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Contextualizing Rosenzweig's and Levinas' Notions of the Other by Derrida's Construal of Difference

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Abstract. The article focuses on juxtaposing the stances of Franz Rosenzweig and Emmanuel Levinas on the notion of the Other based on the metaphysical principles of modernity so as to expose the prerequisites for their attitude to metaphysics in whole. The peculiarity of the proposed approach is the analysis of the notions of the Other in Rosenzweig and Levinas from the perspective of Jacques Derrida's philosophy. The scrutiny proceeds from the assumption that the national philosophies, having been considered as the specific response to the effects of the encounter of societies to be modernized with the spreading modernity, for that very reason attach great importance to the construal of the Other. It is emphasized that the similarities between the national schools of philosophy indicate correlating the particular with the general as the paradigm for the comprehension of the Other, whereas the Jewish philosophy has previously conceptualized that paradigm by way of the opposition of "Athens and Jerusalem". In an effort to assess the capabilities of the above-mentioned paradigm the analysis of the relevant range of problems is set into the wider context and they are considered in connection with the transition from essentialism to anti-essentialism that characterizes already the late modernity. It is disclosed that Rosenzweig's stance was still essentialist, while Levinas tried to abandon the essentialist understanding of the Other, albeit he did not complete the transition to anti-essentialism. Levinas' break with metaphysics was brought to a close by Derrida whose anti-essentialist stance on identity and difference radically diverges from the thinking that adheres to the "metaphysics of presence". In the issue, Derrida who does not formally belong to the Jewish philosophy could afford to summarize Rosenzweig's and Levinas' approaches to the problem of the Other, and in so doing he makes a contribution to both general and Jewish philosophy.

Keywords: Franz Rosenzweig, Emmanuel Levinas, Jacques Derrida, metaphysics, the Other, identity, difference, Athens and Jerusalem, universalism, essentialism, anti-essentialism

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Introduction

The following analysis focuses on juxtaposing the stances of Franz Rosenzweig and Emmanuel Levinas as the prominent representatives of the modern Jewish philosophy on the peculiar notion of the Other as the feature of the metaphysical foundations of modernity in order to reveal and to analyze some generalities of their attitudes and the succession in their thinking. The reason for confining the analysis to the problems of modernity is the peculiarity of just modern Jewish philosophy and its significant sensitivity to the unique features of the epoch. Therefore, the stances of these Jewish thinkers on the concept of the Other in modernity are of interest not only as such, but also as the most distinctive expression of the approaches that characterize both the modern Jewish philosophy as a whole and many philosophies which pertain to the modernity.

Moreover, it is precisely this fact that explains why the stances of Rosenzweig and Levinas on the concept of the Other should be scrutinized from the perspective of Jacques Derrida. He has obliquely summarized and shaped their attitudes and thereby exposed their connection with the concepts of identity and difference in the implied general philosophy commonly considered as the “philosophy proper”. It should be emphasized, however, that the ideas of Rosenzweig, Levinas and Derrida concerning the interplay of identity, difference, and the Other are, without question, already scrutinized separately from the cross-lights of modern philosophy. The peculiarity of the proposed approach is precisely the analysis of one aspect of three philosophies in the consecutive order so as to expose how Rosenzweig's and Levinas' ideas on the Other were interpreted and reconsidered in Derrida's philosophy and how the latter contextualizes Rosenzweig's and Levinas' stances.

Such approach does not conflict with the fact that, while the conceptions of Rosenzweig and Levinas undoubtedly belong to the Jewish philosophy, the philosophical stance of Derrida should be rather referred to the general philosophy, albeit the imprint of the Jewish intellectual tradition can be observed in some of his approaches, his mode of thought, and his manner of describing. Nonetheless, Derrida never remained indifferent to the problems of the Jewish philosophy and, in particular, to the nature of the latter's peculiarity¹. Note should be also taken that the modern Jewish philosophy proved to be the most sensitive to the contexts concerning the opposition of essentialism and anti-essentialism as the approaches to the analysis of the identity, the difference, and the Other².

¹ See the discussion of some aspects of this problem in [1].

² In this connection it would be useful to remind that the essentialist approach that is dependent on metaphysics considers just the identity as pure primary self-identity or sameness that is visualized in the form of a fixed essence or “thing”. In other words, the identity is traditionally construed as

As regards the difference that is deemed secondary, it concerns the non-identity, the dissimilarity, the division, the splitting, the distinction, the multiplicity and, after all, the otherness. Accordingly, the identity as the positive side of the relationship is defined by its difference from the Other that is, so to speak, destined to play the part of the subordinated side which somehow or other opposes the substantial and solid identity. On the contrary, the anti-essentialist point of view proceeds from the assumption that there are no pre-existent and independent stable objects as the fixed “things” which could have essential, universal “characteristics” or “qualities”, so that such “things” and their “qualities” prevent representing them unambiguously as self-identical.

Finally, there is no need to lay out the specifics of the obvious connection between the type of universalism that, generally speaking, presupposes a certain way of adding an element to other elements, and, hence, a certain construal of the Other. This implies that just philosophy or, more exactly, its way of generalization that is inherent in modernity could make the particular discourse universal through the dissemination of ideas (and not, for example, through expanding the effective area of the political power or the armed force, although it stands to reason that the dissemination of ideas may be often supported by violence even or perhaps just in modernity).

