

## **JEWISH PHILOSOPHY AND EDUCATION: THINKING ARGENTINA'S DIASPORA FROM THE THEOLOGY OF FRANZ ROSENZWEIG**

### **Abstract**

Latin American Jewish philosophy requires us to rethink the categories of Philosophy and Judaism. In order to articulate these two dimensions it is necessary to understand that Jewish philosophy must start from the attributes of the Jewish tradition. The matter of the education and Jewishness comes from the beginning of Judaism. Throughout the Twentieth Century, the Diaspora in Modern States acquired its peculiarities in relation to these two dimensions, education and Jewishness. Both aspects have been developed in the work of Franz Rosenzweig, one the most important Jewish philosophers of the century. The main goal of this paper is to rethink the core of Rosenzweig's thought and his dialogues with Martin Buber and Hermann Cohen. Therefore, we will be able to explain the diaspora's peculiarities in relation to Jewish identity and education in Latin America, especially in Argentina.

**Keywords:** Jewish political theology, Education, Diaspora, Franz Rosenzweig, Argentina

The issue and reflection about the Jewish instruction date back to the beginnings of Judaism itself. However, its diaspora dilemma within our modern States has acquired throughout time some peculiarities we intend to approach in the present work. One of them can be found in the writings of Franz Rosenzweig in the beginnings of the twentieth century in Germany. Another one is nowadays lived in the Argentinean Judaism which develops between laicism, community dispersion and the identification problem, that stems from the distinction between Jewish and Israeli.

While one part of the German Judaism between wars questioned the Jewish identity in the life of the diaspora and its relationship with Zionism, before a State of Israel which was still far in time, it is possible to find in present day Argentina, in a renewed fashion, some of the questions of that time: what kind of Judaism is desired to be built? What kind of Judaism is intended to be transmitted? What is diaspora Judaism? Or, what is the current meaning of Jewish life in the diaspora?

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One of the elements that characterized Rosenzweig's thought was his concern about education and community life<sup>2</sup>. And it was not just a relevant concern, but rather the way he found to express his perspective about the Jewish life in the Germany of those days. At the same time, he renewed the bases of Haskalah –the movement of the Jewish Enlightenment<sup>3</sup>– facing his ideas mainly to those of Moses Mendelssohn<sup>4</sup>. On this path, Rosenzweig found the way to articulate his conceptions about law, messianism and Zionism with the Jewish life in the diaspora. One of the hypotheses of this work is that it is not possible to fully grasp his thinking without understanding his conception about Jewish life. At the same time, understanding his thinking about Jewish life, praying and community allows us to introduce into his thinking and reflect upon the diaspora life in Latin America, especially in Argentina<sup>5</sup>.

In 1917 Rosenzweig publishes "It Is Time", a text where he presents some of his reflections upon the problem of instruction and the Jewish being of his times. The text, which was addressed at his great teacher and private counselor Hermann Cohen, shows Rosenzweig's interest on building a "policy" of the Jewish instruction, further than the mere possibility of creating a debate. The fundamental problem he considers is the Jewish religious instruction for the Judeo-German world. Particularly, as he says, in a state such as the German of those years where Jewish people's assimilation and their social and political life set under consideration the possibility of a political life renowned by the values of Jewish education far beyond the books *about* Judaism. As he points out:

We are not concerned with creating an emotional an emotional center of this world to which the student is introduced by other school subjects, but with his introduction into the "Jewish sphere" which is independent from, and even opposed to, his non-Jewish surroundings. These Jews with whom we are dealing

2 We should briefly remember here that the Judaism upon which Rosenzweig reflects considerably differs from, for example, Eastern Europe's Judaism. Among the different reflections from Eastern Judaism is the one that was noticeably left by the Jewish writer and journalist Joseph Roth. It is precisely in the second prologue to one of these texts, in 1937, where he writes that the German Jews, before their Eastern brothers, were the ones who had "lost the God of their fathers and won the idol of the civilizing patriotism". But if there existed a situation of arrogance before the Eastern immigrants that had been shown in the inter-war period, by the ends of the thirties and within the context of what national-socialism was perpetrating, he will say that the German Jew "is not even an Eastern Jew" because from "his memory it has been erased what it is to walk, what it is to suffer, what it is to pray". And the only thing he knows is to work, something that, in fact, he could no longer do at that time. Roth Joseph, *Judíos errantes*, trad. P. Sorozabal Serrano, Barcelona, Acanalado, 2008, p. 11.

