiba: 'All of time is not worthy as the day on which the Song of Songs was given to Israel, for all the songs are holy, but the song of Songs is the holiest of holies.'" In a realm of spirit, there is no difference between a second and a century, between an hour and an age."⁷⁰ A moment can become eternity, depending on what it contains.

Love simply cannot be "purely human." It must speak, for there is simply no self-expression other than the speech of life. And by speaking, love already becomes superhuman, for the sensuality of the word is brimful with its divine super-sense. Like speech itself, love is sensual – supersensual. To put it another way, simile is its very nature and not merely its decorative accessory. "All that is transitory" may be "but simil." But love is not "but simile"; it is simile in its entirety and its essence; it is only apparently transitory: in truth, it is eternal. The appearance is as essential as the truth here, for love could not be eternal as love if it did not appear to be transitory. But in mirror of this appearance, truth is directly mirrored.⁷¹

What Heschel means by claiming there is no difference in spiritual time between a second and a century is what Rosenzweig is claiming by eternity in the event of love.

In Rosenzweig's grammatical analysis of the Song of Songs, he examines the fact that this is the sole book in the Bible that opens with a comparative, "better than wine." This comparative, "better than wine." This comparative at once asserts a point of view that negates all other points of view. This "better," that is, present revelation, picks up precisely where creation left off: "very good." The I who expresses this viewpoint, who had death as the "ultimate and consummate of creation,"⁷² now assert the translation from creation to revelation: "Love is strong as death." This sentence is the only assertion of fact in the whole of the Song of Songs; it is the only possible reflection about love. Everything else has to be spoken, "for love is – speech, wholly active, wholly personal, wholly living, wholly – speaking."⁷³ The rest of the Song of Songs, beyond this assertive, objective sentence that "the living soul, loved by God, triumphs over all that is

mortal,"⁷⁴ is subjective present speech. "A downpour of imperatives descends on this evergreen pasture of the present and vitalizes it."⁷⁵

But in the immediate revelation of love, something is lacking. While all shame dissolves ("I am very dark, but comely") in the outpouring of love, in the peace of being loved, and in the "mine" uttered by the beloved, still, the love between the two lacks something and is not fulfilled. "Would that you were my brother," the beloved sobs. Calling by name is not enough. It demands reality.

The name ought to be the truth . It should be heard in the bright light of "the street," not whispered into the beloved ear in the dusk of intimate duo-solitude, but in the eyes of the multitude... Love after all remains between two people; it knows only of I and Thou, not of the street. Thus this longing cannot be fulfilled in love, for love is directly present in experience and manifests itself only in experience... If this longing is to be fulfilled, then the beloved soul must cross the magic circle of belovedness, forget the lover, and itself open its mouth, not for answer but for her own word... And only in her heart of hearts may she hold fast to that dictum of the ancients which, on this her path from the miracle of divine love out into the earthly world, gives force and dignity to that which it experienced in that magic circle: "As he loves you, so shall you love."⁷⁶

The name is of central importance to Rosenzweig's philosophy of speech-thinking. He was delighted with Margarete Susman's review which first appeared in *Der Jude: Eine Monatsschrift* and later, in English translation, in *The Jew: Essays from Martin Buber's Journal, Der Jude, 1916-1928*, selected, edited, and introduced by Arthur A. Cohen. What delighted Rosenzweig particularly was Susman's heading her review with a quotation from the *Star*. "A name is not sound and smoke, it is word and fire. The name must be named and professed: I believe in it."⁷⁷ In connection with Susman's and Otto Gründler's⁷⁸ favourable reviews of the *star*, Rosenzweig writes to his cousin Gertrud Oppenheim: "The trumpet of fame is not usually tuned as fast as that, at least not as far as good things are concerned. And the other consequence "so it's just not a good thing" I am vain enough not to draw. I wonder what you said to the fact that Susman really fishes out the core-sentence and made it into a motto, and more than that, in the

form I think in which I had originally written it at that time in the spring of 1917 to you, I still see myself sitting and writing. Just as I also still know the day when I wrote the sentence in the * and knew at the same time: this is the most central word of the whole book.”⁷⁹

With the proper name, first and last name, the danger of universalizing or totalizing “the” human being is lessened. As God speaks to each human being individually, so to is each human being to love: one specific neighbour after another. Thus while each human being is loved by God, the only possible expression of the reality of this love is the outward love toward the nearest neighbour. This love of neighbour is not merely a matter of volition: “It is quite true that its origin lies solely in volition, but man can express himself in the act of love only after he has become a soul awakened by God. It is only in being loved by God that the soul can make of its act of love more than a mere act, can make of it, that is, the fulfilment of a – commandment to love.”⁸⁰

