

Rosenzweig Jahrbuch / Rosenzweig Yearbook 11

Das »Und« im Werk Franz Rosenzweigs /

The »And« in Franz Rosenzweig's Work

Rosenzweig Jahrbuch / Rosenzweig Yearbook

Im Auftrag des Vorstands der
Internationalen Rosenzweig-Gesellschaft

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Rosenzweig Yearbook 11

Das »Und« im Werk

Franz Rosenzweigs

Konflikte und Begegnungen
zwischen Glaubensrichtungen,
Kulturen, Klassen und
Nationen

The »And« in Franz

Rosenzweig's Work

Clashes and Encounters
between Faiths, Cultures,
Classes and Nations



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Vorwort / Preface

The *Rosenzweig Jahrbücher* (*Yearbooks*) have already established a great tradition. To date, nine volumes have been published. In its *Yearbooks*, the International Rosenzweig Society publishes high-quality scholarship related to Franz Rosenzweig's life and thought. Traditionally, the *Yearbooks* are comprised of the Proceedings of the Congresses of the International Rosenzweig Society. In February 2017, Irene Kajon organized a very successful international congress of the IRS at the Gregorian in Rome. For the publication of the proceedings of the convention, it was agreed upon that the essays would appear partly in *Archivio di Filosofia* with Irene Kajon and Francesco Valerio Tommasi as editors, partly in *Filosofia* with Luca Bertolino as editor, and partly in the *Rosenzweig Yearbook*, with Ephraim Meir, Christian Wiese and Matthew Handelman as editors.

The papers published in *Archivio di Filosofia* discuss the topic of logic and dialectics implicated by the »and« in Franz Rosenzweig's work. The title of this special issue of the *Archivio di Filosofia* is: »The ›and‹ in Franz Rosenzweig's Work: Connection, Disjunction, Contrariety.« *Filosofia* publishes papers from the Rome Conference under the title: »The ›and‹ in Franz Rosenzweig's Work: History and Redemption.« The present volume of the *Yearbook* contains essays under the title: »The ›and‹ in Franz Rosenzweig's Work: Clashes and Encounters between Faiths, Cultures, Classes and Nations«. As the title of the *Yearbook* implies, the topics here include: I and you, dialogue or conflicts between peoples and religions or social groups and communities, interreligious and intra-religious dialogue, relationships between Christians and Jews, Rosenzweig's reception in different cultural mili-

eous, and clashes and encounters between approaches to philosophy and theology.

The introductory essay of this *Yearbook* features Bob Gibbs' contribution on »Rosenzweig And Today,« which includes the Presidential Address at the Gregorian in Rome, February 2017. Gibbs focuses on how the *And* holds two terms apart, and how *Today* looks both to the calendar and to the promise of redemption. Revised for publication, his introductory speech deals with the lofty reality of study for those who participated in the convention in Rome in February 2017 as well as for future readers, in multinational Canada, in Italy and elsewhere. Discussing the »and« of Judaism and Christianity, Gibbs reminds us of the magnitude of a pluralist, dialogical model of redemption. He further shows how »today« points to the incompleteness of time, but also to the urgency of the relation between I and you. Finally, he explains the »And Today« in the title of his »Rosenzweig And Today« as »an alarm to love, to desire beyond the now.«

My own essay discusses Rosenzweig's contribution to a dialogical approach of identity and to the emerging new discipline of dialogical theology. Working with the term »trans-difference,« in which dissimilation *and* communication are central, I show the problems but also the usefulness of Rosenzweig's thought for the construction of the new discipline of dialogical theology.

Wolfdietrich Schmied-Kowarzik's article investigates Rosenzweig's critique of Hegel's »one-dimensional dialectics«: the three dimensions of the negation of nothing, the affirmation of non-nothing and the copula »and« are present in all parts of the *Star*. The article offers valuable critical thoughts on Rosenzweig and interreligious dialogue. The paper argues that Rosenzweig's dialogical thought on Judaism and Christianity in Part III of the *Star* is exemplary for interreligious dialogue, but not to be read exclusively as related to two religions of revelation.