3 Cf. Rosenzweig Franz, *Ebraísmo, Bildung e filosofia della vita*, Firenze, La Giuntina, 2008; Traverso Enzo, *Les juifs et l'Allemagne. De la "symbiose judéo-allemande" à la mémoire d'Auschwitz*, Paris, Éditions La Découverte, 1992; Bensussan Gérard, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie juive?*, Paris, Desclée de Brouwer, 2004; Boyer Alain y Hayoun Maurice-Ruben, *L'historiographie juive*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 2001; Baron Salo W., *Great Ages and Ideas of the Jewish People: The Modern Age*, New York, Random House, 1965; Strauss Leo, Jerusalem and Athens, in: *Jewish philosophy and the crisis of Modernity. Essays and Lectures in Modern Jewish Thought*, New York, SUNY, 1997; Taub Emmanuel, El dilema de la filosofía judía: apuntes desde al-Farabi y Maimónides, in: Burello Marcelo G. y Taub Emmanuel (Ed.), *Atenas y Jerusalén. Perspectivas – Itinerarios – Debates*, Buenos Aires, Prometeo, 2014.

4 Mendelssohn Moses, *Jerusalem oder Über religiöse Macht und Judentum*, Berlin, Friedrich Mauer, 1783 [we use here the Spanish-German bilingual version: *Jerusalem o Acerca de poder religioso y judaísmo*, trad. José Monter Pérez, Barcelona, Anthropos, 1991]

5 See: Slabodsky Santiago y Taub Emmanuel, "El espacio y la periferia: en torno a una filosofía judía latinoamericana", in: *Estudios Interdisciplinarios de América Latina y el Caribe* (E.I.A.L.), Volumen 23 – No 1, Enero-Junio 2012, pp. 61-76.

have abandoned the Jewish character of the home some time during the past three generations, and therefore for them that "Jewish sphere" exists only in the synagogue. Consequently, the task of Jewish religious instruction is to re-create that emotional tie between the institutions of public worship and the individual, that is, the very tie which he has lost<sup>6</sup>.

In Rosenzweig's view, the Jewish consciousness lost at home can only be found at the synagogue, and, for that reason, the relationship between cult public institutions and assimilated individuals has to be recomposed. In this sense, Rosenzweig writes in another of those year's texts about education and Jewish instruction that, until the Emancipation in Germany, Jewish's life platform was based on the Jewish law, the Jewish home and the religious service of the synagogue. However, the philosopher complains about this platform being devastated by the Emancipation, and the Jewish law now "distinguishes one Jew from another more than the Jew from the non-Jew". Thus the Jewish home is no longer the source from which "Jewish life" stems and to which it returns, and while the Jewish home wants to be reaffirmed against the demands of the outer world, "home no longer binds Jewish life into a unity"<sup>7</sup>.

In the synagogue's struggle for not fully becoming a hermetic religious building, although through the "hours of spiritual rejoicing"- either at a wedding or in one of the great festivities-, according to Rosenzweig, a stream of Jewish life is still radiated. And in spite of this, in those times, the synagogue itself was not able to "give Jewry a platform of Jewish life"<sup>8</sup>: in so far as it makes community life more simple and however more nuclear for Judaism. Every Jew carries a "Jewish world" inside which has been built since the biblical writings and is alive in Judaism but, for Rosenzweig, this world is surrounded by another non-Jewish world. And if this Jewish world is consecrated in its language, in its future wait and in its messianic ideal, because Judaism "is more than a power in the past, more than a curiosity in our own era; to us it is the goal of the future"<sup>9</sup>. Then this world is in itself alone more than what surrounds it. This singularity that the Jewish people embody makes it up and is consecrated in its language. The Jewish man can read the Bible, according to Rosenzweig, in German or in any language. However, he will only understand it in Hebrew: the Jewish prayer is "untranslatable". And for the very same reason the diaspora's classroom is always a previous moment, an "ante-room" to the participation in the life of the congregation: "an understanding of public worship and participation in its expression will make possible what is necessary for the continuation of Judaism: a Jewish world"<sup>10</sup>.