The generalization of the particularity through the agency of the general philosophy turns out to be the result of the contact of a particular culture with the universalist claims of modernity which, however, presupposes the zero-option leveling of every particularity as the difference from the position of its pervasive universalism which is therewith considered the only one of its kind. That is why the comparative analysis of Rosenzweig’s and Levinas’ stances on the construal of the Other performed from Derrida’s perspective in a fashion joins them within the limits of a synoptic panorama of the transition from one thinker to another and thus concerns preeminently the general problems which show through the articulation of the seemingly particular views and conceptions.

The borderland between “Athens and Jerusalem”

The main problem of the proposed approach is the getting over the difficulties with the definition of the particularity of the Jewish philosophy that becomes much more sophisticated if the scrutiny limits itself to exposing and explaining its features in modernity. The attempts to specify the essence and the features of the modern Jewish philosophy and to locate it in the context of the reputedly general philosophical teachings are ringed around with the serious difficulties that prevent the understanding which would be considered clear and obvious by all concerned. The situation worsens because of the difficulties with the understanding how the

the timeless, stable, and universal essence or core that becomes accessible through various representations [2. P. 221—223] which, in turn, presuppose the highly developed system of mediations in society.

Jewish philosophy is included in the teachings of general philosophy as a whole, so that such and such concept could be philosophical and Jewish at the same time. Besides, the nature of the identity of the Greek philosophy itself seems doubtful, since its implied goal beginning with Plato was to efface all the traces of its locality and particularity and to become known as spaceless and timeless, i.e., as essentially universal. Finally, there are difficulties with the very notion of the general philosophy and the nature of its generality (universality) as well.

The second problem lies in discovering the cause of the emergence of particular philosophies which are religious or/and ethnic-based, since the Jewish philosophy, having emerged as the philosophy of Judaism, presumably belongs to this class. Such an approach exposes the features which could make it possible to find the concurrence in the views on modernity of the general philosophy and the modern Jewish philosophical thought. In effect, the concurrence in the views on modernity juxtaposes the Jewish philosophy with other philosophies which are construed as domestic or national. They all are preoccupied with the invention and the elaboration of the method of approach to the spreading of modernity, and this elaboration quite often implies the alternative treatment of the concept of metaphysics and of the latter's attitude to the Other.

The very need for philosophy as it was coined by the Greeks impels to question whether the philosophy of Judaism, being in the cradle a kind of conventional and refined wisdom, could be generalized and all the more universalized only by the use of ever more complicated derivatives of the Greek metaphysics in the form it was once invented locally. The answer in the affirmative faces an issue of the philosophy as the irreplaceable means of the universalization through generalization as it is inherent in metaphysics. Thereby such an answer not only puts the problem of the peculiarities of the Jewish philosophy on the agenda of trying to find the sense of the history of metaphysics, but correlates the particularity of the Jewish philosophy with the general problem of identity of the religious or/and ethnic based philosophies.

The point about the Jewish philosophy is that the very question of defining its nature and peculiarity was paradoxically put only since it has acquired its modern form, whereas earlier the Jewish thinkers (in any case, before Maimonides), according to all accounts, did not concern themselves about that problem which therewith seemed to exceed the bounds of the relevant moral and intellectual tradition. There exists even an opinion that the Jewish philosophy is an invention of nineteenth-century historians, whereas heretofore the very subject did not yet exist [3. P. 2]. One could assume that such paradoxical lack of interest to the identity of Jewish thinking was the manifestation of the latter as such reflection on Judaism that did not meet the requirements and restrictions of philosophy as metaphysics. In this connection it should be noted that albeit the reflection on tradition in order to correct, to innovate, and to keep it in operation initially relied only on the conventional wisdom, the historians of philosophy just the same quite often construe such reasoning as the early form of philosophical thinking.

It is easy to see why the nascent Jewish philosophy, only after having taken into account the benefits and the threats of the contact with the universalism of the cosmopolitan imperial cultures, could not but assign the primary importance to the possibility of living and thinking as Jews quite openly and without tensions between the particularity of the Jewish tradition and the universalist claims of the imperial cosmopolitanism. Owing to the contact with other cultures and, first of all, with the Greek one, Jewish philosophy turned into the speculation about the Jewish tradition already on the basis of the philosophical principles and methods and, in addition, in philosophical terms [3. P. 3—4].

It was, in effect, the first statement of the Jewish question because the discussion about the place of the Jews not in the local, but in the larger social, political and cultural contexts was increasingly becoming the vital and the main issue at that time. It is of great importance that the first formulation of the Jewish question was a special case of the general problem of the Other, the otherness itself or, to top it all, the question of identity and difference. It is feasible to assume that the Jewish philosophy emerged when the Jewish culture and its intellectual background were opposed to the Greek culture despite the fact that the completed abstractive thinking was labeled in the Jewish culture as the strange and unaccustomed “Greek wisdom”. More concisely, there is reason to believe that the birthplace of the Jewish philosophy was just the place of a meeting between “Athens and Jerusalem”, i.e., the imaginary borderland that separated and at the same time in a way united two cultures and two modes of thought.