If to speak authentically is to express love toward the neighbour, and if there is ultimately only one language, it follows that there must be a root-sentence of that One Language which can recognizably resound in every authentically uttered speech. That root-sentence must be a verbal manifestation of an unalterable fact of the One Truth: clearly, the root-sentence must be “God is good.” But “God is good” is a sentence in the indicative mood and is thus a judgment statement, a solitary factual assertion. In order that it might be expressed in accord by two people, or by a community, the root-sentence of the one factual truth must have a future-oriented trajectory, and say: “for God is good.”

This anticipates and begins to infringe upon the material of the next chapter, so maybe the most profitable thing to do is once more to read the three sentence, offer a brief summary of the analysis, and go on to that next chapter. “Translating is after all the actual goal of the mind; only when something is translated has it become really *audible*, no longer to be disposed of. Not until the Septuagint did revelation become entirely at home in the world, and as long as Homer did not yet speak in Latin he was not yet a fact. In a corresponding way, also translating from person to person.”

The goal of the mind, translating, leads to the achievement of the ultimate, revealed purpose of creation: redemption, that is to say, peace and harmony among

all, God, human, and world. Thus to translate is not merely to communicate successfully but also to transform one another toward that peace of wholeness. The attainment of such a goal requires dialogical thinking as distinguished from solitary thinking. One might even call speech-thinking “trilogical” because God becomes a partner in conversations between two people. A person who translates hears and verifies the original speaker’s words. Put differently, one’s own words are verified only when truly received by another. Translating averts solitary self-delusion that can occur in thought as an activity that wants to be autonomous.

Cognition and knowledge that are arrived at through translating are not ends in themselves. Rather, they are means to service in the world, to specific people, and to God. The mind, when translating, mediates understanding among human beings through time, whether that timespan is within one lifetime or crosses two or more generations. More than cognition, an accord is reached through translating. This accord is like redemption in that it acquires a permanence, but the translation’s permanence remains in time. The peace of redemption is at the end of time, and ends terrestrial temporality. Redemption began with time, at creation. The period of revelation means the period of translating. Translating brings about the permanences in world-time. These permanences are perceived as partaking of the creative spirit [*Geist*], and they contribute to the irreversible growth of each language spirit towards its destiny of sharing in the one language of humankind.

Speech between God and the human being is not radically different from speech between human and human. The word is at home in both spiritual and worldly realms, and trust in language is therefore absolute. God’s word can be spoken differently by different people because one’s speech is dependent upon one’s experience: these differences among speakers require translation into the fullness of the one language.

- 1 *B und T, I. Band*, 460-1. The original reads: “Das Übersetzen ist überhaupt das eigentliche Ziel des Geistes; erst wenn etwas übersetzt ist, ist es wirklich *laut* geworden, nicht mehr aus der Welt zu schaffen. Erst in der Septuaginta ist die Offenbarung ganz heimisch in der Welt geworden, und solange Homer noch nicht lateinisch sprach, war er noch keine Tatsache. Entsprechend auch das Übersetzen von Mensch zu

Mensch. I am calling these three sentences, despite the fact that the third is only a fragment and makes sense only in connection with the preceding two sentences.

- 2 See Glatzer, *Life and Thought*, 93-8, for the text of the letter and Glatzer's comments.
- 3 One the fleeting character of letters until answered, see Harold Stahmer, "The Letters of Franz Rosenzweig to Margrit Rosenstock-Huessy: 'Franz,' 'Gritli,' 'Eugen' and 'The Star of Redemption,'" 1:110-11.
- 4 From "Das neue Denken," translated in Glatzer, 196. The original is:

Warum ist Wahrheit fern und weit,
Birgt sich hinab in tiefste Gründe?

Niemand versteht zur rechten Zeit!
Wenn man zur rechten Zeit verstünde:
So wäre Wahrheit nah und breit,
Und wäre lieblich und gelinde.

An alternate translation, which is less elegant, but emphasizes the aspect of time, might read:

Why is truth far and distant,
Hiding itself in deepest depth?

No one understands at the right time!
If one did understand at the right time,
Then truth would be near and wide,
And would be sweet and gentle.

- 5 Derczanski, "Une pensée de la grammaire ou l'assomption du temps" in *Les cahiers de « La nuit surveillée »*, 116. The English is: « For Rosenzweig, the discourse is not an abstract topic, but a communicative

concern whose rationalities are for him internal and not exterior... he insists equally on the connection of the spoken word [*parole*] and of language and gives thought the status of the spoken word. This, moreover, is the reason for his inventing this word: Sprachdenken [speech-thinking].”