Having said that, we are now plunging into one of the greatest diaspora is-

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6 Rosenzweig Franz, "It Is Time", in: *On Jewish Learning*, N. N. Glatzer (ed.), Wisconsin, The University of Wisconsin Press, 2002, p. 28.

7 Rosenzweig Franz, "Towards a Renaissance of Jewish Learning", in: *On Jewish Learning*, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

8 *Ibidem*, p. 63.

9 Rosenzweig Franz, "It Is Time", *op. cit.*, p. 30.

10 *Ibidem*.

sues of present day, and especially in the Argentinean case. What is diaspora in the sense of Jewish life and assimilation and with this, the need for protection of not only a Jewish education but, even deeper: protection of the Jewish identity that transcends the mere fact of filiation by birth; of the cultural nature that surrounds Jewish life. This problem in itself is different to the one that we could think of as the problem of “being a Jew” today in the state of Israel, and for that reason the idea of a “Jewish diaspora life” is proposed, in which the survival of Judaism as tradition and way-of-life is maintained beyond the orthodoxy-laicism debate: in the possibility of being a Jew –inside and out– in a Christian and secular State. In the same way as in the post-emancipation assimilation and Enlightenment crisis in Germany at the beginnings of the twentieth century, we find in Argentina a problem of articulation between the three dimensions that according to Rosenzweig make up the diaspora Jewish life: law, home and liturgy.

For Rosenzweig, Zionism played an important role in those times. And it was exactly this “diagnostician of genius but most mediocre healer”, who recognized the problem but was unable to respond with the adequate therapy. He admitted a need, that of the own and actual Jewish life, which according to Rosenzweig had to demonstrate that it was much more than a book culture, much more than a Jewish science and than the defense against anti-Semitism. In Rosenzweig’s words:

Expressly or unconsciously, Zionism has always emphasized that it is the integrity of the Jewish individual which has in reality held us together since the beginning, and offered the only solid ground upon which the several vessels of Jewish life could develop –land, state, and law in the old days; later, divine commandment, worship, and home. But as soon as the great question is posed as to what should be done now, and how new vessels of Jewish communal life are to be planted in the devastated but indestructible soil in place of the shrunken ones, so that, grifting themselves on to these new vessels, individuals can again feel the sap of the old, eternally inexhaustible stream course through their arteries –as soon as this question is asked, Zionism fail us.

Those who want to work for the movement, for today, without shifting the main burden to an uncertain tomorrow, must take the Jewish individual seriously, here and now, as he is in his wholeness<sup>11</sup>.

As signaled by Stéphane Mosès, in his analysis of last Rosenzweig’s personal *diaries*, the subject of Zionism does not appear explicitly in *Star of redemption*, but, on the contrary, an “abstract messianism” is explicit as eternal category, by which the Jewish people must reject the compromise with the history of the profane world and with politics. And this way, as Christianity turns into the historical agent of the messianic coming, Judaism makes emphasis on the possibility of a messianic possession of redemption consecrated by the instant, as well as its

11 Rosenzweig Franz, “Towards a Renaissance of Jewish Learning”, *op. cit.*, pp. 64-65.

symbolic anticipation, through rites: since the celebration of the Shabbat until *lom kipur* ("Day of Atonement"). This is how in the letters that Rosenzweig writes between 1917 and 1918 he "accuses Zionism of being exclusively a political ideology with the purpose of reducing Judaism to a simple nationalism" and this way deprives Judaism of its "religious vocation that is its unique guarantee of eternity"<sup>12</sup>.