The radical shift of the attitudes to the intellectual foundations of Jewish life was produced by the dissemination of the philosophy of the Enlightenment, the Romanticism, and, in addition, the attendant science [4. P. 2]. The multiple ideological derivatives of that philosophy became apparent in the syncretic cultural forms and the glaring social contradictions of modernity which were in relief described in the Romanticism [5]. Meanwhile, just the emergence and development of modernity with its pronounced universalist claims gave rise to the multiple religious or/and ethnic based philosophies for the simple reason that modernization rendered possible the formation of nation-states. They exemplified a new kind of identity that was unknown to the so-called traditional societies, because the particularity of such an identity paradoxically presupposed also its universality.

This implies that the modern Jewish philosophy in exactly the same way as the other religious and/or ethnic philosophies that, however, had a claim on universality, became the detailed response to the challenges of modernization. To be more exact, it should be taken into account that “Athens” in the opposition of “Athens and Jerusalem” was with the lapse of time eventually replaced by European modernity together with its metaphysical patterns. As far as the philosophy of the completed and exemplary modernity was firstly elaborated in England and France, just that universalist message of the philosophy was considered to be general in the comparison with the discourse of the nascent philosophies of nation-states. As regards the peculiarity of the modern Jewish philosophy, its formation also took the

same path save that there was no Jewish nation-state at that time³. In any case, just the imaginary borderland as the contact zone where the exchange of the influences takes place determined the line of the development of the Jewish philosophy at that time as ever.

Thus, every religious or/and ethnic-based philosophy under the spreading modernity emerges not as the effect of a free design as it might have been thought, but through the force of circumstances which should be somehow construed and tamed⁴. Such philosophy, however, may look like the application of general philosophical approaches and established methods to the particular domestic and national topics (for instance, the origins, principles, and goals of historical existence of a nation or religious community). This conclusion is aggravated by the undeniable fact that the philosophy as a more or less rigorous abstractive thinking according to the stringent and universal logical laws was at first exemplified in ancient Greece, and only thereupon it was imported, reproduced, and in a way naturalized by other cultures. In this situation just the metaphysical construal of universalism that is generally the way of exclusion and inclusion proves to be on the pan as well as the very long-lived paradigm of the interplay between the particular and the general, though [7].

In other words, the peculiarity of national philosophies including the Jewish one cannot be reduced only to somehow generalized facticity of the local traditional singularity. The latter, in truth, is influenced by the encounter with the spreading modernity and bears the imprint of the latter's power of ongoing differentiation of everything that turns into the pervasive otherness [8], and the yearning for the universality as well. Just that encounter and the concomitant trauma of the culture shock engendered both the adopted metaphysical reading of the problem of the Other and its non-metaphysical alternatives in their deep-lying motivations. Those alternatives, however, were concentrated not only within the limits of national philosophies as the means of self-modification and the instruments of the change of the adverse party at that, but also had influence on the general philosophy.

The metaphysical way of the delimitation of every otherness (i.e., the pattern of the universalization as the generalization following a special way of the transition from the particular to the general) which is inherent in the European modernity is of interest the more because it is indeed the latter's distinctive feature. Nevertheless, such attitude to the Other discontents almost all the cultures which from a position of the European modernity itself are considered to be not yet modernized. This discontent makes clear the invention of the syncretic and even the alternative ways of the familiarization of the Other or, in extreme case, the coexistence with the

³ Dvorkin, putting a question of the addressee of the Jewish philosophy of the New and Modern times, writes that "...although Jews remain an important addressee of philosophical teachings and texts, an educated European becomes its main reader" [6. P. 436].

⁴ Perhaps the most expressive corroborations of this assumption might be the emergence and the development of the German classical philosophy (Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel) in the nineteenth century and the Kyoto school in Japanese philosophy in the twentieth century.

Other which could impliedly enable the cultures under modernization to avoid the risk of such universalization that seems inadmissible, since it poses an intolerable threat to the traditional way of life.

Rosenzweig: universalism of the insulated particularity

The pivot of Rosenzweig's first undeservedly underestimated book in two volumes "Hegel and the State" [9] that is considered to be written under the powerful influence of Hegel's philosophy is already more or less explicit expression of the relation to the delayed modernization. In this book Rosenzweig was preoccupied with the problem concerning the state in Hegel's philosophy of history as the prerequisite for the participation in the world history, because Hegel insisted that such participation is impossible for the peoples that have no their states. Indeed, Hegel's scheme implies that since the Jewish people had not their state for a very long time and lived in *Galut*, one cannot consider the Jewish Diaspora that was the latecomer to the modernization and, in addition, did not found its nation-state by then, to be the participant of the world history.

In "Hegel and the State" Rosenzweig cuts the Gordian knot and simply repudiates the necessity of the state, but at the same time he understands it to much wider extent. Rosenzweig follows his teacher F. Meinecke who in opposition to Hegel distinguished between the "state nation", having a common political history and constitution as the unifying power, and the "cultural nation", relying on the shared cultural experience, whether linguistic, religious, or literary. In the issue, Rosenzweig's argumentation proves to be the justification for the right of the Jewish Diaspora to take part in the onward march of the world history on a par with those peoples that have succeeded in establishing their nation-states.