Similar to the preceding authors, Stanislaw Krajewski reflects on Rosenzweig's views on Judaism *and* Christianity in the *Star* in the perspective of today's interreligious dialogue. Krajewski states that Rosenzweig's view is one of a polar complementarity. He proposes extending the »and« in the *Star's* Part III to all religions. His

own »oscillation model« – in which one goes back and forth from the objective, scientific approach to the subjective, religion-specific approach – is a creative interpretation of the »and« that is useful for interreligious dialogue in the present.

Gianluca Attademo's article addresses another dialogue: the one between Jews and Germans. He discusses different positions on the relationship between German *and* Jewish culture, including Heinrich Heine, Theodor Lessing, Moritz Goldstein and Hermann Cohen and Rosenzweig, who wrote that the *Verjudung* made of him a better German and that his *Star* will be considered as a gift of the Jewish enclave to the German spirit.

In her article on Rosenzweig's essay »Bildung und kein Ende« (»Towards a Renaissance of Jewish Learning«), Gesine Palmer explores the meaning of »and« in the title of Rosenzweig's essay. The anti-assimilation essay was intended as a design for the *Lehrhaus* in Frankfurt, which proposed a completely new type of *bet midrash*. The *Lehrhaus* had to give Jews a time and a space to speak, to discuss, to become alive and to wish. If not, Ecclesiastes would again be true with its declaration: »of the making of many books there is no end« (Eccl. 12:12).

Cass Fisher focuses on still another »and« in Rosenzweig's thought. He writes on the near *and* far God in the *Star* and in Rosenzweig's post-*Star* writings. He investigates the epistemological implications of God's proximity *and* distance. He deems that, from Rosenzweig's perspective, the relationship of human beings to God is important and that a »theography« affirms both the power and the limits of theological language.

Andreas Losch brings Buber *and* Rosenzweig together in a contribution on the meaning of the copula »and« in their main works. He concludes that, for both philosophers, »and« has a central conjunctive function. The elements (God, man, and world) become real only in relation. Just as Rosenzweig's »and« makes God, man and world real, Buber's I-Thou is the realization of the eternal Thou as the »in-between.«

Whereas Andreas Losch links Rosenzweig and Buber, Philipp von Wussow investigates the relationship between Rosenzweig *and* Cohen. He examines Rosenzweig's *and* Cohen's views on the

relationship between religion/Judaism *and* the system of philosophy. Specifically, von Wussow studies Rosenzweig's introduction to Cohen's *Jüdische Schriften*. The guiding question in the article is whether religion is the fourth pillar of the philosophical system (next to logic, aesthetics and ethics) or whether it destroys the system. Rather than opting for one of these alternatives, von Wussow proposes reopening the debate between Rosenzweig and Cohen. He concludes that in the philosophical discussion of the »return« of religion, one should be aware of the problem of seeing religion as a part of culture or as a suspension of the cultural order.

Martin Fricke highlights the actuality of Rosenzweig's thought surrounding the conjunctive »and.« He opposes the much-discussed position of the systematic theologian Notger Slenczka with the view of the Dutch theologian Kornelis Heiko Miskotte. Whereas Slenczka, in the footsteps of Adolf von Harnack, denies the canonical value of the Hebrew Bible for Christianity, Miskotte – following Rosenzweig – emphasizes the unity of both testaments, in which the revelation of the divine Name functions as a normative foundation.

Eveline Goodman-Thau describes how Rosenzweig's notions of time, redemption and truth are deeply rooted in Jewish thought. In the Bible, she argues, the Whole is ruptured in the relation between the self and the other and between heaven and earth. The Bible links I and Thou as well as time and speech. She concludes that Rosenzweig brought Athens and Jerusalem together, in their differences, changing reason and faith, theology and philosophy.

Takashi Sato links Rosenzweig's view on messianism *and* his truth theory. For Rosenzweig, messianism did not take place in a linear progression of history or in states that strive for a false eternity: it was rather an anticipation of eternity as a tomorrow which can be a today. Sato writes that political messianism is limited by Rosenzweig's view of truth, in his »messianic epistemology.« Truth, so Rosenzweig posits, is one in God, but plural for human beings. It has to do with »and.« It is always truth (*Wahrheit*) for somebody, »our truth,« which has to be verified (*bewährt*) in life.