This difference turns more radical in a note from April 12 in 1922, when he affirms, "if Zionism brings the Messiah, then *the star* will become superfluous. But all the other books too". However, as Mosès sharply points out, what is interesting here is that Rosenzweig recognizes that Zionism, as historical fact, is connected to the *historical* attempt to bring the Messiah. Messianism seems to stop being just a purely eternal category, although this does not imply a relationship with history. This is how the messianic category, as well as Zionism, become part of the ambiguity belonging to these concepts that were characteristic throughout the Jewish time<sup>13</sup>. As Mosès shows, it is Rosenzweig who throws light over the ambiguity of all the messianic movements of the history of Judaism when he writes that "in the chiaroscuro of the history of all the great messianic movements they *are and are not* what they claim to be: can I dissociate from it because it is only *possibly* messianic? What movement would *not* be just "possibly"?<sup>14</sup>

Before the ambiguity between history and eternity of the messianic, Rosenzweig reaffirms the dimensions that make up the diaspora Jewish life at present: law, home and prayer. For him, it is impossible to separate law from the foundation of the heredity that entails the Jewish people. This heredity is shown in the revelation of the commandments and, especially, in the commandment of honoring your father and your mother to thus lives a long life on earth. For this reason, commandment and heredity are united in the love and respect towards the created world: "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the YHVH, your God, is giving you" (Exodus 20: 12). This revealed commandment is turned into law by man, and is secularized by making it part of the profane world and there, in the man-to-man relationship, is used to legislate society. In a letter of July 15, 1924, about the problem of the revelation and law, Rosenzweig writes to Martin Buber:

For me, too, God is not a Law-giver. But He commands. It is only by the manner of his observance that man in his inertial changes the commandments into Law, a legal system with paragraphs, without the realization that "I am the Lord",

12 Mosès Stéphane, "Franz Rosenzweig in Perspective: Reflections on His Last Diaries", in: Mendes-Flohr Paul (Ed.), *The Philosophy of Franz Rosenzweig*, Hanover and London, Brandeis University Press, 1988, p. 194.

13 To see the process in which Gershom Scholem divides Zionism's messianic dimension as a theological-political gesture linked to the birth of the State of Israel see: Taub Emmanuel, *Mesianismo y redención. Prolegómenos para una teología política judía*, Buenos Aires/Madrid, Miño y Dávila editores, 2013; Schmidt Christoph, "Il messia antimessianico. Soggettività messianica e teologica politica nella teoria del simbolismo cabbalistico di Gershom Scholem", en: Filoramo Giovanni (ed.), *Le religioni e il mondo moderno. II: Ebraismo*, Torino, Giulio Einaudi editore, 2008.

14 Mosès Stéphane, "Franz Rosenzweig in Perspective: Reflections on His Last Diaries", *op. cit.*, p. 195.

without “fear and trembling”, without the awareness that the man stands under God’s commandment. [...] I would accept that as a confirmation of the rule that a commandment changes into law and I would say with the Greeks: “It is not God’s fault”. But if the “On this day” becomes a Shukhan Arukh<sup>15</sup> then I turn a bit pantheistic and believe that it does concern God. Because He has sold Himself to us with his Torah. But in the end we share even this faith<sup>16</sup>.

The issue of the law is a problem of man, not only of God, not only of man’s correlation with God. Under the law that is built by man resides the essence of the commandment and, in it, the revelation, the eternity which God has consecrated. The law is as eternal as God himself. But not so is the community division around the practice of the law: this is a division of the Jewish man, which reinforces the weakening of the community sense.

The Jewish community is prior to the Jewish man, because the spirit of what was revealed by God resides there, and, at the same time, it is an entity in itself – ontological – as a way-to-be for the Jewish people. For this we revisit the concept of Jewish community proposed by Joseph Soloveitchik: man is community and at the same time is man alone, thus in Judaism “the community is not functional or utilitarian, but ontological. It is not a gathering of people who work together for a mutual benefit, but a metaphysical entity, individuality. A living integrity, [...] an autonomous entity endowed with life itself”<sup>17</sup>.