- 6 Rieu, in his introduction to Homer's *The Iliad*, XIV.
- 7 “Zur Encyclopaedia Judaica: Zum zweiten Band, mit einer Anmerkung über Anthropomorphism,“ in *Zweistromland*, 736.
- 8 In Stahmer, Franz Rosenzweig's Letters to Margrit Rosenstock-Huessy, 1917-1922, 400.
- 9 Notably Rosenstock-Huessy, *Judaism Despite Christianity*; Stahmer, “Speak That I May See Thee! ”, 106-82; “Franz Rosenzweig's Letters to Margrit Rosenstock-Huessy 1917-1922”; and “The Letters of Franz Rosenzweig to Margrit Rosenstock-Huessy: ‘Franz,’ ‘Gritli,’ ‘Eugen’ and ‘The Star of Redemption’ ”; and Kamper, “Das Nachtgespräch vom 7. Juli 1913. Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy und Franz Rosenzweig” in *Der Philosoph Franz Rosenzweig (1886-1929): Internationaler Kongress Kassel 1986*, 97-104. Gibbs's Correlations in Rosenzweig and Levinas gives a rather thorough, and very interesting account in terms of Rosenstock-Huessy's affect on Rosenzweig.
- 10 The concluding words of *The Star*.
- 11 In Oppenheim, *What Does Revelation Mean to the Modern Jew?*, 15; and in *Judaism Despite Christianity*, 32-3.
- 12 In Stahmer, “*Speak that I May See Thee!*”, 160.
- 13 Members of the Patmos group and editors of and contributors to the group's publication *The Creature* included Rosenstock-Huessy, Rosenzweig, Leo Weismantel, Werner Picht, Hans Ehrenberg, Karl Barth, Joseph Wittig, Martin Buber, Victor von Weizsäcker, and Nicholas Berdayev. *Ibid.*, 122-3.
- 14 While Gershom Scholem finds much of value in Rosenzweig's *Star*, even here he detects an apologetic tendency. In a discussion of modern Jewish thinkers from Mendelssohn, explicitly including Rosenzweig, he writes, with characteristic forthrightness, that their “religious thought is

apologetically oriented toward the respective categories of the dominant philosophies, from the Arabic Kalam and Aristotle to Kant, Hegel, Dewey, and even Heidegger. The outstanding characteristic of the theologies, regardless of their basic differences, is their strictly selective attitude toward tradition. They disregard anything traditional they find undigestible and by its nature unsuitable for apologetic purposes.” “Reflections on Jewish Theology,” 264-5.

- 15 For good discussions of the restrictions on unbaptized Jews at German universities in the first decades of this century, see Neusner, *The Academic Study of Judaism: Essays and Reflections*; and Meyers, *The Origins of the Modern Jew*.
- 16 In Glatzer, *Life and Thought*, 95-8.
- 17 See Star, 12.
- 18 Quoted in Glatzer, *Life and Thought*, 97.
- 19 In Oppenheim, *What Does Revelation Mean to the Modern Jew?*, 18.
- 20 Ibid., 14.
- 21 In Stahmer, “Franz Rosenzweig’s Letters to Margrit Rosenstock-Huessy, 1917-1922,” 386-7. Also, see Stahmer, “The Letters of Franz Rosenzweig to Margrit Rosenstock-Huessy: ‘Franz,’ ‘Gritli,’ ‘Eugen’ and ‘The Star of Redemption.’ ” In this essay, Stahmer emphasizes that the writing of letters was an integral part in the composing of the *Star*. “Please note that Rosenzweig’s practice of exchanging letters, and then circulating certain ones among his ‘Kreis,’ his ‘group,’ his small circle of close friends, was essential to the shaping of the *Star* at every stage of its development. The ‘inner group’ *during this period* consisted primarily of Eugen and Margrit Rosenstock and Rudolf and Hans Ehrenberg. The ‘outer circle’ of the group, if one may be permitted to characterize it in this fashion, consisted of Gertrud Oppenheim, Adele Rosenzweig, and Viktor von Weizsäcker. These groupings reflect the role these personalities played during this particular period in Rosenzweig’s life based on the published as well as the new unpublished material” (129).
- 22 *Star*, 110.