Michaela Will investigates the meaning of »and« in Rosenz-

weig's biography. She describes how Rosenzweig once wanted to become a rabbi and received the title »*morenu*.« Rosenzweig pondered the relationship between rabbi and teacher. He appreciated Rabbi Nobel in his interaction with the community and as a mediator between the community members and God. Rabbi Nobel asked human questions and offered divine answers. Finally, Rosenzweig linked teaching and Law in »The Builders« (*Die Bauleute*), instigating a new understanding of the Law. »Law« (*Gesetz*) had to become commandment (*Gebot*) and the »New Law« was linked to life itself. In matters of the Law, the »either ... or« was replaced by »and.«

Finally, Brigitta Keintzel argues that the »and« in Rosenzweig's »philosophy of the and« is not a formal category. It is not to be understood in a logical or synthetic manner. Rather, it is experience-oriented, linked to time and language. Consequently, the subject is process-oriented, not yet entirely alive, and changing in contact with the other. Neither is the world already completed, nor is it yet mended. Truth also comes in experience and is necessarily plural. Therefore, as a constitutive element, the »and« points to a lived relation. Keintzel pays special attention to the »and,« which brings moment (*Augenblick*) and duration (*Dauer*) together. Rosenzweig rescued the concept of duration, which was neglected in philosophy: it is the »not yet there« that allows freedom and life. The »and« is therefore the interpenetration of the finite moment and the not-yet infinite duration.

It is my hope that the articles brought together here under the title »The »and« in Rosenzweig's Work« advance the scholarly research on Rosenzweig's inspiring dialogical philosophy. A substantial part of the funds necessary for the publication of this issue of the *Yearbook* was provided by Irene Kajon. These funds came partly from the Dipartimento di Filosofia in the Sapienza Università di Roma and partly from the Stiftung Dialogik – Mary und Hermann Levin Goldschmidt-Bollag. Silvia Richter and Josiah Simon assisted the editors in reviewing the texts. I am grateful for their work. Finally, I thank Lukas Trabert of Alber Verlag for his careful attention to all the *Yearbooks* and especially to this one.

Inhaltsangaben / Abstracts

Robert Gibbs

Rosenzweig And Today: Presidential Address

This opening address connects Rosenzweig to the context and time of the conference, reflecting on what 2017 means and focusing on the possibility that *and* allows for genuine pluralism of communities. It also introduces several of the key moments of *and*, including the relation of I and you, and you and we. The address ends with a reflection on how today is related to eternity, with a discussion of calendars and the role of study.

Keywords: today, plural communities, calendars, study

Ephraim Meir

Rosenzweig's Contribution to a Dialogical Approach of Identity and to Interreligious Theology

Rosenzweig's thinking offers a sophisticated approach to alterity and communication. He highlighted that not all things are easily communicated, due to existing incommensurable particularities. Dissimilation is crucial for him; it is in fact the condition of relation. This attention to differences is a prerequisite for a dialogical theology that appreciates a plurality of approaches to the Ultimate Reality. In his »trans-different« thought, heterogeneity *in religiosis* as well as bridging and translating remain crucial.

Notwithstanding his hierarchy of religions and his limited, euro-centric horizon, Rosenzweig was a pioneer in interreligious dialogue. In showing the interaction between Judaism and Chris-

tianity, he contributed to a pluralization of theology. His idea of a God who transcends religions is valuable in the construction of a trans-different, dialogical theology. Another one of his ideas that is still relevant is of a God who does not create religions, but the world.

Almost one hundred years after his death, we may apply the Jewish saying »these and these are the words of the living God« to all religions. The dictum originally celebrated an intra-Jewish plurality; today, it may refer to the polyphony of the religions of the world. Rosenzweig is at the inception of a process that leads to interreligious communication. He deemed that communication is possible because we live in *one* world, where hospitality and deep listening bridge differences. With his dialogical life and his thinking on relational identity and on the dialogue between Judaism and Christianity, he contributed to a dialogical approach to identity, to interreligious dialogue and to the emerging new discipline of dialogical theology.

Keywords: relational identity, dialogical theology, trans-difference

Wolfdietrich Schmied-Kowarzik

Bejahung und Verneinung. Rosenzweigs dreidimensionale Dialektik

This article investigates the fundamental importance of the copula »and« in Rosenzweig's *Star of Redemption*.