The Jewish community is also a way of decollectivized life in its own individuality: the Jewish tradition is the unifying point, behind which, according to Soloveitchik, is God. The term “*kneset Israel*” in the sense of assembly and also of community is a collective person, which means – interpreting the halakhic principle – that the community as metaphysical unit exceeds the physical existence of its individual components. As written in the biblical text: “Now Abraham was old, advanced in age; and YHVH had blessed him in every way” (Genesis 24:1). This way, Soloveitchik explains, the “had blessed” that Judaism always “considered the individual as if it was a small world (microcosm)”; the community traits of individuality and complementarity resemble those of the community of marriage in the Jewish law. And it is there where the couple existentially complements, from its individualities, but making up one same person: “the community of marriage is like the community in general; its strength does not consist in what is common among its participants, but in its unity and singularity”<sup>18</sup>.

For self fulfillment, man must be alone but at the same time be part of a community. This is the sense of completeness and of existential experience for the Jewish tradition. This is how the Jewish community is conformed when “two

15 The code of Jewish law accepted as normative and based on the book by ravine Yosef Caro, medieval cabbalist. The textual translation is: “the table is served or made”.

16 Rosenzweig Franz, “Revelation and Law”, in: *On Jewish learning*, op. cit., pp. 116-117.

17 Soloveitchik Joseph B., “La comunidad”, *Majshavot/Pensamientos*, Year XIX, No. 4, 1980, Tishre-Kislev 5741, p. 25.

18 *Ibidem*, p. 26.

solitary individuals create a community in the same way God created the world". That is, through the word: "If a solitary man must elevate from the existential exclusion to the total existential inclusion, then the first thing he has to do is to recognize another existence. In fact, this acknowledgement is *ipso facto* or an act of sacrifice, since the mere recognition that *you* exist next to *me*, is equivalent to the mystical concept of the *tzimtzum*: self-limitation or God's contraction to create the world<sup>19</sup>. A community is established in the precise moment in which *me* acknowledges *you* and welcomes *you*. An individual offers the *Shalom* to another and by doing so he creates a community"<sup>20</sup>. From this the idea of the "community of prayer" emerges, so important for Rosenzweig, since in the assumption of the responsibility over the other, one must assume, according to Soloveitchik, the responsibility over every known member; this way prayer is always plural<sup>21</sup>.

The Jewish community can be thought of as a way of decollectivized life in its individuality, united by the tradition that ever since the commandment has been taking shape throughout the history of the Jewish people. This history is pierced by the condition of problematical between the eternal consecrated by and in God's eternity, and the earthly and secular, given by the people own life. Because supporting the community is the tradition and heredity of the commandment where God's order resides. The community is not only leaned on the law, but rather the law looks ahead from man, since man has constituted it. The law regulates man and for that he is distinguished in its observance. But it is a division that the Jewish man today maintains and uses to classify and divide himself.

The debate around the revelation and the law in which Rosenzweig and Buber conversed, was later plunged into an article in 1924, called "The Builders: Concerning the Law". Rosenzweig revisits the relationship between education and, mainly, the problem of the law, the commandment and the Jewish tradition. He explains that it is the "unhistoricity" of the Jewish people given by its sense of eternity, which makes every instant of its history to be always contemporary. This way it is possible to feel in every instant the proximity of the exile and the meaning of every moment, of every psalm, and of every *Lekha Dodi* when receiving the Sabbath, when recalling the exit from Egypt or when fasting in *Iom Kipur*. Because the instant makes what it is the most particular of the relationship of the Jewish man with God and the remembrance of the past is a vital and permanent need. Rosenzweig considers that "the return in the middle of the stream of life which pushes forward" is the hard and strange task that is imposed to the rest of the peoples that are bound to a national community as chain of generations only

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19 According to Isaac Luria's Kabbalist tradition, to create the world and make room for it God self-limited through a self-contraction: *midat ha-tzimtzum* (or *tzimtzum*); this way he precipitated an empty space for the world. See specially the classical works of Gershom Scholem and Moshé Idel about the history of the Kabbalah and mysticism. In Spanish also see for an introduction: Laenen J. H., *La mística judía. Una introducción*, trad. Xabier Pikaza, Madrid: Editorial Trotta, 2006.