According to Rosenzweig, just the shared cultural experience is the soil that engenders the national myth which, in turn, enables the Jewish people to exist without the state, whereas its existence beyond the limits of the universal history turns out to be, in fact, a kind of defense against the reputed destructive work of modernization. Undoubtedly, the repudiation of the importance of the universalizing power of the world history means the rupture with the rationalism of Hegel's philosophy and the conversion to the mode of thinking that precedes the rationalistic restrictions and inevitably makes questionable not only the respective formal logic, but also the whole metaphysical tradition which goes back to Plato and even has more deep roots in yet turbid thought of pre-Socratics.

Rosenzweig's stance is in concept completely anti-metaphysical, being the outcome of his rejection of Hegel's philosophy. It is directed, in effect, against the dominance of the coercive metaphysical structure which presupposes such and such kind of mediation as the framework of coercive reducing the multiplicity of entities, the totality or Rosenzweig's "All", to a single entity — the world, the God or the human spirit. Rosenzweig disputes the reducibility of every entity and thus abandons the idea that there exists the strict identity underlying both metaphysics and the implied logic. Such approach results in the denial of the identity of Being

and thinking, especially categorical if the latter is understood as Logos that designates primordially the coercive reduction of a multiplicity of entities to a specific unity as a prototype of subsumption.

Furthermore, the reduction is possible on the condition that the initial multiplicity with its mobility and changeability is in a way “frozen” and only thereafter it can be grasped through the fixed notions. Rosenzweig is against such “freezing” and he substitutes the idea of creation for the static mediating patterns of metaphysics which rendered possible the reduction as subsumption. It does not mean, however, the creation *ex nihilo*, but implies some initial dualism — the primal words “Yes” (“Something”) and “No” (“Nothing”) which are, against all expectations of the modern mind, irreducible to each other, though. In other words, in the relationships between “Yes” and “No” every opposite is self-sufficient [10. P. 31—77]. This understanding explains Rosenzweig’s keen interest in myth as the state of immediacy and its characteristic feature that manifests itself in the blurring of all distinctions, but such interest presupposes the overcoming of the fuzzy mythical imagery⁵.

Indeed, if the understanding of the dualism comes to nothing more than the idea of the equipollent (“the No is just as original as the Yes” [10. P. 36]), i.e., not mediated opposites (see also [10. P. 28]), the past and the present could not be distinguished from each other, let alone that in such conceptual framework the idea of the future could not be invented. The past and the future, until they are interpreted as equipollent, belong to one and the same level of Being and therefore they could not be really opposed to the present and to each other. They can be only juxtaposed, so that the representation as the game of substitutions between different levels of Being would be impossible. That is why in Rosenzweig the overcoming of myth is considered to be caused not by the transition to Logos that enables thinking to grasp and to reconcile polarities metaphysically, but by Revelation. Hereupon, the future is understood as the age of Redemption, whereas the past and the present become, respectively, the ages of Creation and Revelation.

Such mental step makes visible the background of Rosenzweig’s critique of metaphysics that proves to be the reflection on the arrested flux of Being and the simultaneous generalization through subsumption which coercively subordinates the static particular to the static general. On the contrary, the Revelation to all human beings occurs through a call, and it Reveals the Other who is issuing a command, whether God or some other human being. In the issue, the personal identity of the Self, having been, according to Rosenzweig, determined by the call, i.e., by the time-dependent Other, also cannot be understood as inalterable [10. P. 189—192]. Whoever he or she may be, he or she and the Other are somehow interconnected, and the nature of this interconnectedness becomes the main problem of the implied non-metaphysical thinking.

⁵ Rosenzweig’s understanding of oppositions was strongly influenced by Schelling; see [11—13].

Moreover, the one or another solution of this problem predetermines the construal of the Other, the attitude to the otherness, and thus the distinction between the true and the false human communities. In opposition to metaphysics that reduces the otherness to identity and flattens every difference and particularity Rosenzweig tried to elaborate such non-metaphysical philosophy which would enable the finite and particular human being to grasp the “All”, i.e. the wholeness of beings, by means of the relationships with others and, hence, without overcoming the initial particularity.

That is why Rosenzweig deliberately avoids the universalist approaches of metaphysics and insists on the resources of the particular, that derives its strength from the insulated particularity of the pristine Judaism as the basis of the true community. It should be also emphasized that Rosenzweig’s approach, however, is still in the main essentialist, and, having accentuated the particular, he reified it in order to identify it and to differentiate it from the Other that was, however, essentialized in exactly the same way. Therefore, the retrieval of the pristine Judaism in Rosenzweig implies the return to the self-identical Jewishness that he places in the premodern past which is for him organic and authentic like the respective premodern Jewish community.

Rosenzweig points out that only Jewish people have a relationship to the eternal life and this is “the community of the same blood” [10. P. 317—327], although it should be said that he also lets in the possibility of spiritual community. Thus, in Rosenzweig just the same blood, being the fixed, factual, and immediate identity as opposed to the transitory land or territory as the “soil” and all the more so the modern nation-state, makes the insulated and particular Jewish people, taking part in Redemption, eternal and thus universal, whereas the metaphysical type of universalism, being based on mediation, is considered to be a corruption. So, the national and cultural identity of the Jewish people, being based on the sameness of the blood, is monolithic and safe-sufficient likewise the monolithic sameness and the Other, and the sides of the opposition in their identity do not depend on each other and thereby are equipollent. Just this construal was brought into question by Levinas who abandoned the essentialism in the understanding identity, difference and the Other, albeit he did not consummate the transition to anti-essentialism.