- 23 Ibid., 174. Rosenzweig designates the notion “word and response” being “actual word” as the “center-piece” of the *star*. On page 188 of the Hallo translation, there appears what Rosenzweig later, to Margarete Susman, termed the “kernel” of his philosophy. She heads her review of the *Star* with a quote from it: “A name is not sound and smoke, it is word and fire. The name must be named and professed: I believe in it.” Rosenzweig whole-heartedly approved of every sentence of Susman’s review. It appeared originally in *Der Jude: Eine Monatsschrift*, in the Umschau section, 259-64, and has been translated by Joachim Neugroschel in Cohen’s fine volume, *The Jew: Essays from Martin Buber’s Journal, Der Jude, 1916-1928, 276-85*. In February 1922 Rosenzweig wrote to Susman, stating how deeply she had understood the book, and how much he appreciated her picking out the “kernel.” He said he remembered writing the sentence in November 1918, knowing then that it expressed the heart of his book. See *B und T: 2. Band, 752*. This heart-sentence of the *star* is a reference to Goethe’s *Faust*, part 1, where Faust relegates name to sound and smoke. Rosenzweig vigorously refutes Faust’s view. The setting is Margarete’s garden, and Margarete asks Faust if he believes in God. The conclusion of Faust’s reply is: “Gefühl ist alles; / Name ist Schall und Rauch, / Umnebelnd Himmelsglut. ” Albert G. Latham, a contemporary of Rosenzweig, translates the passage:

Margaret: Then thou believest not?

Faust: Then winsome angel-face, mishear me not!

Who can name Him?

Who thus proclaim Him:

I believe Him?

Who that hath feeling

His bosom steeling

Can say: *I believe Him not?*

The All-embracing,

The All-sustaining,
Clasps and sustains He not
Thee, me, Himself?
Springs not the vault of Heaven above us?
Lieth not earth firm-stablished' neath our feet?
And with a cheerful twinkling
Climb not eternal stars the sky?
Eye into eye gaze I not upon thee?
Surgeth not all
To head and heart within thee?
And floats in endless mystery
Invisible visible around thee?
Great though it be, fill thou therefrom thine heart,
And when in the feeling wholly blest thou art,
Call it Bliss! Heart! Love! God!
I have no name for it!
Feeling is all in all!
Name is but sound and reek,
A mist round the glow of Heaven!

From Goethe's *Faust*, parts 1 and 2. Trans. Albert G. Latham. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1908.

- 24 The reference is to Rosenzweig's translation from Hebrew into German: "Grace after Meals," written for those guests in his home who knew no Hebrew.
- 25 In Glatzer, *Life and Thought*, 100-2.
- 26 Rosenzweig here states explicitly that whatever once is translated into a language resides there permanently. He does not, as far as I know, discuss the notion of evil speech. Nor, therefore, does he discuss what to do about it. He did not have to face Nazi language, for example, or Neo-Nazi speech. This was indeed addressed, within Germany, with attempts at a future oriented redress, by writers such as Heinrich Böll and Günther Grass.

- 27 The concluding paragraph of the Afterword, it may be recalled here, reads: "If may express a wish, then it is the double one that the water-gauge established here on this small selection will soon overflow, but that not one of my successors in this region may have again the audacity of laziness to fall behind the measure of sufficiency reached here. The excuse that it' doesn't work now no longer is at anyone's disposal."
- 28 Rosenzweig, we have seen, states explicitly that whatever once is translated into a language resides in it permanently. He does not, as far as I know, enter into discussions of evil speech. It may be said here only that Buber *did* complete their jointly begun project to translate biblical Hebrew into the German language. Perhaps he believed, even after the holocaust, in that principle of the one language and all the imperatives involved in that principle.
- 29 *Obid.*, 255.
- 30 See Rosenzweig's discussion of essence, the word "is," and so on, in connection with the "old" and the "new" thinking, in "das neue Denken."
- 31 In "Das neue Denken" of 1925 Rosenzweig writes: "I would soonest have have to agree to the label absolute empiricism; at least it would cover the special attitude of the new thinking in all three precincts, of the prehistoric world of concept, of the world of reality, of the supra-world of the Truth; that attitude which likewise does not claim to know anything of the heavenly other than what it has experienced – but this really, even if philosophy already may denounce it as a knowledge 'on the other side' of all 'possible' experience; nor anything of the earthly which it has not experienced – but this not in the least, even if philosophy may already puff it up as a knowledge 'before' all possible experience," *Zweistromland*, 161.
- 32 See the 1916 correspondence between Rosenzweig and Rosenstock-Huessy in Rosenstock-Huessy, *Judaism Despite Christianity*, 77-170, especially 164-70.
- 33 See Mosès, *System and Revelation*, 269-71.
- 34 *Star*, 145.