20 Soloveitchik Joseph B., "La comunidad", *op. cit.* p. 29.

21 *Ibidem*, p. 33.

in time or in space. This feeling of strangeness is, instead, for the Jewish people:

The very basis of our communal and individual life: the feeling of being our fathers' children, our grandchildren's ancestors. Therefore we may rightly expect to find ourselves again, at some time, somehow, in our fathers' every word and deed; and also that our own words and deeds will have some meaning for our grandchildren. For we are, as Scriptures puts it, "children"; we are, as tradition reads it, "Builders"<sup>22</sup>.

It is this so distinctive sense of the Jewish people what allows it to constantly return to that eternal past that conceives as contemporary; an eternity where the people is consecrated in the communal against the national, a community sense that is enlivened and found again in the horizon of the diaspora life through prayer. The community consecrates its sense in God's prayer, as plural, community prayer, which must pray for the other until it can pray just for the Kingdom coming at the door of a messianic time. Because it is there –in God's Kingdom– where the law will no longer exist but be just commandment and closeness to God. Then, as Rosenzweig wrote, prayer itself as known will not need to exist: it will become silent.

It was Hermann Cohen who, based on his reading of Maimonides, had developed the fact that "knowing about God", knowing him, must not be understood as knowing His essence but as moral parameter. Rosenzweig retakes this element in his discussions around the situation of the Jewish people in his times. Cohen explains that the knowledge of God is the love of God, and for that same reason the love of God is the knowledge of God: "Both love of God and knowledge of God, however, are equivalent to love and knowledge of ethics; for ethics is the recognizable attribute of God"<sup>23</sup>. Thus it is through the theory of God's knowledge and love that Maimonides builds the concept of "drawing close"<sup>24</sup> to God ("*hitkarbut*"). Cohen interprets, this way, the world-to-come as the present event of "drawing closer" to God, pursuing the attributes of loving-kindness and justice<sup>25</sup>. That is, through the ethical imitation of the moral foundation of God's being. Commandment, community and heredity are bound in the roots of the idea of a Jewish life.

In this context, prayer becomes the word that calls and brings one closer to God. And this closeness is the search for a coming-future, where man can talk to God face to face once more as Moses did; because the soul must pray and that, for Rosenzweig, was "the greatest gift of Revelation"<sup>26</sup>.

This idea is also linked, as Hermann Cohen did in his own way, with Rosen-

22 Rosenzweig Franz, "The Builders: Concerning the Law", in: *On Jewish learning, op. cit., op. cit.*, p. 91.

23 Cohen Hermann, *Ethics of Maimonides*, translated with commentary by Almut Sh. Bruckstein, Wisconsin, The University of Wisconsin Press, 2004, pp. 113-114.

24 *Ibidem*, p. 118.

25 *Ibidem*, p. 121.

26 Rosenzweig Franz, *La Estrella de la redención*, trad. Miguel García-Baró, Salamanca, Ediciones Sígueme, 2006, p. 230.

zweig's conception of the Sabbath. For him, the celebration of the Sabbath is "the commemorative celebration of the Creation", and thus it is through the Sabbath that the year is given existence. Even more, the work of the creation and the beginning of man's life is commemorated, it is sacred and profane, and it is seventh and first day: "Saturday is the dream of the final compliance"<sup>27</sup>. Behind the Sabbath lies prayer and it is prayer, according to Rosenzweig, that helps "bringing the Kingdom of heavens". The "righteous prayer" transforms the eternity into now. It is prayer that finds its consecration in the Sabbath. Then, in the Sabbath's midday, Rosenzweig writes, through the Jewish people's prayer "it is more than the chosen people: it is here the "one" people, the "only", the people of the "One". [...] the individual performs the eternal union between God and his people and of his people with humanity"<sup>28</sup>. Prayer is the plea for enlightenment. It is the calling to the face of God; it is the consummation of the instant in which the enlightenment of the future and the access to the divine presence occur: the *Shekinah*. Prayer "founds the human order of the world" because only "the end of the days is common to everybody" and prayer is a lighthouse that illuminates, a lighthouse that "illuminates to each one what illuminated to everyone: only what is furthest, the Kingdom."<sup>29</sup>