Rosenzweig surmounts Hegel's »one-dimensional« dialectics, which only knows the negation of nothing. Rosenzweig argues that the affirmation of non-nothing is part of all thinking as the meaning of existence. These two moments cannot find each other without a third active »and« that connects them both. These three dimensions are present in all parts of *The Star of Redemption* and find the last »and« in the love of God to the human being *and* the active answer of the human being through verification in life.

Keywords: Negation of nothing, affirmation of non-nothing,

»and«, the active »and« between God *and* human being, Hegel, Schelling, Ehrenberg, Cohen

Stanislaw Krajewski

Franz Rosenzweig, the Jewish people, »and« Christianity in Dialogue

This article describes three aspects of the Jewish-Christian relationship as presented in *The Star of Redemption*: complementarity, partnership, and the absence of the common historical roots. In addition, it introduces the problem of the purely racial definition of Jews as well as the issue of whether a synthesis of the two religions is possible. Krajewski then defines »deep« interreligious dialogue and discusses the impact of Rosenzweig's system on dialogue. The article concludes by describing two basic approaches to the plurality of religions and the oscillation from the »supra-religious« to the »religious-specific« and back. The oscillation model provides another meaning of the »and«.

Keywords: Franz Rosenzweig, Jewish people, dialogue, complementarity, partnership, oscillation model

Gianluca Attademo

›Die Verjudung hat aus mir (...) einen besseren Deutschen gemacht‹: Franz Rosenzweig and the German-Jewish Dialogue

In the early 1900s, two generations of German-Jewish intellectuals debated the themes of integration and anti-Semitism, as well as the theme of secularization and the prospects of a Jewish Renaissance. Beginning with a review of turn-of-the-century views on cultural Zionism and Hermann Cohen's thesis of a *Wahlverwandschaft* between Jewish and German cultures, this paper analyzes Franz Rosenzweig's reflections on the complexity of German-Jewish identity.

Keywords: Deutschtum, Judentum, Rosenzweig, Cohen, German-Jewish symbiosis

Gesine Palmer

Can And Be an End in Itself?

The »And« in »Bildung und kein Ende«

Much has been written on the two last words of Rosenzweig's *Star of Redemption*, »Ins Leben.« Many readers have been deceived into thinking that life could be considered as an alternative to reading and learning, or at least as the battlefield on which the insights of the book must be put to test and verified by sacrifice.

In his essay »Towards a Renaissance of Jewish Learning« (»Bildung und kein Ende«), written in 1920 as an introduction into the »Lehrhaus«-project, Rosenzweig specifies the relation between education and life. Rosenzweig begins this artfully composed text with a harsh criticism of German-Jewish learning in his time. »Wissenschaft vom Judentum« is, in his view, »genau so wenig deutsch *und* genau so wenig jüdisch ... wie – nun, wie etwa die ›deutschen‹ Zunamen, mit denen sich unsere Urgroßväter im ersten Rausch der Emanzipation behängten.« (Italics by Rosenzweig)

He suggests opening a new space in which Jewish learning can be more than just a pale imitation of Christian or secular learning, and he suggests beginning with the act of opening a public consulting room (a »Sprechzimmer«), in which people are invited to voice their problems and desires. The essay ends with the word »Ende«, as part of a quotation of Qohelet, but the opening of the sentences begins with the word »and«.

This paper explores the idea of a European Jewish education and Rosenzweig's view of Zionism, ending with the claim that »and« is a beginning in itself.

Keywords: Jewish education, universalism, difference, assimilation, program, learning

Cass Fisher

Rosenzweig's Theography and the Epistemology of God's Proximity and Distance

Rosenzweig, throughout his writings, is deeply concerned with the power and limits of our theological language. His reflections on religious epistemology frequently come to expression in the language of God's proximity and distance. In »The New Thinking,« he claims that this charting of God's oscillations, what I am calling his »theography,« is central to the new form of philosophy he is advancing. Rosenzweig's views on the epistemological consequences of God's proximity and distance are curiously counter-intuitive: our cognitive faculties falter in God's proximity, thus leaving only the distant God as an object of reflection. In the paper, I argue that tracing Rosenzweig's concern with God's proximity and distance help resolve interpretive challenges within the *Star*, provide evidence that he sustained his fundamental philosophical and theological commitments in the aftermath of the *Star*, and illuminate his contribution to subsequent discussions in modern Jewish thought on reason, experience, and religious epistemology.