Levinas: escaping from the ontological imperialism

The interplay of the particular and the general assumes another aspect in the philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas, and there are reasons to suppose that he continued considering the problem of the Other as it was reshaped by Rosenzweig. The connection with the paradigm of the particular and the general in Levinas shows just through the set of mostly abstract notions that are seemingly out of touch with reality. Meanwhile, for Levinas the Other cannot be the matter of theoretical descriptions and cannot be defined exactly as the totality of entities cannot be distinguished from the totally Other, because it is postulated that one cannot reduce

the Other to the Same, be it the identity of Being or the sameness of Cartesian *cogito* as the center of the metaphysics of subjectivity.

Moreover, Levinas proceeds from the belief that to be for the Other means to be without identity, since just the Other in his philosophy acquires peculiar traits in the first place. Whereas the singled out self-identical *I* of the metaphysics of subjectivity is construed as the sovereign and tamperproof center and the foundation, in Levinas the identity of the subject turns out to be disturbed by the Other that resists the appropriation at that. Hence, it should be taken into account that the subject cannot but depend on the Other, and the identity of the subject, as opposed to Rosenzweig, is thus not substantial, but relational. In one of his early articles Levinas routinely, to all appearance, criticized Heidegger's project of the fundamental ontology, but in truth already tried to reconsider the Western ontology and besides all Western philosophical tradition which was based on the belief that the Other should be reduced to the Same without fail [14].

Nevertheless, in that early article Levinas agreed with Heidegger on some important points, particularly that the history of philosophy, having been impelled by the aspiration for intelligibility and domination, relied on repression. Furthermore, in spite of the traditional understanding, Levinas identifies philosophy not so much with metaphysics as with ontology. Later he made clear that ontology meant for him precisely the "reduction of the Other to the Same" [15. P. 43], whereas the Same should be associated with the identical Being as the idea that lies in hiding behind multiplicity and difference. And yet, in contrast to Heidegger, in Levinas the history of ontology is charged not with the forgetting of Being, but with the forgetting of the Other, whereupon everything changes from the ground up.

For Levinas the Other is the focus of attention, and the implied turnabout in the attitude to Being is consolidated by the terminological inversion which spotlights exactly the primacy of the Other [15. P. 47]. In the issue, the former primacy of the ontology which deals with the immanence of the Same reputedly becomes null and void. The ontology yields the palm to the ethics which admits the transcendence of the Other. The latter becomes infinite, because it is construed as irreducible and, hence, cannot be represented by an idea. In this connection Levinas makes reference to medieval context of the notion "subject" that presupposes the subjecting and subjection, the inability to conceptualize and to master the infinity of the Other. Therefore, in Levinas only ethics as opposed to ontology may be called ethical metaphysics or barely metaphysics or eventually the first philosophy, and the Other in the context of Levinas' ethics becomes not an abstract and thus general idea, but a face [15. P. 50].

Levinas insists that the Other as a face facing *I* cannot be subordinated to this *I*, opposing, in effect, the infinity of the otherness beyond Being, and cannot be included in the immanent totality of beings that is structurally similar to the subsuming of the mental representations under general notions and therefore is "imperial" by nature. Moreover, according to Levinas, an attempt of such inclusion would be coercive, for it violates the unity of the Other (but by no means the totality of entities around *I* as one could have conjectured). Describing the relationships

between the Self and the Other, Levinas was first speaking of subjectivity as the “hospitality”, i.e., the welcoming that, nonetheless, still establishes the precedence over the Other and implies the hierarchy and power.

The othernesses, being irremovable, makes Levinas supplement the concept of hospitality by the experience of the hostage and finally extend the respective context by introducing the concept of substitution that specifies his new construal of subjectivity [16. P. 8—9, 131—140]. Levinas supposes that the problem ought to be solved as before, i.e., without assuming the mediating schemes embodied in the framework of ontology (metaphysics), and thus more or less intricate societal relations as opposed to the immediacy of face-to-face condition. The substitution of one entity for another is exactly the sought-for theoretical model of immediacy provided that the mediating mean is excluded from the relationships of the extreme terms that prove to be barely facing each other, then. In this connection Levinas’ theoretical model of the attitude to the Other, meeting the tacit requirement of the immediacy, relies on the retrieval of some primordial condition that, similarly to Rosenzweig’s stance, precedes the fixed self-identity of *I*.

Thereby, this state radically differs from Heidegger’s “overcoming of metaphysics” and brings into question the very civilization that assigns primary importance to the individual as the subject together with the political implications of such views in the form of the classical liberalism. One can also note that Levinas construes the self-sufficiency of Being and the *I* as the manifestation of the bourgeois spirit [17. P. 49—50] that is for him, in effect, the spirit of modernity. This implies that Levinas, opposing Rosenzweig, also admits the inevitability of the returning to the revalorized past that is hereupon construed in a different way as compared with both Heidegger and Rosenzweig. Being the experience beyond essence, the revalorized past turns out to be the embodiment of the “an-archy”, i.e., the human condition that is free from the restrictions of the ontological (metaphysical) “imperial” coercion.