That is why the Sabbath never reaches an end. It comes and goes from the historical time; sphere of sacred-time that consecrates us to God; exceptional time in which to remain and depart from. As one of the thirty-nine categories of the forbidden work, the Sabbath is the permanent prohibition of the "final hammer blow"; the blow that defines and completes an action. Splinter of a messianic time that cannot be installed: *unfinished*. This is how the entrance to the Sabbath occurs, since the first star that rises in the sky until the first star on Saturday, and one remains consecrated-to-the-Sabbath in an infinite marriage simulation. This marriage promise is confirmed and cancelled week after week. The Sabbath is the Bride that is possessed and then let go, as an endless parenthesis. As celebrated when welcoming the Sabbath: "Come, my beloved, let us greet the Bride; let us welcome the Sabbath. [...] Come, let us welcome the Sabbath, because it is the source of blessing; from its opening as from the beginning, it was chosen; the last in the creation, the first in God's thought"<sup>30</sup>.

As Soloveitchik has well pointed out in relation to the prayer community, "the central figure in the Jewish history was not the king, neither the field marshal, nor the political leader, but the old master surrounded by young boys"<sup>31</sup>. This teaching was transmitted in the Torah, in Moses' wish that the whole people

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27 *Ibidem*, p. 373.

28 *Ibidem*, pp. 371-372.

29 *Ibidem*, pp. 322, 349.

30 The "*Lekha Dod*" hymn that is recited to welcome the Sabbath was composed by one of the Kabbalists of the Safed, Rabi Shlomo Halevy Alkabetz (1505-1584).

31 Soloveitchik Joseph B., "La comunidad", *op. cit.*, pp. 33-34.

was a people of priests, remembering the passage (Numbers 11:29) in which God transfers part of Moses' spirit to the old men, while Moses pronounces the wish that everyone in the people of Israel were prophets and that God rested his spirit on them; but also, the creation of a community as "community of listeners", based on the sense of teaching and instruction contained in the same Torah, central for the relationships between men<sup>32</sup>.

The Jewish people, coexisting among those "other worlds" that Rosenzweig referred to, searches in the synagogue's task the essence of a Jewish life for a community in the "unhistorical" sense, eternal and revealed, through the so distinctive of the Jewish people singularity that is prayer and remembrance.

In the same way that Rosenzweig recognized in the twenties, part of the essence of the Jewish life and the onto-theological sense of the community in the life of the diaspora can be found and be transmitted in the synagogue. The synagogue transcends the limit of the mere practice of the cult, which we could call "religiosity", because it must be thought as sphere of "community life" which does not lose the religious practice, but feeds it back from the strengthening of the Jewish community bond. It is the role that must be observed as challenge today of the synagogue in relation to the "Jewish world", and specifically, with the diaspora Jewish world.

In our days, the task of the synagogue can be one of the essential tools of a Jewish life for a Jewish community in the unhistorical sense, eternal and revealed. This, against the conditions of Jewish life in the diaspora, far away from the land of messianic hope, in continuous debate over the theological or political nature of the State of Israel, and in coexistence among those "other worlds" Rosenzweig made reference to.

How could it possibly be done then? Through the so unique singularity of the Jewish people: prayer and remembrance. The life contained in the chance of heredity and its strengthening; from the memory of the exit from Egypt to the commandment of honoring our parents. Because honoring our parents is honoring the sense of heredity that transcends man; it is the way of honoring existence. It is maybe for this reason that after the commandments referring to man's relation with God, and before the commandments referring to the man with man relationship, the one about parents appears: a metaphor of a bridge between God and man as another between eternity and existence. It is the celebration of the possibility of transmitting the bases and values of the Jewish people, thus remembering God as the transcending Other, the other as heredity and existence, in the figure of love towards parents and also, in the other as neighbor and as non-Jew, where all the humanity is included.