Keywords: Rosenzweig, theology, religious epistemology, Martin Buber, Joseph B. Soloveitchik, Eliezer Berkovits

Andreas Losch

»Ich – Du« oder »Ich und Du«? Die Wirklichkeit des »Und« in Martin Bubers und Franz Rosenzweigs Hauptwerken

What is the meaning of the »and« in the title of Buber's magnum opus *I and Thou* compared to its function in Franz Rosenzweig's *The Star of Redemption*? While in Rosenzweig's work, its meaning for God, World and Man becomes real and revealed, Buber's approach similarly attributes realization to this »in between« I and Thou. In both works, regarding the imagination of God, this has an eternal dimension, so it is »The Eternal« (Rosenzweig) or »The Eternal Thou« (Buber) which becomes actualized.

Keywords: Ich und Du, Geist, zwischen, Buber, Rosenzweig

Philipp von Wussow

**The Place of Religion in the System of Philosophy:
Rosenzweig's »Einleitung« to Cohen Revisited**

This paper follows up on the discussions in Jewish thought of the 1920s about the place of religion in the system of philosophy. Cohen had addressed the question in his 1915 book *Der Begriff der Philosophie im System der Philosophie* and the posthumous *Religion der Vernunft aus den Quellen des Judentums*. Following Rosenzweig's canonic interpretation in his introduction to Cohen's *Jüdische Schriften*, the problem of religion became a major point of contention in the post-Cohenian debates surrounding philosophy and Judaism. It was the template for renegotiating the relation between system and experience as well as between idealism and the reality of God. The paper examines Rosenzweig's interpretation of the problem while situating it in the larger quarrels on the Cohenian heritage. Focusing on the conjunction »and« helps present Rosenzweig's argument in its fundamental ambiguity. By outlining Cohen's stance with regard to the irreducible »reality« of God in the individual experience, it opened up a new possibility of thinking religion beyond systematic recognition. At the same time, it seemed to forgo the possibility that system and experience mutually refer to each other, being connected through the inconspicuous word »and«.

Keywords: religion, system, neo-Kantianism, idealism, experience

Martin Fricke

**»Lesen Sie den Stern der Erlösung«: Zur Aktualität von
Kornelis Heiko Miskottes Rosenzweig-Interpretation**

In 2015 the German theologian Notger Slenczka put up the thesis, the so-called Old Testament could not be understood as »canonical« in a way representing the essence of Christianity rather than picturing something like its preliminary stage. In contrast, already in the first half of the 20th century the Dutch theologian

Kornelis Heiko Miskotte had claimed the unity of Scripture and the own value of the Old Testament within its canon. This article tries to show, how Miskotte in this context refers to Franz Rosenzweig's criticism of idealizing the truth of revelation, and how his reflections can generate a new perspective on the understanding of Scripture and the relations between Christianity and Judaism.

Keywords: Miskotte, Old Testament, unity of Scripture, identity and difference, Jewish-Christian dialogue

Eveline Goodman-Thau

Truth, Time and Redemption

The notions of Time and Redemption play a pivotal role in the thought of Franz Rosenzweig and serve as a key towards the constant threads he weaves between secular and religious concepts, between the System and the Star, constituting a new *Weltbild*, in which *Seinsdenken*, *Sprachdenken*, and *Geschichtsdenken* emerge in a new light.

This implies breaking not only with preconceived notions in the realm of philosophy and theology, but constitute a cultural criticism affecting the basic previous concepts of western traditions, in fact shaking its very foundations.

Born on the one hand out of his direct experiences in World War I and its historical implications for European thought and on the other hand, out of his search for cultural identity as a Jew and a German in a Christian world, Rosenzweig confronts the concepts of western philosophy *and* religion with Jewish thought transforming God – Man – World into Creation – Revelation – Redemption, influencing later thinkers in the Philosophy of Being (*Seinsdenken*), the Philosophy of language (*Sprachdenken*) and the Philosophy of history (*Geschichtsdenken*).

Time and Redemption serve as critical categories opening the possibility of Truth in Judaism *and* Christianity and their relevance for contemporary philosophy and theology.