It is the coercion of Being itself, whereas Levinas’ goal is a state that is “otherwise than Being”. Levinas emphasized that philosophy, even having admitted the finitude of Being, never questioned being itself and in the bourgeois vein aspired only after the “better Being”, i.e., the harmony between us and the world and the perfection of our own Being [17. P. 51]. As a matter of fact, Levinas was convinced that the philosophy as metaphysics cannot get out of the concept of Being and avoid falling back into a new kind of metaphysics. In other words, it is again, like in Rosenzweig, the transition from the universal to the particular which, however, but again has a claim on universality. Such a stance relies on the understanding of Being that in full accord with the phenomenological method turns barely into the facticity of existence, the world of things whereupon the “otherwise than Being” means its opposite.

The path to this opposite implies in Levinas the escape not so much from such facticity as from the very “climate” of Heidegger’s thought⁶ that, meanwhile,

⁶ It is precisely this fact that explains the understanding the work “On Escape” and the very term “escape” as the ur-form of Levinas philosophy; see [18. P. 247—249; 19. P. 15]

in contrast to Husserl and in line with Heidegger does not presuppose only contemplative theoretical attitude, but includes a variety of intentional life that is mostly practical handling [20; 21]. Deserting Heidegger's rethinking of Husserl's phenomenology, Levinas sought to get out of Being itself as a means providing universality and to this effect followed the path that should lead thinking away from Heideggerian construal of facticity as far as possible.

Levinas' attempt to escape from the concept of Being and the concomitant ontological imperialism as the pattern of universalism resulted in the construal of the Other and, to be sure, the underlying concepts of identity and difference as well. In Levinas *I* and Other are already considered to be interdependent, but this does not imply that they are already construed in tune with the tenets of anti-essentialism. If Rosenzweig's stance is essentialist in principle, in Levinas the transition to the anti-essentialist comprehension of the identity and difference is not yet completed. The relationships of interdependence between *I* and the transcendent Other are asymmetric, so that the latter proves to be self-identical and self-sufficient without any reference to *I*.

Derrida: blurring the identity

As regards Derrida, his summarizing analysis explicitly aims at anti-essentialism and anti-representationalism, so that he, in effect, once and for all blurred the limits between the identity and difference and inverted the identity-difference hierarchy in construing the Other. Apparently Derrida's reconsidering the correlation of identity and difference that underlies the concept of the Other exhausts all the possibilities of construing the otherness beyond the limits of metaphysics. Derrida emphasizes that every difference is always power relation, and one term always dominates another. In this regard his philosophy is that of difference, but it surprisingly does not oppose the philosophy of identity, acting on the premise that identity and difference are inseparable, and one can admit neither pure identity nor pure difference. Moreover, it seems that Derrida always looked suspiciously on the very notion of purity that is obviously impossible without the clear definition of identity and difference.

In this connection suffice it to remind that, since the notions of identity and difference in Derrida are understood from the anti-essentialist perspective, just the difference is eventually brought to the forefront and construed as irreducible at that. Against all expectations it does not mean that the difference takes the place of the identity and becomes substantial. Instead of this the timeless difference acquires the temporal dimension on the top of everything and changes into *differance* that points out to the relations not only in space, but also across time. These relations are imperceptible because one cannot perceive the past and the future, and they can reveal themselves as the context in motion only through its traces.

One can observe that in Derrida's interpretation of Heidegger's philosophical legacy the concept of mediation in Hegelian vein that was, generally speaking, alien to Heidegger, albeit it was somehow coming to light later in the interpretations of

his ideas, e.g., by Adorno, not only became an important issue, but also was legitimated as the background shared concept. In the final analysis, the concept of mediation that was at first softly and almost without being noticed introduced by Derrida into his argument, became the indispensable joint between Derrida's and Heidegger's conceptions and opened the door to the summarizing construal of the relationships between the identity and difference.

Derrida's construal of identity and difference altered Hegel's understanding of mediation and thus enabled the historian of philosophy to trace the transition from Rosenzweig to Levinas as a stage of the modification of the basic notions which specify the treatment of the Other. After all, abandoning essentialism implies exceeding the bounds of the paradigm that confines the relationships between the general and Jewish philosophies and thus the construal of identity in the context of the reified universal and particular on the condition that the opposing sides could be reconciled and the particular would be somehow turned into the universal. Accordingly, the representation as a sign is understood not as a fixed reference to some independent entity that makes sense of the correlated sign.

The signs themselves in tune with Ferdinand de Saussure are provided with the ability to generate their conventional meanings through the reference to each other, i.e., through the changeable difference or mediation between the signs which themselves have not positive meaning, so that no self-identical and fixed origin is presupposed [22. P. 215]. Hence, the transition from essentialism to anti-essentialism indeed means the death of representationalism⁷ and hereupon, the foundationalism as the attempt of philosophy to find or invent some absolute, universal, and unshakeable foundations or origins in order that the truth of knowledge and values could mediately, but surely rely on them.