- 35 Ibid., 145-6.
- 36 *Judaism Despite Christianity*, 26.
- 37 Rosenstock-Huessy, *Magna Carta latina*, 176.
- 38 In Glatzer, *Life and Thought*, 256-7.
- 39 “Das neue Denken,” 151.
- 40 “Die Wissenschaft von der Welt” in *Zweistromland*, 660-1.
- 41 Ibid., 661.
- 42 Nachwort, 154/3.
- 43 In Glatzer, *Life and Thought*, excerpt from Rosenzweig’s “Scripture and Luther’s Translation,” 255.
- 44 Ibid., from “Scripture and Luther’s Translation,” 260-1.
- 45 Glatzer, “The Concept of Language in the Thought of Franz Rosenzweig,” 183-4.
- 46 Rivka Horwitz, “Franz Rosenzweig on Language,” 396-7.
- 47 “Das neue Denken,” 140.
- 48 See *Star*, 198-205.
- 49 The conversational layers, of course, are much wider. One would be justified in arguing that the layers of voices begin (and end) with biblical voices and further discussions with rabbinic references, receptions, and allusions. A consideration of all these voices would involve a separate study. Appropriate and interesting in this regard would be a focus on reception theory. I am not addressing these wider layers here, nor is it within this book’s purview to discuss reception theory.
- 50 Nachwort, 153/1.
- 51 Nachwort, 153/1.
- 52 Glatzer, in *Life and Thought*, includes a letter Rosenzweig wrote to his cousin Hans Ehrenberg on 11 March 1925: “Again and again I am amazed at how little its readers know it. Everybody thinks it is an admonition to kosher eating” (146).
- 53 Ibid., from a letter to Richard Koch dated 2 September 1928, 165.
- 54 “Das neue Denken,” 160.

- 55 Glatzer, "The Concept of Language in the Thought of Franz Rosenzweig," 183.
- 56 "Das neue Denken," 141-2.
- 57 *Star*, 151.
- 58 Ibid., 186.
- 59 Ibid., 186-8.
- 60 *B und T*, 2. *Band*, from a letter to Benno Jacob, 27 May 1921, 708-9.
- 61 In Glatzer, *Life and Thought*, from "Scripture and Luther's Translation," 257-8.
- 62 "Das neue Denken," 154-5.
- 63 *Star*, 215.
- 64 Rudolf Ehrenberg (1884-1969), a professor of medicine at Heidelberg, was also heavily engaged in theological thinking.
- I would like to mention here a few things about a cousin of Rosenzweig's father, Hans Ehrenberg (1893-1958). He held a doctorate in philosophy from Heidelberg (1909), and served as a Privatdozent until 1911 when he was baptized; he was ordained in 1925. Rosenzweig refers to him as a fellow "new philosopher" in "Das neue Denken" (1925), pointing the reader to Ehrenberg's by then published *Fichte*. This work and his *Die Parteien der Philosophie* (Leipzig, 1911) have not yet appeared in English.
- The earliest review of the end *Star* was written by Ehrenberg, published in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* on 29 December 1921. Rosenzweig was pleased with it. He wrote to his cousin at the end of December 1921: "Your essay in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* is wonderful" (*B und T*, 2. *Bande*, 735). He took exception only to Ehrenberg's reading of the *Star* as setting philosophy and life in opposition. Rosenzweig contended that he was opposing not philosophy and life, but rather "the looking around" until one develops a philosophy and life. Indeed, Rosenzweig thought that philosophy and life *do* go hand in hand (Ibid., 735-6).
- 65 " 'Urzelle' " des Stern der Erlösung: Brief an Rudolf Ehrenberg vom 18.11.17, "in *Zweistromland*, 131-2.
- 66 *Star*, 239-40.

- 67 Ibid., 241.
68 Ibid., 199.
69 Ibid., 199.
70 Heschel, *The Earth is the Lord's & The Sabbath*, 98.
71 *Star*, 200.
72 Ibid., 202.
73 Ibid.
74 Ibid.
75 Ibid.
76 Ibid., 203-4.
77 See Ibid., 188.
78 Otto Gründler, "Eine Jüdisch-theistische Offenbarungspheie. "
79 *B und T*, 2. *Band*, 757-8.
80 *Star*, 214.
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Source : Barbara Elle Galli (ed.) (1995), *Franz Rosenzweig and Jehuda Halevi. Translating, Translations, and Translators*, Montreal & Kingston, McGill-Queen's University Press, p. 322-359; 494-500.