Keywords: truth, time, redemption, Seinsdenken, Sprachdenken, Geschichtsdenken

Takashi Sato

Messianismus und Wahrheit bei Franz Rosenzweig

This paper examines the relationship between messianism and politics, truth, and dialogue in the thought of Franz Rosenzweig. For Rosenzweig, the Jewish people, as chosen by God, have already reached eternity and thus are independent from a secular state and world history. Simultaneously, the ideas of election derived from the Bible were transmitted to other peoples through Christianity and eventually became the origin of modern nationalism. Many other peoples insisted on their eternity based on the ideas of election and »messianic politics,« or politicized messianism. Criticizing this situation, Rosenzweig asserted a pluralistic and dialogical truth, and it is reasonable to think that, through his truth theory, he criticized the excessive expectations for a Messiah and false eternity of states. This paper thus clarifies that his concept of pluralistic and dialogical truth intended to set limits to politicized messianism.

Keywords: messianism, truth, election, eternity, pluralism

Michaela Will

Franz Rosenzweig zwischen »Berufswunsch Rabbiner« und »Ehrentitel Morenu«

This paper discusses – from a biographical perspective – the significance of choosing the word »and« (»und«) in certain contexts in the work of Franz Rosenzweig. Central to this topic is Rosenzweig's self-conception in the time between his desire to become a rabbi and his reception of the rabbinical honorary title »Morenu«. This article considers the choice of the word »and« in Rosenzweig's writings in three specific contexts: Rosenzweig's new professional orientation in connection with his return to Judaism, raising the question of the relationship between modern rabbi and modern teacher; his perception of Rabbi Nehemia Anton Nobel's preaching; and, thirdly, in the context of Rosenzweig's understanding of Jewish law, based upon his ultimate goal of

teaching law. To conclude, the present paper explores the relevance of choosing the word »and« in today's society.

Keywords: biography, Rabbi, Morenu, Nehemia Anton Nobel, Jewish Law

Brigitta Keintzel

Dauer und Augenblick: Rosenzweigs Verständnis vom *Und*

Rosenzweig's understanding of the *And* is based on an intertwining of logic, existence and ethics. For Rosenzweig, it is not the panoptic view of the whole that is significant, but rather the time-bound view of the whole. This standpoint requires rediscovering the linguistic and temporal nature of the *And*. The *And* is not a formal category, but has dual temporal characteristics. It refers to both duration and the moment. Exploring the relationship between duration and the moment allows more accurate insight into the time-bound understanding of peace and peaceful coexistence.

Keywords: Time, language, alterity, peace, Shoah

Rosenzweig And Today: Presidential Address

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AUuJ09zs4Vs&feature=youtu.be>

On 20 February 2017, as President of the International Rosenzweig Society, I helped open the International Rosenzweig Conference in Rome on »The conjunction *and* in Franz Rosenzweig's work.« We were honoured to be meeting that day at the Pontifical Gregorian University, where we were greeted and welcomed by leaders of the universities of Rome. What I could not say, as my comments were the very beginning of the Conference, was how splendid the four days of meetings were. The participants came from the four corners of the world, from every stage of academic careers, from diverse fields, and created a uniquely rich intellectual exchange. Near the end of my comments I called for a time of study together, and for many of us attending, the Conference did become the unique today, a day more than a simple today, a day where eternity became part of today. We are all grateful and even blessed to have been welcomed to Rome for those events.

If you were there, then this volume (and the two others planned in other journals) might seem a mere task of remembrance. That was February 2017, and you are now reading papers that you heard, and that in many cases were enhanced by that *today*. But the today of your reading is not those days of study. If you were not there, then that today is even harder to grasp – you can only read what others heard and discussed. On the contrary, the today of study, as I will discuss at the end of my comments, is a today that overflows its own day, its own hours and meals, even as it occurs in that time. The today of reading, likewise, can be a site

for eternity to enter time. Perhaps this is why there are these three journal issues: the study that we engaged in Rome is not complete, and there is not a single day or week in which it achieves its completion. Perhaps the goal is not merely a remembrance or a rehearsal of those events, of a time now gone, but the goal of study, as scholars, is to speak and to write for future readers. Not captured in a today of meeting, but handed over to others to create new todays, and to keep the reflections always alive. Do we write in order to have a conference, or have a conference in order to write for a future today? Study without end, aided both by meeting and also by writing.