The foundationalism, being based on the metaphysical tradition, presupposes, on the one hand, the creation of coercive foundational hierarchies and on the other hand, the coercive and but again hierarchical binary oppositions as the module of mediation. Whereas previously identity as the fixed, timeless essence or core that is expressed by representations was at the first place, Derrida insists on the priority of just difference which is construed in the anti-essentialist vein, i.e., as plastic and changeable. The difference is not the state, but a process of becoming that oscillates between the points of similarity and distinction, and there is no difference that would be uniting, organizing, subsuming, and therefore unique. Rather, a multiplicity of eluding equivalent identities which intersect, alternate, and continuously come into another forms is admitted. Thus, it is believed that the identity is differed and deferred, and in the issue the unifying metaphysical structure which, having been imposed on thinking, molded and ordered it, weakens.

The weakening of this structure, being the "destruction of metaphysics", was purported by Heidegger in expectation of the return to the immediacy of the origin.

⁷ Derrida replaces the habitual model of representation by the "postal principle" which implies that the connection of the signifier with the signified is metaphorically interpreted as "sending" that makes the arrival of the letter conditional of its non-arrival [23; 24].

Although Heidegger was, to all appearance, convinced that the sought-for origin was screened by the mediating structure of metaphysics, Derrida does not admit any return to the immediacy of the origin because the mediation is deemed unavoidable. It might be supposed that just because of that dissent the “destruction of metaphysics” changed in Derrida into its “deconstruction” that obviously makes no provision for the utter demolition. In spite of the implied premise that the unavoidability of mediation is equivalent to the inaccessibility of the origin, for Derrida the endless deconstruction of the “logocentric” text, however broad might be its concept, makes sense because it deals not only with texts as such, but, by means of them, with the constraint of the mediating metaphysical structure that is imposed on thinking and, hence, makes the triumph of “logocentrism” inevitable.

All in all, the difference is that Heidegger believed in the possibility of the absolute discharge from the metaphysical coercion, whereas Derrida relied on it that the deconstruction only makes the metaphysical structure “loose”, and the victory, so to speak, cannot be gained exactly because the origin remained inaccessible. The blurring of identity manifests itself in Derrida’s persistent pursuit of the difference that is deemed inherent in the identity, albeit unfortunately there is no Derrida’s text that would explicate the continuous presence of this yearning fully and in a condensed form. Nonetheless, one might point out to some basic texts which, being lined, become the convincing evidence of Derrida’s uniform strategy.

One might begin the line with the work on the construal of madness in Foucault in which Derrida shows that madness “itself” cannot speak if it does not rely on the resources of reason. Discussing the concept of madness, Derrida emphasizes the hybridity (the syncretic character) of the concept of reason, disagreeing with Foucault’s thesis that Greek *logos* “had no contrary”, and insists that the identity of reason does not avoid the contamination by madness, so that the difference is present in the very identity of reason [25. P. 47—50]. Derrida’s construal of the relationships between identity and difference as compared with Levinas’s one is retraced in the paper on violence and metaphysics in which Derrida discusses the hybrid terms “greekjew” and “jewgreek” which are both the unities of universal and particular coined in order to destabilize the border between Hellenism and Hebraism in culture [26. P. 190—192].

Furthermore, the idea of the difference in identity is scrutinized in the landmark paper dealing with the adoption of the Greek philosophical legacy, and Derrida again emphasizes that not only the non-Greek and the Other of the Greek attracted him, but the “wholly other” of the Greek, of his language and his *logos*. In the issue, the identity of the Greek, i.e., of the “Athens”, proves to be blurred by the otherness of “the Jew, the Arab, the Christian, the Roman, the German, and so on” [27. P. 31]. Finally, Derrida analyzes the difference in the identity of the Jew, i.e., the “Jerusalem”, and rejects the very possibility of authentic Jewish identity like the very possibility of the authentic Greek logocentrism [28].

In whole, the Greek and the Jewish identities, having been interpreted in the anti-essentialist vein, make not the center, but the margins of their relationships the

most important, and the interplay of differences is deemed particular and universal at the same time. Moreover, Derrida's pursuit of the difference in the identity covers also the concept of the origin that cannot be immediate, because it, like the binary opposition, is considered to be already hierarchical, being not the identity, but the difference in the identity. Derrida is of the opinion that not the difference of the origin of a system from the secondary entities, as it was in metaphysical thinking, but its difference from itself is primordial.

Hence, just the mediation is of paramount importance, whereas the immediacy of the origin is not admitted in principle. The endpoint of this development obviously proves to be the stance on the Other that is the alternative to Heidegger's admission of the immediacy of the origin in his construal of the so-called "other beginning". This is the culmination of anti-essentialism and anti-representationalism that completes the transition from Rosenzweig to Levinas. The most important thing is that once the immediacy of the origin was rejected, the very paradigm of establishing the relationships between the particular and the universal became pointless because the discernible difference between them in the framework of anti-essentialism barely ceases to exist.

Conclusion

To sum up, according to the described scheme of the transition from Rosenzweig's to Levinas' to Derrida's concept of the Other and the underlying concepts of identity and difference corresponds to the decline of essentialism and representationalism. The analysis of the relevant problems from the perspective of the Jewish philosophy required more accurate definition of the latter's relationships with the philosophy which, exceeding the national and cultural bounds, is commonly considered to be the general one. In this connection the Jewish philosophy proved to be similar to all other philosophies which might be named the national (or domestic) ones, and at the same time like the latter laid a claim to universality. Such angle of the analysis rendered possible the construal of tailor-made national philosophies as a response to modernization that resulted in the formation of the nation-states as a new type of identity.