If the intention on the bases of Rosenzweig's view is to build or continue with a "new thought" that reflects upon the world's secularization and the Jew-

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32 Cf. Steiner George, *Lessons of the Masters: The Charles Eliot Norton Lectures 2001-2002*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2005.

ish practice in society, it is perhaps the sense of "community" what turns as public the theological-political sense of a life consecrated to the values of tradition: the divinization of the world in daily life. These values and way of life cannot separate the individual from the community, because they contain both, respecting the individuality in the possibility of a moral and communal existence, transcendent, beyond the individual's will. Restoring it through prayer will bring over the messianic chance of closeness to the divine. In the Jewish community dwells the very sense of the commandment and the law united, preserving the possible instant where the spirit of the commandments not transformed into law is manifested, finding the transcendence that remembers the heredity that is consecrated in the eternity: community to the Jewish man, where the individuality is maintained but in the belonging to that "world". In the same way that it is to God, it is to the community and to man. It is the synagogue, as axis and expression of the shared and communal prayer, which will allow the approach to the dimension of the sacred, as messianic possibility in these historical: so historical times!

We must build an ethics that is able to coexist with man's political life. And we have a place to start in the life-in-common with the moral tradition that has summoned us throughout our existence. This tradition is centered on the education "in Jewish values" beyond the formal education of religious life, beyond books, as Rosenzweig wrote: as Jewish life. Because today we live with a problem that is found beyond the orthodoxy-laicism debate, and it is about the secularized world and the "religious" world, about the permanence of moral values coming from the transcendent authority, enabling a political as well as an ethical life.

In 1968 Hans Jonas, in an outstanding article about the contemporary problems of ethics from a Jewish perspective, explained that in the modern world "instead of the absolute, in ethics, only what is relative exists; instead of the universal, just the socially particular; instead of the objective, just the subjective; and instead of the unconditional, just the conditional, conventional, y convenient"<sup>33</sup>. We have been gradually losing the very transcendence of the sense of Jewish community, the commandment that gave birth to the law in the hands of man but who has forgotten the commandment as divine order, and, this way, has reached the neutralization of a moral and political life, a way that has been deepened by modern life in the contemporary societies.

Today, what used to be the pillars of the Jewish life in the diaspora according to Rosenzweig, which are still present for us in Argentina, are weakened by the divisions around a law that seems to be useful to merely point who is more Jewish than the other. Likewise, the Jewish home is banished from its historical task of transmission of Jewish values and tradition. This banishment is part of the present times, which does not only include the Jewish home, but also a lifestyle

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33 Jonas Hans, "Contemporary Problems in Ethics from a Jewish Perspective", in: *Philosophical Essays: from ancient creed to technological man*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1974, p. 171.

that involves the loss of values of all the Western societies. It is then that we can think that community prayer, that at least only in the moments of pain or celebration gathers in the synagogue even the most assimilated Jew, is what maintains alive the beat of a Jewish life that is identified with the spirit of all times.

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## ЈЕВРЕЈСКА ФИЛОСОФИЈА И ОБРАЗОВАЊЕ: ВИЂЕЊЕ АРГЕНТИНСКЕ ДИЈАСПОРЕ ИЗ УГЛА ТЕОЛОГИЈЕ ФРАНЦА РОЗЕНЦВАЈГА

### Сажетак

Латиноамеричка јеврејска философија захтева од нас да поново промислимо категорије философије и јеврејства. У циљу да артикулишемо ове две димензије важно је разумети да јеврејска философија мора почети са атрибутима јеврејске традиције. Питање образовање и јеврејства потиче из самих почетака јудаизма. Кроз двадесети век, дијаспора у моденим државама је очувала своју особеност управо захваљујући овим двама димензијама, образовању и јеврејству. Оба аспекта се могу пронаћи у раду Франца Розенцвајга, једног од најважнијих јеврејских филозофа. Главни циљ овог рада јесте да поново промисли главне идеје Розенцвајгове философије и његовог дијалога са Мартином Бубером и Херманом Коеном. У складу са тим сматрамо да ћемо моћи да објаснимо особености дијаспоре у односу на јеврејски идентитет и образовање у Латинској Америци, а нарочито у Аргентини.

**Кључне речи:** јеврејска политичка теологија, образовање, дијаспора, Франц Розенцвајг, Аргентина

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