I ramble through this complex relation between the today of February 2017 and the time of your reading because my comments which follow focus both on the specifics of that day and its time, and also on how *today* as such is key to Rosenzweig's thought. I will not erase the extensive reflection on that today in Rome, but the persistence of those references, of those indices of a moment, will help, I hope, to introduce our ongoing study, punctuated by cycles of journals and conferences. The stubbornness of the index itself is linked to the promise of salvation – not by abstraction but by a richer conjunction and maintenance of uniqueness: the work of the word *and*.

We come together today as scholars to discuss and indeed to debate the work and the life of Franz Rosenzweig. He is, admittedly, a reluctant object of study, because he committed his life to a series of interventions in the world, in his world in his day, and he made that commitment by explicitly rejecting the university and the work of academic scholarship. Trained as an intellectual historian, he rejected that tradition in search of what we might well call existential meaning. It is not that he became anti-intellectual or even anti-historical, but the purpose of his new thinking was to engage with living people, and to animate whatever was studied in relation to his own time – to his *today*.

In a different context, I might speak much more about Rosenzweig himself, and even about his writings in order to introduce him, but this is a Conference of scholars of Rosenzweig. For this very Conference, I might speak much more about the word *and*,

as our many scholars address this small and vital word – but I will only brush the surface of the way that *and* works. My task is to speak of *today*. I am no specialist in current events; no expert in the study of Italy, or even of Canada, whence I come. But if we take Rosenzweig seriously, then we must recognize how central to his thought the demand of today was. But his *today* in Weimar Germany was not ours. And so the framing question is how can we connect Rosenzweig, profoundly attentive to his today, to our today, February 2017?

It would not be hard to draw some parallels between Weimar Germany in the world recovering from World War I and the rise of new nationalisms today. The threat to minorities and even to the rule of law inspires many scholars, journalists, and citizens to connect Rosenzweig's today to our today.

Today in Canada

I would like, however, to step aside these crises for a moment, and think about what today means in Canada – perhaps not so obvious to this society gathered in Rome. For Canada, this year is the 150th anniversary of Confederation. Four Colonies, encompassing French Canadians and English Canadians formed a federal government in 1867, and a genuinely bi-national state was formed. We were hardly the first, and nor are we the last, but this year there is almost endless hoopla celebrating this moment of federation. I would suggest to those of you who have thought about Canada at all, may well have thought about Canada as a place where immigrants are welcomed, and refugees have flowed in for a very long time. As a New World country, we depend on immigration (approximately 250,000 a year for over 20 years as of today). For a long time, this was a largely British colonial project, and even French Canadians were slighted. But somehow this bi-national state evolved in the late 20th Century to become a home to refugees and other immigrants from around the world, and because there were two official languages and cultures, immigrants often retained much of their culture and social practice.

We do have long standing Italian immigrant communities, including over one million Italians and an Italian language newspaper in Toronto. Of course, we also have scores of other immigration language newspapers, and churches and mosques and temples, synagogues, and much else of diverse traditions. Federation has proven to be a way of fostering the diversity of our country. This is our familiar narrative, and alas, it is also an illusion, and today we are asking a new and very different set of questions about these 150 years.

Perhaps the key issue that is overlooked is that the two parties, the two nations forming our federation, were bound by treaties to First Nations, to the indigenous people who had lived here before the Europeans came. They were not party to the debates in the 1860's, even though their own lives and lands would be governed by the bi-national state. Or to make the point clear, Canada was settled by two European nations, but has living in its territories many other nations, nations recognized by treaties for hundreds of years. Today, when we tell the story of the 150 years since confederation, the story is radically altered from the story told 25 or 50 years ago, as we now recognize the absence of First Nations (and Inuit and Métis) peoples, and indeed, the cultural extermination policies that have ceased only in the last decades.

Today to be multinational, as we Canadians like to brag we are, is to welcome immigrants, to encourage cultures to thrive, and also to have expropriated and excluded peoples who often welcomed us here. This is a profound social logic that abjures unity, even as it struggles with an unstable federation. Perhaps there is an echo of Italian history here, by which I mean recent history, from the Unification in the 19th Century to the issues concerning immigration and refugees in our time, and also an echo of the Unification of Germany (another 19th Century phenomenon – indeed all taking place within a decade of each other), as well as questions about refugees and immigrants in Germany.