Thus, the genealogy itself of national philosophies leads to the understanding of the relationships between the particular and the universal as the paradigm for the construal of the Other in the Jewish philosophy that formally proceeds from exactly the same premises as the other national philosophies, though. Therein, one should by no means miss the point of the problem of the Other that, being the problem of inclusion and exclusion and therefore requiring the philosophical reflection on a certain form of social conflict, has to do, first of all, with the conditions of entry of social and cultural outside into the exemplary modernity itself. Meanwhile, this aspect of the problem is the most significant, since it puts the question of the reinterpretation of the otherness in such a way that could leastwise smooth over the contradictions between the modernity and its Other and render possible the mutual recognition of the opposite sides.

It goes without saying that this aspect of the problem concerns not only Jews, but for the variety of reasons it was indeed for the first time realized and, what is not of less importance, explicitly conceptualized exactly in the Jewish philosophy. It is precisely this fact that explains why the notion of the Other, having noticed attention of national philosophies and the general philosophy as well, symbolizes not the border, but the permeable borderland between them all. Hereupon Derrida who does not formally belong to the Jewish philosophy, could afford to summarize within the framework of reputedly universal philosophical tradition the logic of Rosenzweig's and Levinas' construal of the concept of the Other, and in so doing to make a valuable contribution to both general and Jewish philosophy. The larger context of Derrida's overarching vision implies that the shift from Rosenzweig's to Levinas' notion of the Other corresponds to the change in the essentialist understanding of identity and difference that ended in the prevalence of the anti-essentialist stance.

Firstly, it is the transition from the polarities of metaphysics to equipollent and thus independent opposites in the wake of Rosenzweig's critical appraisal of metaphysical thinking. Just this attitude created an affinity between Rosenzweig and Heidegger that is universally recognized, and at the same time it gave rise to the state of "otherwise" taking into account the antipodal conclusions that were formed in the final analysis by Heidegger, on the one hand, and Rosenzweig, on the other hand. Secondly, it is the theoretical model of the fusion between not equipollent and already specifically interrelated opposites in Levinas as the sought-for state that is supposedly "otherwise than Being", but also otherwise than Heidegger's aiming at the passage from the "overcoming of metaphysics" to the "other beginning". Thirdly, this succession results in the anti-essentialist and anti-representational stance of Derrida regarding identity and difference which, to be sure, is "otherwise" than the thinking based on the "metaphysics of presence" as the metaphysics of essence and but again "otherwise" than Heidegger's anti-metaphysical project of the "other beginning".

These multiple "otherwise" indicate the peculiarity of Jewish philosophy, but they also uncover the clash of opinions within its own boundaries. Derrida's summarizing consideration of this problem stated the fact that the borders between *I* and the Other indeed became "porous" and permeable. This change corresponds to the modification of the regime of symbolization at all levels of the symbolic substitutions in society and culture. It seems plausible, that in the late modernity the regime of symbolization obviously manifests itself through the ubiquitous separating of the signifier from the signified, since, according to Heidegger's finding, the "suprasensous is let loose" [29. P. 92]. This implies that the previous understanding of identity and difference is becoming impossible just like the paradigm of the relationships between the particular and the general in the context of the problem of the Other clearly falls away.

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Представления Розенцвейга и Левинаса о Другом в контексте понимания различия у Деррида

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Целью статьи является сопоставление позиций Франца Розенцвейга и Эмманюэля Левинаса по отношению к представлению о Другом, которое опирается на метафизические принципы модерна, с тем, чтобы выявить предпосылки их отношения к метафизике в целом. Особенностью предлагаемого подхода является анализ представлений о Другом Розенцвейга и Левинаса в ракурсе, задаваемым философией Жака Деррида. Исследование исходит из того, что национальные формы философии, понятые как своеобразная реакция подлежащих модернизации обществ на последствия своего соприкосновения с распространяющимся модерном, именно вследствие этого придают большое значение истолкованию смысла Другого. Подчеркивается, что схожие черты различных национальных школ философии указывают на соотнесение особенного с общим в качестве парадигмы понимания Другого, тогда как еврейская философия ранее осмыслила эту парадигму в виде противостояния «Афин и Иерусалима». Для того, чтобы оценить возмож-

ности этой парадигмы, анализ соответствующей проблематики включается в более широкий контекст, и она рассматривается в связи с переходом эссенциализма в антиэссенциализм, который присущ уже позднему модерну. В статье показывается, что позиция Розенцвейга все еще была эссенциалистской, тогда как Левинас уже пытался отойти от эссенциалистского понимания Другого и лежащих в его основе концепций тождества и различия, хотя он и не завершил переход к антиэссенциализму. Разрыв Левинаса с метафизикой был завершён Деррида, антэссенциалистская позиция которого по отношению к тождеству и различию радикально отличается от того мышления, которое твердо придерживается «метафизики присутствия». В результате Деррида, формально не принадлежа к еврейской философии, смог подвести итог подходам Розенцвейга и Левинаса к проблеме Другого и, таким образом, внести вклад и в общую, и в еврейскую философию.

Ключевые слова: Франц Розенцвейг, Эмманюэль Левинас, Жак Деррида, метафизика, Другой, тождество, различие, Афины и Иерусалим, универсализм, эссенциализм, антиэссенциализм

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